

Penalties and Sentences (Sexual Offences) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025

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Submitter Comments:

As a Mum to two young girls, I do everything I can to support my children. I've tried to educate them to understand body safety, autonomy., boundaries and consent from a young age. I do what I can to prevent them from being harmed. However, I still know that there is a chance that something awful could happen. And, I know that our communities are being let down as convicted offenders may receive lighter sentences based on glowing references from their friends and family.

I want to support all Queensland children and women. I want the best possible outcomes for those who have been seriously harmed. For me, that means taking a small moment out of my day to prepare these comments for submission.

I support the proposal from the #YourReferenceAintRelevant campaign calling for a total abolition of good character references in the sentencing of convicted rapists, child sex offenders, and perpetrators of domestic violence. Allowing these references enables abusers to weaponise their social status to minimise harm. Justice should be based on the facts of the case — not on who the offender knows.

Our women and children deserve better. This law will support other laws to support better outcomes for our families and Queenslanders in the future. This is an opportunity to do better for our communities and minimise further retransmission and harm to those who have already been harmed.

Queenslanders deserve better than for serious offenders to receive lighter sentences based on references. These offenders build a public persona that is very different to the one they exhibit while harming others behind closed doors. It's how they get away with things and fly under the radar for so long. These offenders gaslight their victims and tell them that nobody will believe them because they have built these 'good bloke' public personas. They should not be rewarded with leniency in their sentencing for hiding the worst side of themselves in public. Instead, they should be sentenced for the crimes they commit in private. Victims should not be further punished for the 'good character' their abuser exhibits in public.