Speech By

Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

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VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; BAIL (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (7.40 pm): I move—

That the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

On 1 December 2016 I introduced the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill into this House. The bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for consideration and report by Monday, 27 February 2017. The committee tabled its report on 27 February and recommended that the bill be passed. I would like to thank the committee for its timely and detailed consideration of the bill. I would also like to thank those individuals and organisations who provided submissions and also those who gave evidence before the committee.

Tonight we will be debating two bills: the victims of crime assistance bill and the private member's bill. I want to acknowledge those in the gallery, particularly family members, for whom I know this is a difficult time. It will be difficult to listen to the details in this debate, but I hope that this debate can be carried out in a civil and bipartisan way and that those in the gallery understand that we are all here for the same outcome, which is to see an end to domestic and family violence in this state.

The bill before the House has three main objectives: (1) introduce a sexual assault counselling privilege in Queensland; (2) give victims of a sexual offence automatic status as a special witness when they are to give evidence in a criminal proceeding against the accused; and (3) make amendments to the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 that will implement the 15 recommendations of the act's statutory review, streamline processes and improve operational efficiency, and extend the victims of crime financial assistance scheme to all victims of domestic and family violence.

Sexual violence is the second most prevalent form of violence against women after domestic and family violence. This is a sad indictment on our society. Currently in Queensland, communication between a victim of sexual assault and a counsellor can be disclosed in court without the consent of the victim. These communications can then be used to discredit and retraumatise the victim. Stakeholders who appeared before the committee highlighted the serious and detrimental effect this can have on victims.

While models vary, all other states and territories have introduced statutory protections to restrict the disclosure of sexual assault counselling communications in legal proceedings. In line with recommendation 130 of *Not now, not ever: putting an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland*, the report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, the provisions in the bill before the House establish a sexual assault counselling privilege based on the New South Wales model. This model aims to strike a balance between the right to a fair trial for an accused person and the public interest in preserving the confidentiality of counselling communications between a victim of sexual assault and a counsellor and minimising harms to victims.

As noted at page 317 of the *Not now, not ever* report, the existence of a sexual assault counselling privilege may encourage victims of sexual assault to seek counselling by only allowing access to or disclosure of protected confidences in certain legal proceedings with court approval. This important reform is long overdue. The privilege recognises that a person's private psychological and physical boundaries are invaded during a sexual assault and acknowledges that counselling services play an integral role in providing support and assisting people to recover.

In a committal and bail proceeding an absolute privilege will apply, and a party will not be able to access the victim's counselling records. In other criminal proceedings and proceedings for a domestic violence order under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, a qualified privilege will apply. This means that in these proceedings a person will need to apply to the court and show why they should be able to get access to the counselling records. In general, for leave to be granted the court must be satisfied that the material will have substantial probative value and that no other evidence concerning the matters to which the communication relates is available, and the court will consider the harm the victim is likely to suffer if access is granted.

I would like to now address some of the key concerns raised by stakeholders before the committee about the sexual assault counselling privilege amendments. The definition of protected counselling communication does not extend to communications made by or to a health practitioner in the course of the physical examination as the examination takes place in a clinical and non-therapeutic context. Importantly, however, this exception is limited to a communication made to or by a health practitioner about a physical examination in the course of an investigation into the alleged offence. Outside of this very limited scope, there would be instances where there is communication between the victim and the health practitioner that amounts to a privileged communication.

A concern was also raised, during both the consultation undertaken on the bill and through the committee process, about the application of the privilege in domestic violence proceedings, where it is more common for both parties to be unrepresented, which may mean that a perpetrator can directly inspect counselling communications. The amendments provide protection to unrepresented victims by specifically requiring that where the court considers that a person may have a ground to object to the release of a counselling communication the court must satisfy itself the person is aware of the relevant provisions and has had the opportunity to seek legal advice. Also, importantly, the sexual assault counselling privilege legal service, being established alongside the legislative amendments, will allow victims and counsellors access to independent legal assistance should they wish to claim the privilege. Provision will also be made for legal representation to the accused seeking disclosure of the sexual assault counselling material, acknowledging that there may be growth in requests for legal support. This assistance will not be limited to criminal proceedings.

