




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

International Women's Day

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (2.33 pm): As we all know, today is International Women's Day and I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of the women in my life and across my community for the contributions they make each and every day in their homes, workplaces and across our community. Today should be a day of celebration. We have come far. We have women at the highest levels of politics, business, public and community service in this state and across this country.

I am very proud to be a member of a government and political party that lays claim to strong and dynamic female leadership at the very top—Premier, Deputy Premier, Leader of the House and state secretary alike—and it was an absolute atmosphere of celebration last night at the reception hosted by our passionate Minister for Women, Di Farmer, when more than 160 women came together from all walks of life to share friendship and optimism about what women can achieve in this state.

Perhaps it is because of those gains that invariably each year on International Women's Day criticisms are raised about why we still need an International Women's Day. After all, if women have apparently achieved everything, why do we need to keep talking about women's rights? As female leaders we have a responsibility to the next generation of women and girls—just as those did before us—to shine a light on the journey still to be traversed, and we still have a long way to go.

In the 2017 *Global gender gap report* of the World Economic Forum Australia was ranked 35th overall out of 144 countries. Our rank overall has improved in large part because of progress towards gender parity in the country's share of female parliamentarians, particularly in the number who hold ministerial positions—an example of Queensland doing the heavy lifting nationally again.

The same report also identifies that on current estimates it will take 217 years for the global economic gender gap to be closed, mostly because the gap has actually widened. Women globally are far more likely to live in poverty; more likely to face violence, in particular domestic and sexual violence; they are paid less; they are less likely to be on boards, though our government has made real inroads into government boards at least; and they are less likely to be influencers in politics.

I continue to hear statements of women in leadership and work like, 'She was just the weaker candidate', 'She has family responsibilities that will distract', 'She is too aggressive, too shrill, too emotional, too ruthless, too much like a man'. On every measure—every measure—women are just as passionate, just as powerful, just as visionary and they should be credited as such. The embarrassing underrepresentation of women opposite—six out of 39 opposition MPs, which is 15 per cent—is another very embarrassing visual example in 2018 of why we need to keep talking about this. Iraq has 25 per cent, Afghanistan has 28 per cent, we have 50 per cent but the Queensland LNP has just six female representatives.