




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Sexual Violence Awareness Month

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.53 am): As I have said many times in this place, the Palaszczuk government is taking strong and urgent action to tackle domestic and family violence, and I am really pleased that the House will adjourn this afternoon so that members can attend the public rally to say ‘enough is enough’ and to remember those whose lives have been lost through domestic and family violence.

October is Sexual Violence Awareness Month, and I take this opportunity to thank members for wearing the teal ribbon to show their support. Sexual Violence Awareness Month is a time when we encourage Queenslanders to show their support for ending sexual violence and violence against women and inform those affected about the help that is available. It is an opportunity to let those affected by sexual violence and abuse know that they are not alone and they have the community’s support.

This is an issue right across our state and impacts many women, including rural and regional women, which is particularly worth mentioning today as it is the UN’s International Day of Rural Women. I take this opportunity to thank the Centre Against Sexual Violence and the Murrigunyah Family Cultural Healing Centre in Logan for holding a candle-lighting ceremony to start the month of October and remember those women we have tragically lost to sexual violence. It was an extremely moving remembrance ceremony. In Australia one in three women have experienced violence or sexual violence, almost one in five women report that their most recent incident of sexual violence was perpetrated by a current partner, and in almost one in three cases it was a former partner. The Palaszczuk government is investing \$6.2 million in sexual assault services and \$4.4 million in women’s health services.

Before entering parliament I spent a lot of time at the Centre Against Sexual Violence on the organisation’s board of management, and I saw firsthand how devastating sexual assault and violence are and that women’s health, sexual violence and domestic and family violence are all intrinsically linked. That is why I was so pleased last week to speak at the launch of the Ending Violence Against Women Queensland peak body, made up of more than 20 different community organisations to provide a united and representative voice across sexual violence, women’s health and domestic and family violence services. It is the kind of action we need to drive change and really make an impact. We need to recognise that domestic and family violence and sexual violence go hand in hand. Domestic violence, sexual assault and violence against women broadly are all gendered forms of violence and are driven by the same cultural attitudes and disrespect towards women. The Palaszczuk government understands the importance of working together with the community to develop coordinated strategies to end violence against women.