




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2017

**TRANSPORT OPERATIONS (ROAD USE MANAGEMENT) (OFFENSIVE
ADVERTISING) 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) (5.07 pm): I rise to add my support to this bill. As the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, I condemn any business that continues to promote a culture of misogyny and disrespect of women. I take this opportunity to thank the Wicked Pickets group, led by Anna McCormack, for their tireless efforts in campaigning against a company profiting from anti-women slogans.

Time and time again, Wicked Campers has failed to act in response to numerous complaints from the public and decisions by the Advertising Standards Bureau. Wicked Campers has been given numerous chances across the country to comply with public standards and remove offensive slogans from their vehicles. They have not complied. They have ignored the views of the community and responded by mocking those who were offended by their vans. Now the time for chances is over. Queensland is sick of this business, which views the offence, outrage and damage it is causing as free publicity. Wicked Campers finds humour in violence against women.

That culture of misogyny and disrespect of women ends now. Let us be clear about what is the cause of the offence: the slogans painted on the vans have attempted to find humour somehow in xenophobia, racism, homophobia and child sexual abuse. That is just the beginning. There are slogans suggesting kidnapping women, gaffer taping women's mouths shut, promoting sexual violence against women and general violence against women. These are slogans that devalue women and girls—slogans that trivialise rape. These slogans condone attitudes and fuel behaviour that the Palaszczuk government is committed to seeing the end of.

We know that here in Queensland over 200 calls a day are made to the Queensland Police reporting domestic violence and we know that so much more goes unreported. We know tragically that two women are killed every week in Australia as a result of domestic and family violence. We know that one in three women will experience violence or sexual violence in their lifetime.

Domestic violence and other forms of violence against women, such as sexual assault, happen in the context of cultural attitudes towards women. These cultural attitudes, perpetuated by companies such as Wicked Campers, do not place value in women. By allowing Wicked Campers to continue to have these slogans on their vans we are letting these cultural attitudes continue to run unchecked in our state. We are allowing, knowing full well that it is damaging, imagery and commentary that endorses violence against women to be viewed freely by our young people. This is to the detriment and harm of us all.

Our young people witness these offensive slogans on cars and it becomes engrained in their psyche. Compelling research conducted recently by Our Watch, which I have previously spoken of in this House, shows concerning results about young people's attitudes towards women. As the Deputy

Premier mentioned in her speech, more than a quarter of young people believe that male verbal harassment and pressure for sex towards females are normal practices—more than quarter. They believe it is normal because it is the society in which they have grown up.

It is in this way that businesses like Wicked Campers normalise this cultural by making verbal harassment and pressuring women for sex a subject of humour. Children, especially young boys, forming their opinions on gender do not need to be exposed to these slogans and images. It is our responsibility to make sure that they are not.

Government has a vital role to play here. It has to be a priority for each and every one of us to challenge the culture that allows this violence to continue and to stop violence before it starts by changing the attitudes and behaviours that underpin the cycle of violence. The onus is on all of us to call out harmful or sexist comments amongst our peers, be it at the pub, in the workplace, in our schools, in our streets, in our neighbourhoods, in our living rooms. It is up to us to step up to companies like Wicked Campers when they perpetuate this harm. We have taken many steps forward and it is a step back to allow Wicked Campers, adorned with offensive and damaging slogans, to stay on the roads. That is why I support this bill.