




Speech By
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2015

**DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND ANOTHER ACT
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (9.02 pm): I too rise to speak in support of this bill. The reason I am particularly pleased that this bill has come before the House—and I congratulate the minister for doing this—is that it is all about protecting the victims. That is something that we have to ensure in our laws. Victims must come first.

This bill enshrines that it is the victims of domestic or family violence who will be at the forefront when people are making decisions about their wellbeing. We are ensuring that the courts consider that the needs of those most in need are protected. This legislation is about protecting the most vulnerable in these situations. We all know the horrific nature of domestic and family violence.

I was lucky enough to attend three domestic violence round tables held in my electorate—the legal round table, the religious round table and the LGBTIQ round table. I listened to the various speeches made tonight, and in particular to the very moving speech by the member for Mudgeeraba.

The common thread that came through in all of those round tables and the speeches that we have heard in this debate is the need to protect the victims. They must come first. This bill, which is a result of the recommendations from the *Not now, not ever* report, is all about giving victims the confidence they will need to report instances of domestic and family violence and the confidence that someone has their best interests at heart and their best interests at the forefront of their mind. We must ensure the protection of victims of these heinous acts that happen in our community.

All of us in this House—members from both sides of the House—are repulsed by domestic and family violence. It is amazing how widespread it is. Going around my electorate the stories that come forward are heartbreaking. They are often harrowing. They are like some of the stories we have heard during this debate. I also mention the member for Aspley who recounted the stories of a couple of friends of hers who fell victim to this.

I strongly support the policy objectives of this bill which are to ensure that those who are in most need are protected and ensure that the protection for domestic violence victims is maximised and the disruption in their lives is minimised. The perpetrators of domestic violence need to be considered when it comes to protecting the victims. With domestic violence we recognise the importance of victims being able to express their views.

We have to ensure that police officers using body worn cameras are using them lawfully when conducting their duties. I am very proud tonight to be speaking in favour of this bill. We must protect victims. I commend the bill to the House.