




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

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.24 pm): This evening I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. At the outset I want to particularly acknowledge my friend and colleague from the Gold Coast the member for Gaven. I think all members would appreciate that it takes a lot to bare one's emotions in the House. Particularly when speaking about such a difficult personal issue, it took a lot of courage and I am sure that all members would join me in acknowledging the contribution that he made to the House in the debate earlier today. I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the shadow minister, the member for Mudgeeraba, for the amazing work she has done in this space. Over a number of years the member for Mudgeeraba has been a very strong advocate for survivors of domestic and family violence and she will continue to be a very strong advocate for years to come.

As has been outlined by members on both sides of the House, it is heartening to see continued bipartisan support for changes in the law around domestic and family violence and how we respond in this state. As we know, the laws that we are seeing introduced in this House in this term of parliament are a response to the *Not now, not ever* report which was a result of the task force which was instigated by the LNP when in government with bipartisan support. I know that all members of the House are very much looking forward to continuing to work together to ensure that the framework that we have in place to support families and survivors of domestic and family violence is the best framework that we can put in place, and that is what is so important about the legislation that we are debating today because, ultimately, we need to be able to ensure that the services that we have in place are not only the right services but we are able to get there sooner and faster and we are able to, at the earliest instance, provide support for men, women, children, friends and families—whoever needs it—so that we can make sure that we can send a message in this state that domestic violence is not okay not now, not ever.

I cannot remember who it was, but earlier a member of the House in their contribution spoke about how we need to change culture and it is a psyche change. One of the things that we are seeing as a result of increased news reports on this very significant issue and members of parliament continuing to share their own very harrowing and personal experiences is that we can start to change the culture and we can start to change the psyche in our communities so that people feel more comfortable coming forward and admitting that they need assistance and that they need help but also so that we can ensure that the responses that we have, both in the community but importantly also within the Queensland Police Service and within the justice system, are the most appropriate ones. That is something in particular that the member for Mudgeeraba has been very focused on—that is, making sure that all of the services work together but, importantly, that at every step of the way victims and survivors are aware of what is happening and what the process is so that everyone is well informed.

All members on the Gold Coast have been working not only with the community services that we have but also with the Queensland Police Service to ensure that we have the right response for our community on the Gold Coast. As we are aware from media reports, the Gold Coast unfortunately is a location where there is much domestic and family violence and the president of the Law Society, who hails from the Gold Coast, highlighted that in his contribution to the committee's inquiry. To that end I want to acknowledge the statement of reservation that has been put in by LNP members on the health committee who took the opportunity to acknowledge the work that is being done in the Southport specialist court. Unfortunately, as those of us who represent seats on the Gold Coast are all too aware, Southport is a very busy domestic and family violence court. It is a busy court generally, and to that end I say to the Attorney-General on behalf of the legal profession on the Gold Coast that it would be much appreciated if Judge Wall could be replaced sooner rather than later. I am sure that they would appreciate an appointment sooner rather than later, but those of us on the Gold Coast need to make sure that we all work together to ensure that we change the psyche. I know that the steps that we are taking in this House not only today but also will do and have done are an important part of that process. I want to particularly acknowledge on the Gold Coast those who give so much of their time to support survivors of domestic and family violence so that together we can help make our community a safer and better place so that no-one ever needs to feel the scourge of domestic and family violence.