




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Workforce, Women Participation

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.22 pm): In Queensland women have reached historic heights, with some 61.5 per cent female participation in the workforce. This is a first and represents around 1.27 million Queensland women engaged in the Queensland workforce, which is a 1.5 per cent increase in the participation rate.

Women make up 50 per cent of the population and gender equality is quite simply good business. Companies that reported the highest number of women in senior leadership roles financially outperformed those with lower rates of women, with a 35 per cent higher return in equity. Yet, sadly, we women still experience barriers within our economy, with, on average, starting salaries sitting at seven per cent lower than our male counterparts. In the media and telecommunications industry, the gap is 23.3 per cent.

The visibility of women in leadership roles is an extremely important arena of representation. The positive portrayal of women is crucial and vital so that people are aware of diversity and appreciate and celebrate that diversity. The *2015 Women in media report: A study of gender differences in Australia media* found that women make up 48.5 per cent of the broadcasting and 51 per cent of the publishing industries, with female print and broadcast journalists only being named or acknowledged as journalists of 30 per cent of that media coverage. Further, female journalists were more likely to work on stories in areas such as lifestyle reporting or celebrity news and gossip rather than in areas such as politics and sport.

News media and political programming feature men talking to men about men. Women are the focus of only 10 per cent of news stories, comprise just 20 per cent of experts or spokespeople interviewed and only four per cent of news stories are seen as challenging gender roles. What we see on screen affects what happens off screen. Who we see in power influences how we see ourselves.

Politics is portrayed by the media as a man's game. That is what we have seen played out in recent times in the federal LNP. With only 22 out of 107 federal parliamentarians being women and six—yes, just six—women in the Queensland parliament, it is no wonder female LNP members should be put on the endangered list. Perhaps we should put some signs up during sitting weeks: 'Be aware—endangered LNP female MPs about.'

At least five of the federal female LNP elected representatives are talking openly about bullying and harassment. We have heard female Labor MPs referred to as the dregs behind Shorten. Equal representation of women in parliament requires leadership, which is what we in the Labor Party are all about with a female leader and a female deputy leader.

(Time expired)