




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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MOTION

Women

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (2.44 pm): There is a movement for change and that change is much needed. I commend all the women from right across the nation and around the world who are seeking that change. They are seeking change for a better life—a life that should not have to be asked for, but a life that is warranted. While we should not be here today speaking on such a motion because these things should be granted, I am proud to speak on the motion moved by our Premier.

In 2008, upon entering the Commonwealth Senate as a Queensland senator, I did not hesitate when I was asked to become a white ribbon ambassador. I wear that badge with honour and pride. There are people in our society I do not refer to as 'men' but as 'males' because real men do not commit violence against women. Real men stand up and support women. Real men speak out against the perpetrators of violence and they speak up for the change that we need in our society.

One of the most enjoyable times in my life before entering politics was when I was a union official representing workers in many different workplaces. Unfortunately, many of the workers I represented were women who were violated, generally by supervisors, in their workplaces. I will never forget one particular workplace in Toowoomba. It was a small ice-cream manufacturing plant that is no longer around. A supervisor would call on women to climb ladders so that he could perv at their underwear while they changed machinery. He demeaned them and their involvement in that workplace.

That is why I believe that in our society all good men—separating them from 'males'—need to ensure that women have the voice that they rightly deserve and that all women are treated with respect. The member for Moggill picked up on an important point that I also want to raise, which is that we all come from women. We all have mothers. For the life of me I cannot understand why a male would commit violence against a woman and I never will. However, I will make sure that my voice is loud in support of women not only in this place and other workplaces but also in society as a whole. I will do that until I have no breath left in my body.