




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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**CRIMINAL CODE (NON-CONSENSUAL SHARING OF INTIMATE IMAGES)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (5.26 pm): I rise in this House to speak in support of the bill. We have seen and heard the devastating impact of what is often referred to as revenge porn can have on individuals. The statistics indicate that revenge porn is particularly not good for young women. Revenge porn has been used as a vicious tool in the infliction of domestic and family violence.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the domestic and family violence service providers in the Redlands electorate, particularly the Centre Against Sexual Violence and the Red Rose Foundation, which both made submissions to the committee's inquiry into the bill. Those organisations do incredible work in our communities. They are at the coalface. I would particularly like to thank Betty Taylor, a founder of the Red Rose Foundation. Betty states in her submission—

Non Consensual Sharing of Intimate Images by its name clearly implies a relationship or at least an intimate encounter. For this relationship to then lead to the deliberate distribution of intimate images clearly shows not only an absence of all respect but a desire to harm and a need to control.

The Red Rose Foundation commends the State Government on the timely creation of this 'Non Consensual Sharing of Intimate Images' Bill in response to the growing community concern for how people; especially women and girls, can be protected from the harmful and lingering effects of this technologically facilitated act of violence.

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This method of abuse takes the impact of Domestic Violence to another and frightening new level of fear because an image that they may or may not have 'consented' to being taken or not even aware has been taken.

The member for Keppel alluded to that. At the press of a button, it is out there and in the public domain. The submission states further—

Apart from the obvious distress and humiliation the victim would experience they may also find themselves being the targets of unwanted attention or even stalking by viewers who have been misled as to the origin and purpose of the publishing of such images.

We heard the member for Macalister in her contribution recount that very horrendous and real story. This legislation is just another way the Palaszczuk government continues to tackle the scourge of domestic and family violence in Queensland.

Like Minister Grace and her daughter, Ally, I have a teenage niece who has a phone and a social media account. We have spoken at length about how images can be used as a tool to bully, threaten and intimidate. In this digital age, it is important that we put in place the necessary protections. The challenges that we face are continually highlighted. Last year, I hosted an anti-cyberbullying forum with students and teachers from the Redlands electorate. We talked about everything—from being able to be tracked and stalked via social media through to images and that constant need to be vigilant about how we provide protection.

Two weeks ago, I also attended a Soroptimist International forum, hosted by Catherine Heiner, on e-safety with the eSafety Commissioner. That forum reminded me of how easy it is to not have the right mechanisms and controls in place and for the misuse of information to be undertaken easily. These laws are paramount to making sure that we are protecting our community.

Regardless of the intention of the distributor, the impact of the non-consensual distribution of an image can be absolutely devastating. Some of the most damaging consequences have been caused before the image has even been shared. The issue is not just about the action; it is about the threat and the potential to do harm. In some of the cruellest instances, these threats have been used to control and coerce. As the Red Roses Foundation pointed out, victims are disgraced and sadly often blamed for their part in revealing themselves to a trusted party but the offender has rarely been punished, not because society approves of revenge porn but because to date the legislation has not been there and we have not kept up with technology.