

# Statement

Hon Jacinta Allan MP  
Premier



Sunday, 3 November 2024

## STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF FAY MARLES AM

Born in Melbourne in 1926, Fay Marles grew up in a world where women were taught to keep their ambitions and aspirations small.

Over the course of her 98 years – she helped to lead a transformation that means, today, Victorian girls can now dream big.

Fay served our state in many roles – as a social worker, an academic and an advocate.

But it was as Victoria's Equal Opportunity Commissioner that she really made her mark.

The first custodian of equal opportunity in our state's history, Fay was determined to dismantle a culture the told women they were worth less.

She took on so-called 'niche issues' – sexual harassment, workplace discrimination, women's pay – transforming them into topics worthy of national conversation.

Perhaps her most well-known intervention was the "pilots' case" – where she helped upend the offensive notion that somehow women were less skilled, less competent – less able.

Fay would continue her trajectory of 'firsts', becoming the first woman Chancellor of the University of Melbourne in 2001. In that role – and consistent with her lifetime of challenging injustice – Fay dedicated herself to ensuring more First Peoples have the opportunity they deserve.

On behalf of our state, we extend our condolences to Fay's children Victoria, Jennifer, Elizabeth and Richard, their families and to the many people whose lives she touched.

Vale Fay Marles.