



Speech By  
**Joan Pease**


**MEMBER FOR LYTTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

**MOTION**

**Women**

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (3.30 pm): I rise to support this motion. I too acknowledge those who have shared the incidents that occurred to them and I was proud to join the March 4 Justice last week.

I started working as an office junior in 1976. That was 44 years ago. The senior partner was notorious for smacking the female staff on the bottom, particularly in front of clients—it was sport to him—including me, a naive 16-year-old, more used to running around the local farms, just a little girl really. I am my mother's daughter though and, following her advice and in front of clients, after another sharp smack on the bottom I reminded this senior partner that I was only three years older than his daughter and whether he would like someone doing that to her. He never smacked me again.

Fast-forward to current and calling out, ignoring, avoiding or simply accepting the many, many, many more and varied examples of this disgraceful and unacceptable behaviour. I received a phone call from my daughter, who called me in tears from remote Northern Territory to tell me of the shocking harassment, including sexual, that she had been subjected to at the hands of her supervisor. You can only imagine my heartache and my dismay. When she attempted to report this behaviour, she was asked to carefully reconsider as this man would likely lose his job because he had another complaint against him. She chose that path. However, the harassment continued. I flew to Alice Springs to support my daughter and she reported the behaviour. The officer in question resigned and no further action was taken. So 40 years on and nothing has changed. Harassment in the workplace still continues.

To my daughter and to the other women who have experienced this harassment, I believe you and I support you. My darling, I am so sorry—sorry that change has been so slow, sorry that this behaviour still happens and sorry that I could not stop this happening to you. I am frustrated and I am angry and I am disappointed. But now it is time. It is time for each and every one of us to stand up for what we know is the right thing to do. It is time to call out bad behaviour when we see it. It is time to not talk over the top of each other. It is time to listen—yes, really listen—when women are talking. And it is time to respect all women. I call for respect and I condemn harassment and violence against women.