

23rd February 2017

Sonia Anderson

To The Research Director, Legal Affairs & Community Safety Committee.

As a matter of urgency, we need to step up and act as one to stamp out domestic violence and ultimately domestic homicide. *Any* act of domestic violence is the path to domestic homicide.

I am a mother who lost her beautiful first born daughter, Bianca Faith Girven, in a senseless act of violence in 2010. Bianca was 22, and left behind a young son, Ziggy, who was just 20 months old.

Before her death, Bianca herself was a strong advocate for women's rights and supporting victims of domestic violence and homelessness.

Since Bianca's death I have been continuing her work to advocate for change so we can protect and help more women impacted by domestic violence.

Sadly I am not alone in what is an all too familiar story for many Queensland families. The 10 minutes prior to my Bianca's death were particularly cruel and brutal, as is often the case in these murders. Bianca's killer has since admitted wrapping himself around Bianca so she couldn't struggle. He admitted 'choking her out slowly for 10 minutes', and told her she wouldn't survive. Our Queensland women are the ones experiencing true terrorism, and heinous deaths.

We often hear 'enough is enough' but we need to **stop the talk** and **start to act** to make the laws work for victims and their families.

It's time we put victims first and took away the automatic assumption of bail being granted in domestic violence situations. Case in point, Teresa Bradford's tragic murder.

I will continue to speak out in support of the alert system for DV victims being proposed by the LNP because I believe victims and families should be notified when an alleged perpetrator is being considered for bail or an offender is being considered for parole. The victims and families first need the notice that bail/parole *may* occur, so they can start forward planning what they need to do to stay safe. Then when a perpetrator is given bail/parole, the victim and family must be advised immediately. You can not underestimate the fear these woman and children live in, and the desperate need a woman has to keep her family safe.

We need to empower victims, not shut them out.

The use of GPS tracking devices, currently implemented in Queensland for sex offenders, could also be implemented in certain cases.

What price the life of your daughter? Your sister? Your mother?

Any law that increases the safety for victims must have the support of all sides of politics. It is what the people of Queensland want and need, and those we have voted to represent us need to act on our needs.

I urge on all Members of the Parliament to support these changes being introduced in the Bill presented by the Queensland LNP Opposition.

If required, I could make myself available to attend the Public Briefing/Hearing on 1st March.

Regards

Sonia Anderson