When the privilege has been found to apply in a criminal proceeding or a proceeding under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, the privilege will continue to apply to that evidence in any civil proceeding on the same fact, for example, in civil proceedings against the offender for sexual harassment. This approach ensures consistency in how courts deal with protected counselling communications and it maintains the integrity of the privilege.

Other concerns were raised before the committee about the risk of inadvertent disclosure of communications otherwise subject to the sexual assault counselling privilege and the absence of sanctions for noncompliance. The provisions explicitly prohibit a person from using evidence that is a protected counselling communication in the legal proceeding. Accordingly, no criminal sanction is necessary. A range of supporting processes and procedures for the privilege are also being developed by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to ensure compliance with the privilege. This includes examination of the wording and the material that is attached to subpoenas.

Further, drawing on the experience in New South Wales, the dedicated sexual assault counselling privilege legal assistance service will assist to mitigate inadvertent disclosures. The service will develop and disseminate education material about the privilege to assist legal practitioners, key stakeholders including a range of government and non-government organisations that provide counselling services, and the public to ensure general awareness and an understanding of the privilege.

In recognition of the vulnerability of a victim or alleged victim of a sexual offence, the bill also contains amendments to section 21A of the Evidence Act 1977 to provide that those victims who give evidence in a trial against the accused will automatically be recognised as a special witness. The court may then make a range of different types of directions and orders to support a special witness when giving evidence in the criminal proceeding. This amendment will mean that a victim of a sexual assault does not need to initially satisfy the court that they fall under another element of the definition should they wish to give their evidence in a way that differs from the usual practices and procedures. Together with the introduction of the privilege, these important and beneficial reforms will provide increased

support to victims of sexual assault. These amendments help ensure that as much protection and privacy as possible is given to victims and the impact of the justice process on these vulnerable persons is minimised as far as practicable.

I am heartened by the views expressed by the Centre Against Sexual Violence representative in her oral submission to the committee, noting the fact that her ability to advise clients of the bill's introduction has contributed to the healing process of survivors. It is my hope that once enacted the amendment will, to the extent possible, remove obstacles that currently inhibit a victim's therapeutic relationships and recovery process and interfere with their right to give unintimidated evidence. This government is committed to addressing violence in all forms. The amendments in this bill form part of the broader Violence Against Women Prevention Plan. The plan aims to address the great costs that violence against women have on those who experience it, their families, the community and the economy. It is intended to guide positive change in the Queensland community, challenge negative attitudes about women and their experience of violence, and work to strengthen the support and protection women receive.

I will now turn to the provisions of the bill which amend the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009, known as the VOCA Act. As explained in my explanatory speech for the bill, the bill includes a number of amendments that improve how victims of crime are treated in the criminal justice system. Importantly, the bill expands the financial assistance scheme to victims of non-physical domestic and family violence by expanding the definition of 'act of violence' to include domestic violence as defined under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012. This amendment ensures that all victims who have suffered injuries as a result of domestic and family violence, not just personal violence, are able to access financial assistance, including those who have suffered non-physical violence—for example, victims of elder abuse. This amendment implements recommendation 95 of the *Not now, not ever* report.

The bill enhances the rights and treatment of victims of domestic and family violence. Under current sections 15 to 15B of the VOCA Act, only victims of personal offences can give a victim impact statement to a court during a sentencing proceeding for a convicted offender. The bill expands the operation of the victim impact statement provisions to allow victims of any criminal offence involving domestic and family violence to give a victim impact statement to the court hearing the sentencing proceeding. This will ensure that all victims of domestic and family violence have the opportunity to inform the sentencing court of the harm that the convicted offender's conduct has had on them. Giving a victim impact statement is not mandatory and if the victim chooses not to give one this does not give rise to an inference that the offence caused little or no harm.

The bill inserts a charter of victims' rights into the VOCA Act which replaces the current fundamental principles of justice. The charter is written in a simple, easy to understand language and will importantly require relevant agencies to proactively provide information to a victim without the victim having to ask for the information, when it is appropriate and practicable to do so. Included in the charter is the responsibility for agencies such as the Queensland Police Service and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to proactively provide information or victims with details about each major decision about the prosecution of the person accused of the crime. It is important to note that the charter provides that a victim will be informed about the outcome of a bail application made by the accused and any arrangements made for the release of the accused, including any special bail conditions that may affect the victim's safety or welfare, and I will be moving amendments in consideration in detail that further clarify that, as part of those major decisions about prosecution, the victims will be notified of an application for bail.

