



MEDIA RELEASE

ANDREW LEIGH MP JOINS RALLY AT PARLIAMENT HOUSE CALLING FOR MORE ACTION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

10 December 2015: Labor MP Andrew Leigh will join with YWCA Canberra and other women's groups in a Day of Action on the lawns of Parliament House this Friday, to commemorate the lives of women who have died this year as a result of violence.

The Federal Member for Fraser will join YWCA Canberra Executive Director Frances Crimmins to speak at the rally about what more can be done to eliminate the scourge of domestic violence from our communities.

Mr Leigh said such public demonstrations were necessary, in the light of the continuing numbers of women being killed by domestic violence.

"Across Australia, 78 women have lost their lives this year as a result of violence, with over two-thirds at the hands of an intimate partner.

"Even one would be too many.

"The Day of Action will show that the Canberra community stands together against violence, and is working to build a culture where every woman can feel safe, every day.

"As fathers, husbands and friends, men have a responsibility to help achieve that goal. Taking part in events like the Day of Action sends a clear message that we are partners and active participants in this important work," Mr Leigh said.

In partnership with the Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Toora Women Inc., Doris Women's Refuge and Beryl Women Inc., YWCA Canberra is calling on women and men to assemble on the lawns of Parliament House from 12pm – 2pm, Friday 11 December.

There will be a moment of silence for each woman who has lost her life as a result of violence this year.

Ms Crimmins said while recent government initiatives to address domestic violence were welcomed, governments now needed to look at how to meet the diverse needs of women experiencing violence.

"Women and children need appropriately-funded frontline services that take into account their financial, physical and emotional needs.

“Services must provide for diversity, including cultural and linguistic diversity, gender diversity, and women with disabilities,” Ms Crimmins said.

The rally is part of YWCA Canberra’s campaign supporting the global 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence.

There will be five key requests for action:

- Adequate resourcing to provide access to respectful relationships education for all young people in Australia.
- Better resourcing for frontline services
- Access to gender-aware crisis and other housing support for women escaping domestic violence
- Ensure specialist women’s legal services have access to adequate and ongoing funding to provide support to women fleeing domestic violence.
- That funding for domestic violence is responsive to the needs of diverse and marginalised groups.

The demonstration will include a display of 78 Christmas cards attached to pickets planted in the lawn, as a visual reminder of the women who will not be taking part in festive celebrations with family and friends this year.

Labor Senator Katy Gallagher will also attend the rally. Coalition leaders have been invited to take part but have so far declined.

- ENDS -

Frances Crimmins is available for interview.

Media contact: Karan Gabriel 0429 210 881

Media contact for Mr Andrew Leigh: 0428 214 856

Follow the 16 Days on social media: #16Days

About the 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence: The 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence is a global campaign from 25 November - 10 December. It is to raise awareness about violence against women and its impact on a women’s physical, psychological, social and spiritual wellbeing.

The 16 Days begin on International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (also White Ribbon Day) and end on International Human Rights Day. These two dates highlight that violence against women is a human rights abuse.

During the 16 Days, activists around the world will use the campaign to further raise awareness about the prevalence and devastating impact of gender violence, challenge policy and practice that allow women to be targeted for acts of violence, and demand that violence against women be recognised as an abuse of human rights.

About YWCA Canberra: YWCA Canberra is a feminist, not-for-profit community organisation that has been providing community services and representing women’s issues

in the Canberra community since its establishment in 1929. YWCA Canberra employs more than 300 staff across the ACT, and delivers 30 quality programs in children's services, community development, housing, youth services, women's leadership, advocacy, and training. Represented in 122 countries, the YWCA has a global reach of 25 million women and girls. As part of this international movement, YWCA Canberra works for a world where reconciliation, justice, peace, health, human dignity, freedom and care for the environment are promoted and sustained through women's leadership. For more information visit: www.ywca-canberra.org.au

Follow YWCA Canberra on social media:

Twitter: [@YWCACanberra](https://twitter.com/YWCACanberra)

Facebook: facebook.com/YWCACanberra

YouTube: youtube.com/YWCACanberra

Instagram: [@YWCACanberra](https://instagram.com/YWCACanberra)

Flickr: [YWCA Canberra](https://www.flickr.com/photos/ywca-canberra/)