

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## GREENS' POLICY ON FAIR WORK AMENDMENTS GOOD FOR CARERS

Carers Australia is pleased that The Green's Policy Plan includes provisions to redress a particular inequity in the Fair Work Act.

Carers Australia CEO, Ara Cresswell, said, "The Act includes the right of employees to request flexible working conditions to meet family responsibilities. However, this right is restricted to employees who have been employed for 12 months or more. The Green's policy would remove this restriction.

"The fact is that anyone can become a family carer quite suddenly at any time. It can happen as a result of a health crisis, an accident, or sudden changes to existing caring arrangements for a child, parent, partner or other family member.

"The principles for flexible working conditions enshrined in the Fair Work Act should apply to everyone facing the same circumstances.

"We also welcome The Green's proposal that the Productivity Commission be asked to investigate workplace and social security reforms against the background of the contribution unpaid carers make to the economy. This includes consideration of superannuation credits for carers who are unable to work, often over long periods of time, as a result of their caring role. Many carers face long-term financial challenges, including into old age, as a result of having to forgo employment.

"In 2015 it was estimated that if the unpaid care that family and friend carers provide had to be replaced with paid care it would come at an annual cost of over \$60 billion."

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