

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Education
Minister for Women



Wednesday, 8 March 2023

CELEBRATING WOMEN NOW AND ALWAYS

In Victoria, equality is not negotiable. Every day, the Andrews Labor Government is ensuring that women are celebrated and their interests are advanced.

We've delivered record funding to support gender equality, ensuring that women from all walks of life have access to the best opportunities, right here in Victoria.

With *Best Start, Best Life*, we're delivering an investment of \$14 billion over the next decade to save families money and support women to return to the workforce, reforming the early childhood education and care sector to make Kinder free for every Victorian family and increase funded hours for three- and four-year-olds.

We'll deliver \$23 million to install 1500 free pad and tampon machines at up to 700 public sites, including public hospitals, courts, TAFEs, public libraries, train stations and major cultural institutions like the State Library of Victoria and Melbourne Museum.

For too long, women's health was overlooked and under-diagnosed. The Labor Government is completely changing the way women's health is treated in our state – creating 20 comprehensive women's health clinics across Victoria – a one-stop shop for women needing treatment or advice on issues from contraception to pelvic pain.

2023 marks 100 years since women won their right to stand for the Victorian Parliament – a century since women from all walks of life and backgrounds helped shape the state through public office.

The Labor Government is proud on International Women's Day to celebrate how far we've come – we have now reached equal gender representation, with women making up 54 per cent of the Labor caucus and 64 per cent of the Cabinet.

In addition, 54 per cent of seats are now held by women on government boards thanks to the Government's successful Women on Boards policy.

We have also invested \$3 million to create new economic opportunities for women in the male-dominated manufacturing and energy sectors.

The Victorian Women's Public Art Program is increasing the number of women represented in public art, creating monuments to women such as Victoria's much-loved comedian, journalist and disability advocate Stella Young and equal pay campaigner Zelda D'Aprano.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

"International Women's Day is an opportunity to celebrate our successes and its also a time to recognise that the fight continues to achieve gender equality in Victoria. We know there is always more we can – and will – do."

"Equality in Victoria is not negotiable. We're working hard to deliver so that all women across Victoria have equal opportunities to thrive."