



Speech By  
**Joseph Kelly**


**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

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**MOTION**

**Women**

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.35 pm): It was a privilege to walk with members of our community at the March 4 Justice. It was uplifting to see the Premier and other members of this chamber there as well. I was greatly moved by the average women and men who have had enough and came together to raise their voices—people who, like me, are sick of hearing stories of harassment and having to offer comfort to family, friends, colleagues and strangers about sexual harassment, abuse and violence.

The society that I grew up in and I started my working life in was openly sexist, homophobic and racist. These values did not reside in my family and were actively discouraged by my parents, but these attitudes perfused our society in an active and at times casual way. I would like to say I stood outside that society and called it out but, like most people, I was part of it without ever having the sense that our world was deeply flawed and that the little things that at best we tolerated and at worst we actually supported led to much bigger and worse things.

As I look back I see the deep paradox of being inspired by people like Rosa Parks and Nelson Mandela standing up for fairness in their communities without ever realising the little things and the big things that needed changing in our society. Fortunately, for me that change started and the values instilled in me by my parents made it easier to move in that direction, and I hope it is a direction I continue to move in. The Australian trade union movement started to educate people like me about discrimination, particularly the women in the movement, and that made us realise that things had to change.

I thought our society had changed a lot but clearly it has not. I am good friends with the federal member for Griffith, Terri Butler, and her husband. These are people I have been friends with for over two decades. They, together with their children, were recently subjected to the most vile attacks via email. If you want to see how far society has to go, let us just look at a couple of the comments that accompanied the story from the *Courier-Mail*, and the *Courier-Mail* did an excellent job of covering this story. 'Yajustgottalaugh' said she 'must've upset someone'. What? Upset them enough to physically threaten them and their children? 'Keeping the Whigs Honest' said, 'I agree that direct threats etc should be dealt with—but disagreeing with a politician is a national pastime'. I would like to thank Ann who responded by saying that 'Threats of violence is not a national pastime'.

My favourite is 'Michael F', who said, 'Get on board with bandwagon Butler'. Which bandwagon would that be? Would that be the bandwagon that the Premier, the Police Commissioner and the member for Nanango are on? Would that be the one that countless women around the country marching for justice are on? Would that be the one that countless women around the country marching for justice are on? Would that be the one that is full of people saying it is really not okay to send vile, disgusting emails attacking a woman simply because she is in public life and stands up for what she believes in? Would that be the one with countless women and men on board who say they have had enough of the daily mistreatment, the small indignities that women have to suffer, the belittlement, the harassment, the assault, the rape and the murder? Well, I am glad to be on that bandwagon with Terri Butler if she will have me.