




Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**

**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 October 2016

**DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.56 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to today's debate on the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I am pleased to see so many members stand up and speak out against domestic and family violence, which is an issue across every electorate. I make special mention of the member for Gaven, who very bravely told his story, which reflects the experience of too many Queenslanders. I thank him for his positive words and his own personal passion and purpose to do something to prevent this from happening to others. In partnership with the Queensland community, we can stop the behaviour and attitudes that allow domestic and family violence to continue.

The government is happy to accept the amendment proposed by the member for Mudgeeraba. While in practice reasons are usually explained to participants, it is acceptable to the government that we make it explicit that those reasons must be articulated. The government will support the amendment in consideration in detail. However, it was incredibly disappointing to hear the shadow minister apply the same fearmongering she has been using with child safety to this issue of tackling domestic and family violence, which up until now has had bipartisan support. As I have said before, but it appears I need to say it again, it is dangerous for members of this House to make statements such as, 'DVOs are not worth the paper they are written on,' because it discourages women from seeking help. Let me be very clear to the women of Queensland: please seek help. We have increased your protection and we have increased the penalties for breaching DVOs in order to hold perpetrators to account.

It is also clear that the shadow minister has not been paying attention. It was claimed that the Palaszczuk government has yet to put forward a real plan to address domestic violence. Only someone whose only goal is political gain could make such a claim. The government has accepted each and every one of the *Not now, not ever* recommendations, has completed 37 recommendations, commenced 78 recommendations and the remaining six recommendations are proposed for the second action plan. We have released a comprehensive action plan to outline our delivery of those recommendations and, in an unprecedented way, brought together the directors-general of all relevant departments to drive reforms across government. In fact, it took me four weeks as the minister to announce two new domestic violence refuges, which are the first government funded refuges in 25 years.

I could take all evening to list the achievements of this government in this area, but it is clear that the shadow minister is not interested in the facts. Let us not forget that under the LNP Queensland was the only state in this country without a strategy to tackle domestic violence. They refused an invitation

to join Our Watch, the national body set up to look at the prevention of violence against women and children, and they cut funding for important programs such as Breaking the Cycle in Rockhampton. Again, I am happy to put our record up against theirs any time.

The member for Caloundra emphasised that police officers will need adequate training to ensure they use their new powers effectively. As my department has made clear to the committee, the Queensland Police Service is developing an educational package to support implementation of the changes in the bill. This training package will be delivered to all police officers and front-line staff as an eight-hour face-to-face session. This training will help equip officers to use their new powers effectively and responsibly.

The member for Caloundra also expressed concerns about the security of information shared under the new information-sharing framework for domestic violence. The bill requires the director-general of my department to develop information-sharing guidelines to support cross-agency information sharing. The department will consult with the Queensland Privacy Commissioner in the development of the guidelines. There is already a robust legal framework for government entities that prescribes the appropriate collection, storage, retention and disposal of confidential information.

In conclusion, the bill will enhance the legal and justice response to domestic violence by improving protection for victims, increasing perpetrator accountability and encouraging behavioural change. Again, I would like to thank the members of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its examination of the bill. I would also like to thank the many domestic and family violence and legal stakeholders, individuals who contributed to the committee process and those who participated in the review of the act.

My department, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and the Queensland Police Service will continue to work together to implement the recommendations of the special task force to improve the domestic and family violence system in Queensland. I am proud to be part of a government that has put domestic and family violence reforms at the forefront of our agenda. I commend the bill to the House.