

The Hon Nicola Roxon MP  
Attorney-General  
By email: [nicola@nicolaroxonmp.com](mailto:nicola@nicolaroxonmp.com)

21 June 2012

Dear Attorney-General

**Re: Domestic Violence as a Ground for Discrimination**

In January 2012, AWAVA formally endorsed and supported the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse (ADFVC) submission to the Attorney-General's Department on the consolidation of Commonwealth anti-discrimination laws.

AWAVA strongly advocates for the addition of domestic violence as a ground of discrimination in the consolidated laws. AWAVA firmly agrees with providing an express protection for victims of domestic violence and welcomes your leadership, as Attorney-General, on this important legislative change.

The fact that women endure discrimination in the workplace, or in securing accommodation or services, as a consequence of experiencing, or having experienced domestic violence is unacceptable.

AWAVA is one of six Commonwealth-funded National Women's Alliances. AWAVA's key area of focus is addressing all forms violence against women, to *'ensure that all women and children are able to live free from all forms of violence and abuse'*. AWAVA recognises that violence against women is both a consequence and cause of gender inequality in all sectors of society and so it must be addressed by promoting women's empowerment. Integral to women's empowerment is their financial independence through employment and secure accommodation. Protections are urgently needed to assist women who have experienced/are experiencing domestic violence to reduce further social and financial disadvantage.

In her recent study tour of Australia, the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Dr Rashida Manjoo, emphasised that violence against women is already recognised as discrimination under international law. Enacting a similar protection in domestic legislation would contribute to Australia meeting its obligations under the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and would demonstrate the Australian Government's commitment to addressing violence against women.

We look forward to hearing your decision

Yours sincerely



Julie Oberin  
Chair of AWAVA