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Ita Buttrose  
Chair  
Australian Broadcasting Corporation  
700 Harris Street  
Ultimo NSW 2007

21 March 2022

Dear Ms Buttrose

**Re: ABC's coverage of transgenderism in young people**

Feminist Legal Clinic Inc. is a community legal service based in Sydney that works to advance the human rights of women and girls. Our service is operated by volunteers and does not receive any corporate or government funding.

We refer specifically to the article by Jacqueline Howard published online by the ABC on 14 March 2022 titled *Young Australians Are Exploring Gender More Than Ever Before*. We are concerned that the biased and unbalanced nature of this report, like so much of the ABC's coverage on this topic, is contributing to an environment where children and young people, particularly girls, are being exposed to considerable harm.

This news piece generalises statistics provided only for the state of Victoria to the whole of Australia to claim that youth are seeking gender-related interventions 'more than ever before'. However, there is no discussion of the reasons behind why children are increasingly seeking these medical interventions. Research by Professor Dianna Kenny (2020) demonstrates that the rise in the popularity of these interventions among children is not taking place in a vacuum but is concentrated in areas proximate to gender clinics. Victoria, which has had the largest numbers and the largest increases, is also a state where the trans lobby has been particularly vocal and where the Safe Schools policy was first conceived and implemented.

The increasingly legalised denial of the material reality of sex in the form of self-identification laws, the saturation of social media with gender ideology and the capitulation of institutions like schools, academia, and the health professions to the demands of the aggressive trans lobby, have contributed to a cult-like culture which endorses medical experimentation on the bodies of children and

other vulnerable people. Unfortunately, the ABC has consistently failed to provide coverage of this context, leaving it to right wing media to report on the persecution of feminist academics, health professionals and other activists who dare to question this oppressive and dangerous ideology. Instead, the ABC has chosen to increase content that uncritically celebrates transgenderism.

Howard's article cites a medical academic, Dr Ken Pang, who says the risks of puberty blockers are 'minor'. However, this does not accord with the findings of the interim report of the Cass Review into the Tavistock Gender Clinic in the United Kingdom or recent statements by the French National Academy of Medicine and Sweden's National Board of Health and Welfare released in the last month. These countries are rapidly changing course and no longer advocate the affirmation model of treatment for gender dysphoria in children. It is of great concern that none of these significant international developments are mentioned in Howard's article and have also failed to receive appropriate coverage by the ABC generally.

Gender ideology has done extensive damage to the hard-won rights of women and girls in Australia and around the world. The notion of gender identity feeds on the sexist stereotypes and misogyny that girls battle as they grow into adulthood. It misleads girls into believing they can opt out of their structural oppression by simply identifying as male and making harmful alterations to their bodies. Our service is actively engaged in supporting young women who, like Keira Bell in the United Kingdom, have detransitioned and deeply regret the use of hormones and surgeries in pursuit of this impossible goal. They tell a very different story from that presented in Howard's article, which irresponsibly minimises the risks involved in these medical interventions.

Humans are a dimorphic species – they are either male or female, and the sex of each individual is immutable. The use of hormones and superficial cosmetic procedures cannot alter this fact, although it is likely to result in loss of sexual and reproductive function. In view of this reality, encouraging children to undergo the harmful and irreversible medical procedures recommended for 'transition' is unethical in the extreme and paves the way for litigation in the future.

We implore you to ensure the ABC publishes corrections and addendums where appropriate and commits to taking a more critical approach to the coverage of transgender issues in the future. Women and children deserve to be told the truth about this very dangerous ideology.

Please do not hesitate to contact me by email or on 0402 467 if more information is required.

Yours faithfully



Anna Kerr  
Principal Solicitor