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Media Release

Historic milestone for gender equality and its role in preventing violence against women

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Respect Victoria welcomes the historic passing of the Gender Equality Bill (2019) by the Victorian State Government.

“This Bill is a once in a generation opportunity to improve gender equality in Victorian workplaces,” said Respect Victoria Chair Melanie Eagle.

“Gender inequality a key driver of violence against women and family violence. There is a strong and consistent association between gender inequality and levels of violence against women. A 2015 study in The Lancet found factors relating to gender inequality predict the prevalence of intimate partner violence across 44 countries.

“When it comes into effect on 31 March 2021, the Gender Equality Act (2020) will underpin improved workplace gender equality across the Victorian Public sector, universities and local councils, providing both social and economic benefits to Victoria through the positive effects gender equality provides society.

“The Act will require over 300 organisations to develop and implement Gender Equality Action Plans and report on progress towards achieving workplace gender equality.

“Its application will cover 96% of Victorian public sector employees and over 10% of the total Victorian workforce,” Ms Eagle said.

Respect Victoria Chief Executive Officer, Tracey Gaudry applauded the Victorian Parliament for leading this action and their commitment to gender equality and its critical role in prevention of family violence and violence against women.

“The passing of this Bill is a significant step towards challenging the harmful norms, practices and structures that lead to violence, including gender inequality, marginalisation and discrimination,” said Ms Gaudry.

“Government, industry, organisations and communities all have a role to play, and this Bill demonstrates the Victorian State Government’s commitment to eliminating gender inequality through its own action in public sector workplaces. Respect Victoria looks forward to implementing the practices within our own organisation.

“Respect Victoria stands with the Victorian State Government in working to create a Victoria free from violence,” Gaudry concluded.

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