The bill extends the charter to apply to non-government entities funded by Commonwealth, state or territory governments to provide services to victims of crime to ensure victims receive consistent treatment across services. The bill also amends the VOCA Act to allow the Victim Services Coordinator to be more involved in the complaints process and help victims resolve complaints if the victim is dissatisfied with the response from an agency. The bill also simplifies the amounts of assistance that can be granted and also increases some maximum amounts of assistance. For example, the bill replaces the current maximum amount of $6,000 payable for funeral assistance with a new maximum amount of $8,000. The applicant must show evidence—for example, receipts or a quote—to receive the assistance.

The bill simplifies the special assistance payments payable under the act. Special assistance payments are one-off, lump sum payments made to a primary victim to recognise the impact of the harm caused by an act of violence. As the Centre Against Sexual Violence noted in its submissions to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, special assistance payments of themselves may be insufficient to help victims of serious and violent sexual offences such as rape recover from an act of violence. The amounts of special assistance form part of the $75,000 maximum amount of assistance for each primary victim, meaning each victim can, in addition to the $10,000 special assistance

payment, seek up to an additional $65,000 in financial assistance for services to help them recover from the act of violence. Amendments through the bill remove pools of assistance for secondary and related victims, easing the complexity of the application process and ensuring that each secondary and related victim's application is considered on its own merits rather than being considered as part of a pool. These amendments also ensure that victims who do not immediately make an application for assistance—for example, a child—can still obtain assistance at a later date without fear that the pool will be exhausted at the time their application for financial assistance is made.

The bill also amends the VOCA Act to provide that the state may only recover a grant of assistance from an offender if action to recover the assistance is started within six years after the day the offender was convicted of the relevant offence or the day the application for the grant of financial assistance was made, whichever is later. The decision to pursue an offender to repay financial assistance to the state is discretionary for Victim Assist Queensland. If a victim has a concern about their security, Victim Assist Queensland is able to assist the victim through a grant of assistance to improve the victim's security. For example, Victim Assist Queensland has assisted victims to relocate to states where they have family to provide support, improve victim's home security and assisted victims to change their name.

A number of provisions contained in the bill will help to improve decision making by providing greater flexibility for government assessors to defer deciding an application for assistance in certain circumstances, clarifying the relationship between other schemes for financial assistance or compensation and the victim's financial assistance scheme, and enhancing access to relevant information. The bill makes a number of amendments to the VOCA Act to improve operational efficiency and to give victims relief from procedural requirements in the act. The bill removes the requirement that an application for financial assistance be verified by statutory declaration and that the victim provide a medical certificate with their application for assistance, easing the burden on victims when first applying for assistance. The bill also amends the act to allow the scheme manager to extend the time for a person to make an application for funeral expense assistance if it is appropriate and desirable to do so, having regard to clear criteria. This amendment relaxes the three-year time limit to apply for assistance for people who, for example, can demonstrate they have impaired capacity or who have suffered psychological effects as a result of the act of violence committed against their deceased loved one.

I again thank the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for its consideration of the bill and acknowledge the very valuable contribution of all those who have made submissions on the bill and assisted the committee during its deliberations. The victims of crime bill represents this government's commitment to ensuring victims of violent crime are treated with dignity, respect and fairness during the criminal justice process.

I want to take the opportunity now to speak on the Bail (Domestic Violence) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2017, which was introduced on 14 February 2017 by the Leader of the Opposition. The private member's bill was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for consideration and the committee tabled its report on 17 March. The chair's foreword to the report confirms that, although it was clearly apparent that all committee members and those who lodged submissions or appeared before the committee want to stop domestic and family violence, the committee was unable to reach a majority decision to recommend that the bill be passed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those individuals and organisations who provided submissions and also those who gave evidence before the committee. In particular, I acknowledge the contribution made by the family members of domestic homicide victims who spoke in their personal capacity about their heart-wrenching experiences.

