




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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ADJOURNMENT

Sexual Violence, Denim Day

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (6.26 pm): I rise this evening wearing my jeans in parliament not because I wanted to get away early from today's proceedings but rather in support of the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence, which is based in my electorate of Southport, and also in support of the victims of sexual assault. The centre does a fantastic job in supporting so many Gold Coast women.

As members would be aware, this month is Sexual Violence Awareness Month. I think it is important that everybody takes a stand against sexual violence in our community, so this evening I am wearing my jeans to support Denim Day, which is a way to use fashion to make a strong stand about sexual violence. Denim Day, which is actually tomorrow, began as a protest in Italy in 1999 when a judge overturned a rape conviction because he felt that, since the victim was wearing very tight jeans, she must have helped the rapist remove them, therefore implying consent. Denim Day has become a symbol of protest against the myth that sexual violence occurs because of clothing. On Tuesday I attended the launch of the Queensland Sexual Assault Network 'What were you wearing?' Exhibition here at the Parliamentary Annexe, and last week I attended the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence candle ceremony. It is always very moving to hear the stories of these incredibly strong women.

I would ask all members to join with me in supporting Denim Day tomorrow by wearing your jeans or your denim jacket—you may want to dust that off; I thought that may be a little too much for the chamber this evening—and also by taking a photo of yourself and uploading it to join the online campaign using the tags #denimday, #startbybelieving, #svam, #metoo or #gccasv, which is the abbreviation for the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence.

I would also like to take the opportunity to acknowledge some of the other local support services in my electorate for the work they do in support of sexual violence and domestic violence victims. I want to particularly mention Di McLeod and the team at the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence. Di was here yesterday for the exhibition and took a very lead role in that. I also want to acknowledge Rosemary O'Malley and the team at the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Protection Centre, which is also located in my electorate of Southport and provides services right across the city.

I also want to mention Victoria Shiel and the team at the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre, who also do a tremendous job in supporting so many vulnerable people in our community. Sexual violence is not acceptable in any circumstance. I am sure all those in the House will stand with me and those victims in supporting the very worthy cause of Denim Day tomorrow.