

Statement

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier



Friday, 1 March 2023

STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Linda White was a warrior for workers.

As a unionist, a lawyer and a Senator in our nation's Parliament – she devoted her days to the pursuit of justice: not only legal but social and economic.

She fought hard for good jobs – because she knew what they meant to working people.

She fought hard for workers' rights – because she knew what they meant to their families.

Every Australian worker that was underpaid, undermined, undervalued – Linda was in their corner.

She believed deeply in the power of collectivism. That while markets fail people, unions never do.

She saw that firsthand with the collapse of Ansett – a national tragedy that saw more than 70,000 Australians lose their job. As Linda said, it broke people.

In the absence of government leadership, it was left to union members to take up the fight for these Australians, and that's exactly what they did. As an official with the Australian Services Union, Linda helped lead the near decade-long battle to give these workers what was rightfully theirs.

She was unafraid to take on her own Party, too. That included her mission to achieve genuine gender representation in our movement – which this year, saw Victoria reach 50:50 equality in our Parliament.

Perhaps the most long-lasting of her legacies: elevating the worth of women's work.

Because of Linda, tens of thousands of Australian women are better paid. Because of Linda, their work is not only recognised but rewarded.

On behalf of the Victorian Labor family, I extend my heartfelt condolences to everyone who loved her.

Today, and just as Linda would have wanted, we reflect not only on the gains achieved – but the battles still to be won.