




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Domestic Violence

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.50 pm): I rise today to talk about a topic that is really dear to my heart and important to every single member in this place I am sure, and that is domestic violence. I first want to acknowledge the amazing work being done in my community, first by our local Mount Ommaney police led by Peta Comadira, who has the best domestic violence clear-up rates in the local region, and another wonderful local volunteer Hayley K who, as part of her work in the local community centre, sets up emergency accommodation for DV victims. Lisa, another Riverhills local, assists DV victims to navigate court and provides emotional support as well as assisting them with their paperwork.

Something that is equally important is the role that each and every member of our communities plays in assisting to stamp out domestic violence. Suzie Q is a well-known local tradie in my community. She moved to Queensland to escape her violent ex-partner and she has bravely given me permission to share part of her story today. Suze was not content just to get away from her perpetrator; she has dedicated herself in her limited spare time to helping others.

At the onset of COVID Suze had a friend who left a relationship that was defined by coercive control, but she continued to be stalked and harassed by her ex-husband. Suze called me for help and I offered my spare room to her friend for a week while she debugged her house, got new phones for herself and her children and got new locks fitted. As I did not know her or her ex-partner at all I figured she would be quite safe with me. Unfortunately, despite following all of the advice we were given by the domestic violence hotlines, he managed to track her to my house and he showed up the next morning. My husband escorted him out of the yard and thankfully he never came back. The fact that he showed up to a stranger's house and tried to walk in uninvited just shows the mentality of some abusers.

The Palaszczuk government has run a bystander campaign encouraging those members of the community who witness the signs of domestic violence or coercive control to speak up and offer support and help in whatever way they safely can to people experiencing domestic violence. Suze did something really amazing in showing that support to her friend. She said to her really clearly, 'I've been here before. I can see that you're in danger', and, to her credit, her friend listened. She took the help that was offered and she got herself out of a dangerous situation.

Thankfully this story has a happy ending. Suze's friend is now studying as well as working and looking after her gorgeous kids, and she wants to follow in Suze's footsteps and help others like her. Suze, I am so proud of you for being an awesome bystander. Her example of offering help and support over a long period of time and being there to help and step in when she was needed is an inspiration to all of us. I am proud to call you friend. Let us all be bystanders like Suze.