The statistics on domestic and family violence deaths are shocking and indisputable. The Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Unit reports that, during the period from 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2016, in Queensland, 248 women, men and children were killed by a family member, or by a person with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate partner relationship. The private member's bill proposes amendments to the Bail Act 1980 and the Corrective Services Act 2006 regarding perpetrators of domestic and family violence. Although the *Not now, not ever* report by the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland did not recommend changes to the bail arrangements, the Palaszczuk government has committed to considering improvements to the bail arrangements in Queensland. However, close consultation with those people at the front line and careful consideration is required to ensure that we have the right solution that will achieve the best outcomes.

In September 2014, the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland was established to comprehensively examine Queensland's domestic and family violence support systems and make recommendations on how the system could be improved and future incidents of domestic violence could be prevented. The task force conducted extensive statewide community engagement and consultation. This government has accepted all of the recommendations of the task force and made

significant progress towards implementing them—actions that have already seen a significant change in the attitudes of our community and awareness around this scourge on our society. Previously, I mentioned that I have noticed in my own community that at just about every event or forum for any age group it is an issue that is first and foremost in people's minds and it is being openly discussed. I am now having victims of domestic and family violence openly coming up to me and admitting for the first time that they are a victim and wanting support. The fact that they now feel that they can come forward and seek support from the police and seek support from the justice system means that we have come a long way, but we have a long way to go.

The Palaszczuk government remains committed to leading a program of reform to end domestic and family violence in Queensland. Achieving our vision is a long-term endeavour requiring focused and sustained commitment from the whole community. Any deviation from the recommendations made by the task force requires very careful consideration and consultation. Based on the submissions lodged and evidence provided in the hearings before the committee, the government members of the committee were of the view that the bill requires more consultation and significant amendment.

Although the bill is supported in principle, the government members of the committee noted the potential for unintended consequences. It was also noted that the bill has considerable overlap with some of the provisions of the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which the committee has recommended be passed.

To this end, on 8 March 2017 I convened a roundtable consultation meeting to discuss proposals regarding bail issues. This round table was attended by various legal, community and government stakeholders. This government is committed to addressing this scourge on our society. We are all committed to addressing this scourge on our society. That is why we have taken a bipartisan approach to this issue and seek to work with all sides and levels of government to do what we can to stop domestic and family violence.

Although we support the fundamental policy underpinning the private member's bill to improve community safety for victims of domestic violence and hold perpetrators to account, it is clear from the consultation on the bill that, in its current form, there are areas that are not workable in practice or may have unintended consequences. For that reason, we will be wanting to strengthen the bail laws to make our community safer by moving a number of amendments during consideration in detail of the cognate debate to deliver strong, workable laws for Queensland.

These amendments aim to give effect to much of the policy behind the private member's bill while recognising and better dealing with a number of the fundamental concerns with the approach taken. The government will move amendments to the Bail Act to explicitly require consideration of the risk of further domestic violence by the defendant whenever bail is considered for a domestic violence offence or for a breach of a domestic violence order. This will ensure better consideration of the key risk factors in each case from the outset and will allow for increased reliance by bail-granting authorities on evidence based risk assessments and other relevant information. This is a cornerstone change and will best support achieving the policy objectives of the private member's bill. It is something that came across very strongly with the stakeholders with whom I met.

The government supports reversing the presumption in favour of bail in the following circumstances: firstly, for defendants charged with a domestic violence offence where the substantive offence is punishable by seven or more years imprisonment, which will include, for example, the offence of strangulation in a domestic setting and other offences of violence such as grievous bodily harm. It will also apply where the substantive offence is one of a prescribed list of offences punishable by a maximum penalty of less than seven years imprisonment, but is offending of a type often associated with domestic violence behaviour—for example, threatening violence, the dangerous operation of a vehicle, stalking, deprivation of liberty and injuring animals—and, secondly, where defendants are charged with an offence of contravening a domestic violence order and one of the following scenarios applies: the contravention itself involved the use or threatened use of violence to person or property; or the defendant has previously been convicted of an offence of violence, whether against the victim or another person within the last five years; or the defendant has previously been convicted of any offence of contravention of a domestic violence order, whether the same order, or a different order, and irrespective of whether the order related to the same victim within the prescribed period of two years.

