




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

MOTION

Women

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.24 pm): I would like to start by thanking my colleagues right across the chamber for sharing their stories over the last week. I was moved to tears at the rally I attended along with many members of this House from right across the political divide. As I held my baby girl in my arms thousands of people sang together, 'I am woman, hear me roar.' I thank Brittany, Grace, Kate, Saxon and the women who paved the way for this movement with their stories. They have made such a difference. I knew that, standing at that rally with members of this House and the community at large, things are finally fundamentally changing and men are beginning to comprehend the magnitude of what it means to walk through this world—or even just down the street—as a woman.

I spoke to some of the men in my life, particularly my dad, a fair bit over the last few weeks. I hate to say it, member for Pumicestone, but he was truly shocked by the scale of this issue. I know that a lot of men have started asking their female friends and partners if they have experienced this kind of thing, and they have been shocked by the answer because they never asked the question before. When I spoke to my dad on Saturday last week he sounded almost despondent as he realised that almost every woman he knows has a story.

I know that men like to have a job to do. It is the best way they know how to help, so here it is. If you can do one thing—just one thing—to stop this disgraceful behaviour, if you want to show solidarity with women and what they have been through, you can do one simple thing as a starting point. When you hear misogynist comments, when you read them on a Facebook page, when you hear blokes slut-shaming a woman, say clearly, publicly and without equivocation, 'Hey, that's not okay.' I know it is a hard thing to do. It is a small thing, but it is a hard thing. It is embarrassing, but this behaviour starts early and we need to stamp it out. We cannot do that without strong male allies and we need you to step up. There is no acceptable level of misogyny. There are things you can do as men; there are actions you can take. It does not start and stop with not sexually harassing or assaulting women. That is the bare minimum.

As leader of this country Scott Morrison has failed this test. Only now is he even entertaining the idea of quotas. Quotas work; we can see that on this side of the House. In my first term in parliament an elected male member of the LNP told me that I am only here because of a quota in this House. Every single member of this House is elected by their community through grit and hard work. Many of us do it while balancing family responsibilities—especially, but not exclusively, women. We earned our place here just as you did. That is a great place to start: acknowledge that women have earned the right to be here.

I will finish with a word to the trolls who like to target women in positions of leadership and who I am sure will be all over the comments page of the media coverage of this motion: we are coming for you first. Your days hiding under rocks are numbered, and I know that Queenslanders will call you out when they see your disgusting comments online and when they hear them from your mouths.