




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Share the Dignity

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.27 pm): We have just come to the end of August, which is Share the Dignity month, and I know that many members that I have spoken to this week across the House are in fact collection points for Share the Dignity. There are a few collectors for Share the Dignity in the House tonight, so that is fantastic.

A government member: Good cause.

Ms PUGH: It is a good cause, and I am sure we can all agree on that. Obviously it is something that is a little bit embarrassing to talk about, but I have been collecting for it for the last eight months and I was still a little bit embarrassed to get up and talk about it tonight. However, that was before I had heard of two amazing 4074 locals—Kim and Olivia Hamson. Not only do they promote Share the Dignity on Facebook; they went on the nationally televised show *The Project* to talk about period poverty and the personal impact that period poverty has had on their lives. That was absolutely sensational and that gave me the kick in the pants that I needed to get up here tonight and talk about the impact that periods and period poverty can have on women in our community.

I know that period poverty is an issue that my electorate cares about. Last year on the 4074 Facebook page, which is incredibly popular and run by the 'Lisas squared', as we call them, there were 1,300 votes cast on the issue of providing free menstrual products to school students, specifically ones who could not afford them. Of the 1,300 votes cast, just 21 people voted against providing products. I do not know what that breaks down to statistically, but it is fair to say that there is overwhelming support in my electorate for ending period poverty.

We have just come into September which is when we are banning that first round of plastics and we know that, increasingly, menstrual products are a really big offender in this space, but the great news is that there are alternatives on the market. I put this call out: because I am a year-round collection point for Share the Dignity, I would love for people to consider, as I have, donating more renewable options. We have things like period undies, which are increasingly affordable and really effective. There is the DivaCup, which is also incredibly effective. The great thing about these is that if you are donating them to a woman in need who is suffering from period poverty they are not a one-use and throwaway item; they can use that item month after month, year after year. That is a game changer—that is, when we are talking about ending period poverty, that is going to provide something that is going to give them months and years of continued use. As I said, they are incredibly and increasingly affordable. Periods and period poverty are a fact of life. We are never going to move the needle on talking about this issue if we are not willing to talk about it in society and in parliament. Thanks to Kim and Olivia for being fearless and setting that example.