Although these amendments target a different category of offending than that covered by the private member's bill, by targeting this particular cohort of defendants, and in particular those persons charged with breaches of domestic violence orders, it better delivers the underlying policy objective. This approach is also aligned with that applying in a number of other Australian jurisdictions.

The government does not support the stay of release provision in the private member's bill on the basis of both legal principle and practical outcomes. The private member's bill fails to achieve its intended policy objective because it does not provide an immediate trigger for the automatic stay of

release, but rather requires an application under existing section 19B of the Bail Act. This is a civil application to the Supreme Court and is not immediate. As such, a defendant would, in practice, be released on bail, pending the making of the application and the reviewing court exercising its power to issue a warrant to apprehend the defendant. The need for the stay proposal also significantly diminishes when the bail-granting authority is provided with key information to help assess the domestic violence risk factors in the first instance, which leads to better informed bail outcomes. In this regard, this is what will be achieved with the proposed government amendments. I note that, under the Bail Act, there is already provision under section 16 for a defendant to be remanded in custody where it has not been practicable to obtain sufficient information to enable a determination as to whether there is a present unacceptable risk.

The government does not support the approach in the private member's bill to provide for GPS tracking as a condition of bail, focused solely on domestic violence offending. The government's response to the task force report recommendation 123 committed to exploring options to monitor high-risk perpetrators of domestic and family violence, taking into account the full range of potential technological solutions, including the use of GPS monitoring, and then trial the most promising model to improve victims' safety. Although such a trial may take place in a bail context, there are significant operational and resourcing issues with the use of electronic monitoring technology that need further and more detailed consideration.

However, the government proposes to take this opportunity to make amendments to the Bail Act to set up an appropriate and effective legislative framework to allow for the future use of tracking devices as a bail condition at the discretion of the court and not limited to domestic violence offending. I want to emphasise this point. Currently, the private member's bill in relation to bail proposes to limit GPS tracking to just domestic violence offending. Our proposed provisions will extend a legislative framework for GPS tracking relating to bail across all offences. The court will have the discretion in a whole number of situations, not limited to domestic and family violence.

It is proposed to commence these reforms on proclamation to allow for necessary planning and operationalisation. The government does not support the amendments in the private member's bill regarding notification of bail information because they have been more appropriately addressed through amendments to the VOCA Act. The Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill contains the government's position on notification of information to victims, namely, that as far as practicable and appropriate a victim in the criminal justice system will be informed about a range of steps during the criminal justice process. We believe that is important because otherwise what we will have is the victims of crime legislation with a charter of victims rights obliging prescribed persons to inform victims of major steps within the justice system in relation to their matters and at the same time we will potentially have conflicting provisions in the Bail Act and the Queensland Corrective Services Act. We believe one set of rights in one piece of legislation that goes beyond just domestic violence victims to victims broadly under the Victims of Crime Assistance Act is a better way and does not treat victims of crime in relation to domestic violence in a more limiting way than the broader charter of rights.

The amendments in the private member's bill are impractical and unworkable in this regard. However, the government does propose to move a clarifying amendment in the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to make it clear that it does apply to applications for bail but will not extend the notification requirements to people unrelated to the offence being heard before the court.

The government does not support the amendments in the private member's bill to extend the eligible persons register. The Queensland Parole System Review conducted by Mr Sofronoff QC directly considered an extension of the eligible persons register, in particular in the terms included in the private member's bill, and did not endorse the proposal. However, the government does intend to take this opportunity to make an amendment to implement recommendation 82 of the parole report which was recommended by Mr Sofronoff QC in the context of his consideration of the eligible persons register as is now proposed under the private member's bill.

The amendment to be moved by the government will make it clear that for the purposes of the eligible persons register, a history of violence will capture domestic violence as it is defined in the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012. Together, the government's proposed amendments will provide a package of reforms that will improve safety outcomes for victims of domestic violence and better hold perpetrators to account. The government's proposed amendments have been informed by the views of a wide range of stakeholders and victims. They are proposed in the spirit of true bipartisanship and genuinely seek to provide the right outcomes. I hope the opposition can do what it sought from the government in its statement attached to the committee's report and support what is clearly in favour of victims, their families and the community generally.

