



Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 5 September 2018

MOTION

Domestic and Family Violence, Public Service Leave Provisions

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved tonight by the opposition leader. That probably comes as no surprise. An incredible amount of work has been done in this state to bring domestic and family violence out of the shadows, and we all know that. Talking about this violence, this scourge on our communities, is no longer a taboo subject. We only need to look at the Premier's recent bystander campaign to see how much more willing people are to tackle the issue front on and say 'enough'. Stopping victims of abuse from being beaten, from being strangled and from being killed is surely a cause that members from all walks of political life can get behind. Sadly, we may no longer be able to say that there is bipartisan support in this chamber to fight domestic and family violence in Queensland.

In talking about domestic and family violence issues, the member for Mudgeeraba loves to call it Quentin Bryce's report 'the LNP's *Not now, not ever* report' as if somehow the LNP owns all the answers when it comes to domestic and family violence. Yet we saw in government how it actually treats the issue of domestic and family violence. They cut \$48,000 from the Caboolture Regional Domestic Violence Service. They cut \$38,000 from the Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service. They cut \$33,000 from the Centre Against Sexual Violence and they cut \$40,000 from DVConnect, which is one of the main sources people use to ring in about domestic and family violence.

In Wide Bay, the shadow minister's own region, the LNP cut more than \$8,000 in funding from EDON Place women's shelter and more than \$16,000 from the Yoorana Women's Domestic Violence and Resource Service. At the last election in the dying days of the campaign when they hoped that nobody would notice their costings revealed they planned to slash another \$4½ million from existing domestic and family violence services if they won the election. Shame! This is their record on domestic and family violence in Queensland.

In just the last sitting week the member for Caloundra accused the government of abandoning the bipartisan approach to domestic and family violence because he did not like the tone of the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence. I have listened to her speak quite a few times and I have never been surprised by her tone. He said it with a straight face—it was a straight face—despite the fact that he was present at the minister's estimates hearing where the opposition asked not one question about domestic and family violence. That tells us that they are happy with what we are doing with that service here in Queensland.

The member for Mudgeeraba has spent the last three years sniping at this government about our \$328 million investment to implement the *Not now, not ever* recommendations, and she continues to do that well into this term as well. Now the opposition has started to abandon the findings of the *Not now, not ever* report. While heavily and appropriately focused on victims, the *Not now, not ever* report

also made it clear that we cannot end domestic and family violence without dealing with the behaviour of perpetrators. We cannot just continue to throw them into jail and hope they will get better while they are in there. Page 13 of the report says—

Any integrated service response must include programs to address perpetrator behaviour and hold perpetrators to account.

That is what we are doing with this. They need the help, not the jail system.

Because the LNP think there is a cheap shot to be had over domestic violence leave, that finding is no longer supported by the opposition. They do not support it. Under the LNP's motion today, if a domestic violence perpetrator or potential perpetrator was to approach their manager and ask for leave to attend a perpetrator program so they could change their own behaviour, the government would say to them, 'Tough luck. Go and sort it out yourself.' The opposition want that door—the door which could mean perpetrators getting support to stop their violent behaviours—slammed shut with a sign that says, 'Not on my time, champion.'

The opposition should be ashamed of themselves. If we can do anything to stop domestic and family violence from happening then we should. That includes giving victims of violence every possible support to escape from and recover from that violence. That means investing in specialist domestic violence courts that make sure those victims are protected. That means making strangulation a specific offence, which we have done here in Queensland.