




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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**CRIMINAL LAW (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE) AMENDMENT BILL; CORONERS
(DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE DEATH REVIEW AND ADVISORY
BOARD) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to add a few short words to this very significant debate in support of the cognate bills before the House, the Criminal Law (Domestic Violence) Amendment Bill and the Coroners (Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board) Amendment Bill. These bills go some of the way towards the realisation of the commitment of the Palaszczuk government to support the recommendations of the *Not now, not ever* report, which was brought down under the leadership of Dame Quentin Bryce. A range of other people were involved in that task force. I acknowledge my predecessor in this place, Kerry Millard, the former member for Sandgate, who was a member of that task force. Obviously there are a number of issues on which Ms Millard and I disagree, but we have spoken on these matters on a number of occasions in the lead-up to the election and since. Her role in this particular matter was one that garnered her great respect in the community.

As we have heard from a number of speakers here today, the scourge—as it genuinely is—of domestic and family violence is absolutely and utterly multifaceted. It has a huge range of implications in the community. It has a huge range of causes and consequences. The most disturbing thing about it is the way in which, in so many ways, our community has ignored it for far too long. That is why it is vitally important that as a community and as a society we make a change. Our government will play a role in that and legislation, such as that before us today, will play a role, although it will not be the final role. The final role will be a cultural change. It will be the changes that we make in our hearts, the changes that we make in our attitudes and, most importantly, the changes that we make in our actions.

Therefore, it is important that what we are doing as part of the implementation of the *Not now, not ever* report is not seen as an end in itself. This is very much the beginning of a long and what will be at times very difficult and very challenging process. That is why it is important that we continue the conversation; that we keep the conversation going. That is why it is important that, as I have heard a number of members say, we work as activists within our own communities and talk with, ventilate and engage the broader community on these issues.

On 24 September, at the Fitzgibbon Community Centre in my electorate of Sandgate, I was very proud and pleased to host with my electoral neighbour the member for Nudgee, Leanne Linard, a north side domestic and family violence forum. We were very pleased to provide the community with an opportunity to have input in discussions and engagement with the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth. It was fundamentally important that all interested community organisations and individuals had a chance to be a part of that conversation. They included an organisation that does a tremendous amount of work on these issues on the north side of Brisbane, particularly in my area, that is, SANDBAG, the Sandgate and Bracken Ridge Action Group. In our local area, SANDBAG works under the auspices of DVConnect. Maggie Daunt, the DVConnect coordinator, does absolutely tremendous

work. The leadership that she has shown over many years in this area has been very important. Attending the forum from the Nudgee electorate were representatives from the Zillmere and Nundah neighbourhood centres. More broadly across the area, we had groups such as Jabiru Community Youth and Children's Services and the Burnie Brae Centre, which does a lot of work across the whole area. A range of local shelters and other service providers that provide services to individuals who have experienced the effects of domestic and family violence were also represented. It was very heartening to see the very significant contingent of local officers from the Queensland Police Service who provided very timely and useful input into the conversation around these important issues.

I conclude my comments in relation to the bills before us by thanking the Attorney-General for her commitment to leadership in this area in terms of the development of the government's response. A lot of the hard edged areas are in her portfolio of responsibilities. The way that she has worked with other cabinet colleagues, including the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, lends great credit to her. The leadership that the Premier has shown in cabinet on this matter, working with the Attorney-General and the Minister for Communities, has been very important. I endorse the bills before the House.

I finish with a final note of caution, which was a topic that came up as part of a domestic and family violence round table that I chaired on behalf of the government in Toowoomba on 7 October. The round table involved a number of service providers and community leaders. It was great to see the real ownership that the community leaders in the Toowoomba and Darling Downs region have taken in relation to this issue. At that round table, the issue of language came up. Language is very important. Language is one of the ways in which domestic and family violence is inflicted upon people. When we think about the way that we conduct ourselves in relation to these issues, we need to be very conscious that we do not make issues harder or more difficult because of the language that we use. It is not sticks and stones; it is language that can really make difficult issues more difficult.

In the process of learning more about these issues, particularly in the conversation we had at the recent round table in Toowoomba, I have learnt the importance of avoiding language such as 'perpetrators' and 'victims'. Frankly, if we talk about people as victims, we are casting them as that for the rest of their days. We need to be talking about people who 'have been victims' of domestic and family violence or 'who have experienced' domestic and family violence.

Equally, we have to be careful about referring to people as perpetrators. Turning people into 'perps' means there is no redemption, there is no way out of it and they might as well continue to execute the awful and terrible behaviours that are inflicting so much harm in our community. We have to talk about people who have perpetrated domestic or family violence. We should not say that they are perpetrators but that they have perpetrated. We need to give them a way out of that situation. As I said earlier, that involves multifaceted responses. That is why I am very pleased that this government is leading with this legislation and its range of responses to the *Not now, not ever* report.