

## **Resolution 1**

**Resolution Title:** Safety first in family law

### **Wording of Resolution:**

That VIEW Clubs of Australia urge all state, territory, and federal governments to implement the five point plan "Safety First in Family Law" to fix Australia's family law system as outlined by Rosie Batty on 15th June 2016 to the National Press Club as part of the Justice for Kids Campaign.

### **Rationale:**

Family violence cannot be taken seriously without taking family law seriously. This is something that COAG – all state, territory, and federal governments – must consider and address.

### **Arguments for the resolution:**

- Rosie Batty has worked in conjunction with Women's Legal Services nationally to outline the plan.
- More than 90 organisations have backed a five-point plan\*, Safety First in Family Law, saying legal hurdles in the Family Court system currently make it hard for vulnerable women to leave dangerous situations.
- Legal and social service groups are urging bipartisan political support for the new five point plan aimed at reducing the impact of domestic violence through law reform.
- Over 30% of parties in the Family Court are unrepresented. The most disadvantaged Australians struggle to access assistance in family law cases from community legal centres and legal aid commissions due to limited Federal funding.

### **Arguments against the resolution:**

- Training is required of all the people involved in this system, who are currently very unskilled in dealing with the complexities of these cases.
- The family law court has evolved, it was never set up understanding or expecting to be dealing with complex domestic family violence cases.

### **\*Five Point Plan**

1. That major political parties fund domestic violence experts for the court system.
2. That legislative protections are introduced to prevent victims being cross-examined by their abusers.
3. That a mediation model is established with specialist domestic violence lawyers and social workers.
4. That barriers in the family law system are addressed for women in high risk groups e.g. women with disabilities.
5. That Commonwealth funding be increased for the legal assistance sector.