




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

Record of Proceedings, 11 October 2016

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (4.12 pm): The Palaszczuk government announced last year that we will implement all 140 recommendations in Dame Quentin Bryce's landmark *Not now, not ever* report into domestic and family violence. All 121 government recommendations have been accepted and the 19 non-government recommendations will be actively supported. I am proud that this parliament has been so strong on this issue. This House has already passed four priority bills to improve how the legal and justice system deals with domestic and family violence. This bill builds on priority legislative changes already enacted and is the next stage of legislative reforms to implement the Queensland government's response to the task force. However, we are continuing to see deaths as a result of domestic and family violence. We all know that domestic violence is abhorrent. We were all shocked and horrified when we heard about Tara Brown, Karina Lock and Michelle Reynolds. I know that these very public deaths were just the tip of the iceberg for domestic violence in this state when the Queensland police are receiving close to 200 complaints a day.

For something that is so prevalent it is disturbing how misunderstood this issue really is. What the research says, and certainly what service providers and women themselves have been telling us for a long time, is that domestic violence is all about control. We often think about the campaign image of the woman with a black eye, but we need to realise that abuse is not just physical violence. Domestic abuse almost always starts when the perpetrator systematically erodes a person's confidence, their support networks and their independence. Often it is just the threat of physical aggression that does the work of controlling a partner. That is not to downplay the horror of physical violence. This kind of behaviour often escalates to violence, but we must accept that it starts with isolation and control. That is why saying 'he just has a bad temper' is misguided. Violence is not about anger; it is a tool—one of many that abusers use to control their partners. That is why we need stronger laws that recognise just how dangerous and life-destroying domestic violence is for its victims.

This bill will allow police protection notices to be enforceable in the same way as domestic violence orders. It also increases the maximum penalty for breaching a police protection notice or release condition to a maximum of three years imprisonment or 120 penalty units. This ensures the penalty for breaching a notice is the same as the penalty for breaching court issued DVOs—penalties that the Palaszczuk government increased last year from two years to three years for breaching a DVO and from three years to five years for subsequent breaches.

The bill also includes a range of reforms to strengthen the justice response to domestic violence, such as allowing courts to make protection orders last longer and tailor DVOs to meet a victim's protection needs. The Palaszczuk government is committed to making changes to the system to protect vulnerable people. That is only one piece of the puzzle. Domestic violence will remain a problem for as

long as our attitudes towards women remain a problem. I say women because it is about women. Let us be clear about this: 87 per cent of domestic violence victims are women. When some men's groups claim that men are abused just as much as women and that it is a silent epidemic, that is absolute rubbish. Men do suffer at the hands of both female and male partners and they too need support, but studies have repeatedly shown that it is not as prolonged and that men are less likely to be living in fear. They are also far less likely to be murdered. Men kill women in four out of five intimate partner homicides. When women kill their partners it often follows a history of being subjected to domestic violence. Murder is the most extreme example of male entitlement, but there are many other examples we see every day and rarely do anything about.

We have come a long way, but not enough to become complacent. When Eddie McGuire and Sam Newman casually joke about drowning a female colleague we are sending a powerful message to young men and women about women's status in our society. Just last week we heard that Donald Trump, a presidential candidate, talked about groping and sexually assaulting women. More worrying still is his explanation: it is just locker room talk; it is normal. It is not normal and every single casual groping and lewd comment that goes unchallenged or is explained away as locker room talk is eroding our standards. The standard you walk past is the standard you set. I hope that men in this place and men across the state and this country will start calling out this kind of behaviour, start teaching our sons that jokes about assaulting women are not funny, stop asking, 'Why doesn't she leave him?,' and start asking, 'Why does he feel the need to control her?' Lead by example and challenge others because I for one want my two sons to treat their future partners with adoration and respect and I never, ever want my daughter to experience fear or intimidation. I commend the bill to the House.