




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

MOTION

Women

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.34 pm): Quite simply, anyone who believes that a voice is less important based on gender is on a one-way track to mediocrity. Anyone who believes that they or their gender hold all the answers is on a one-way track to failure. Some would say that it is patronising for a male to speak on behalf of women fighting for equality, so I will speak as a father and a husband. My message to other men is a simple one and it is that every male needs to look upon their actions and words towards women as if those actions or words were being spoken to or done to their sister, their daughter, their wife or their mother. We as males must apply the same test to the actions of other men.

Undoubtedly 15 March 2021 will go down in history. For any person—man, woman or child—to have not been aware of the March 4 Justice is almost impossible. I want to add my voice to the message that enough is enough. What we saw on that day was confirmation that discrimination based on gender is something that we as a community must assign to the pages of history alongside other forms of discrimination. I cannot speak on behalf of the participants. I cannot say that I fully understand the effects felt by women who are discriminated against because I am a male, but what I will say is that the vast majority of men fully support equality, that the vast majority of men stand against violence against women in any of its forms and that the vast majority of men utterly condemn inappropriate treatment of women whether that be of a sexual or any other nature.

Discrimination or inequality in any of its forms is quite simply a failure to achieve our full potential as a group, as a community, as a state and as a nation. While we must actively speak against and oppose discrimination and inequality, we must always acknowledge the benefits of inclusion. We have an obligation to ensure that all women are treated equally, that they are able to reach their full potential; the same goal that we have for our wives, our daughters, our sisters and our mothers. We do not need to guide or lift women to reach their potential, but we do need to ensure the way is clear for them to do exactly that. The reason for doing it is simply that it is the right thing to do.

As a state, as a nation, as a community and as men we have work to do and it is work that must be done for the benefit of every man, woman and child in this country. For me there is a very simple message here and that is respect: respect for women, for who they are, what they can achieve and what they contribute. When you look at this chamber and the contribution that the female members make to this parliament, you truly understand how valuable that is.