



Speech By  
**Ali King**


**MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE**

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## MOTION

### Women

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (3.12 pm): These last weeks have seen an avalanche of women's stories. Brittany Higgins has bravely spoken truth to power. We have heard brutal rape allegations against the Commonwealth Attorney-General and the Prime Minister's pallid response to them. We have heard how federal coalition staffers flaunted their foul disrespect for female MPs in their own party. Today we have heard reports of Senator Eric Abetz's slut-shaming of Brittany Higgins.

Women absolutely deserve to be safe. They deserve to be respected in their homes, in their workplaces and in their community. Women in Pumicestone have shared their stories. I have those stories. My loved ones have those stories. The stories just keep coming. This has been happening forever.

I say to the men of this House today: please stop saying you are shocked. Women are not shocked by these stories. This is our experience. This is our lives. If you must be shocked, be shocked by the Prime Minister's conduct yesterday. He said he cared about women and their safety. He said he was listening to women. Then, like a toddler throwing a tantrum when he did not get a cookie, the Prime Minister weaponised a woman's private confidential workplace matter and threw her under the bus to score a cheap political point and issue a threat against a journalist. It was disgraceful. It was disgusting. Then on 2GB this morning the Prime Minister said, 'Blokes don't get it right all the time.' That sounds a lot like 'boys will be boys' to me—again, disgusting.

The Prime Minister cries crocodile tears but he just does not get it. I say to those opposite: do not say this is above politics. Politics is at the very heart of this. I remind those opposite of some major obstacles to women being safe and respected. Stripping women of their reproductive rights makes us less safe. Winding back industrial protections makes us less safe. Cutting domestic and family violence services makes us less safe. Destroying the Family Court makes us less safe. So much of what the LNP and the federal coalition stand for, the things they do in government, make women and girls less safe.

We have heard the Leader of the Opposition say he wants to see more women elected, but the proof in that particular pudding will be whether the Leader of the Opposition commits to quotas to guarantee women winnable seats. On this side of the House we would love to see more diverse faces on the other side of the chamber. The federal member for McPherson says she wants to talk about quotas but she is worried that LNP men will say that women are not there on merit. I ask now, if those opposite back women: which of you are prepared to stand up and stand aside to give more women a go, to get more women into your caucus and into parliament? Like the Prime Minister, those opposite are talking big for women, but will they back it up with support for quotas and with policies that support women?

*(Time expired)*