It is important still for all members of this House to remember that legislation is only one small part of a multifaceted response to this complex and dynamic problem. While there is more to be done, the Palaszczuk government remains committed to leading a program of reform to end domestic and family violence in Queensland. Achieving our vision is a long-term endeavour requiring focused and sustained commitment from the whole community. As we know, there is no one quick fix, no matter how hard we try. Significant headway has already been made and in the majority of cases the justice system is responding appropriately. The number of domestic violence order applications lodged in Queensland has increased at a steady rate of about 15 per cent per year since 2011-12 when the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012 commenced. This is a sign that police and courts are acting efficiently and that Queenslanders have confidence in the system.

The Queensland government is also currently trialling integrated service responses for domestic violence in response to the recommendations in the report of the task force. A common risk assessment and management framework, including guidelines regarding the sharing of personal information, will support the integrated service response trials. Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety was engaged to support the development of the framework for use by government and non-government community service agencies. It will articulate a shared understanding, language and common approach to recognising, assessing and responding to domestic and family violence risk and safety action planning.

Further to recommendation 76 of the task force report, the Queensland government has committed funding for the establishment of high-risk teams as part of an integrated approach to domestic and family violence. HRTs provide a forum for appropriate information sharing to ensure risk assessments are comprehensive, inform safety planning and risk management as well as enabling swift and flexible action across agencies in response to need. HRTs are required to mobilise quickly to respond to changing levels of risk and are critical to stop victims from falling through the cracks and to prevent domestic violence related deaths. The first HRT is operational in the Logan-Beenleigh trial site.

Another important initiative is the commitment made in the 2016-17 state budget for an additional just over $10.3 million over four years provided to deliver more perpetrator intervention programs. The new programs will operate as part of an integrated response to domestic and family violence, working closely with other domestic and family violence support services to keep women and children safe. Key recommendations for future attention include the rollout of the specialist domestic violence courts to other high need locations from 2017 to 2020 and enhancing the capability of community justice groups operating in 18 discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop culturally appropriate domestic and family violence responses. Work in these areas will continue to drive important change.

I wish I could stand here and say that no matter what legislation is passed today we can guarantee that there will not be another tragic death. What we are trying to achieve here is the eradication of crime. If it was that simple we would have achieved it already. There is no reason not to do everything possible to achieve that aim. We are all absolutely committed to seeing an end to domestic and family violence. This House will do what it can to put in the legislative parameters to achieve that aim, but it requires a shift in our community and our culture, a shift in the way our children interact with each other, the respect they show to adults, the respect adults show to each other. This needs to go across the whole of society. Are we really going to get to a point, and are we almost there, where we start to accept that the way we treat each other—the disrespect, the contempt, the lack of respect for multicultural and diverse people in our communities, the way we talk to each other through social media, where we think we have some sort of autonomy to be abusive and offensive, which all flow into domestic and family violence—is just how society is now? We need to change the behaviour in our society. We need to say enough is enough, that this is not acceptable behaviour. We all need to call it out. We should all commit to respect. Whether it is in this chamber or the way we engage with our family and friends and other people in the community, we need to call out this behaviour, not turn a blind eye and say there is nothing I can do about it or this is just the way it is now in society. It will only get worse if we do not call it out.

Next time someone thinks that a family member or a friend may be in a bad, dangerous or violent relationship, call it out. Ask questions. Do not just ask the question of the person who you think is the victim—this happens too often: 'Is he hitting you?' Why are we not turning to the male and saying, 'Are you hitting her?' Males need to speak up and talk to other males and call it out. If we think this is just a problem for women to be fixed by women, nothing is ever going to change. I want to acknowledge that although the majority of victims are women we know men are also victims of domestic violence. We know that there is domestic violence in the LGBTI community. We know that there is domestic violence in our multicultural communities and because of their cultures they are even less inclined to speak up. We need to keep working on this. Do not ever let this momentum fade away. We have done so much in just two years but, as I said, we have so far to go.

I commend to the House the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the proposed government amendments to the bill and to the private member's bill to be moved in consideration in detail.