




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2021

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (2.09 pm): I am pleased to be a part of a Palaszczuk government that today announced \$30 million for sexual, domestic and family violence services. I know this will be welcome news to many services in my community.

I have recently had the opportunity to attend a number of Speak Out events, as I know Deputy Speaker Bush has, in Brisbane, Far North Queensland and Central Queensland to talk to young people about the issues that are important to them. What stood out was their passion for speaking out about consent and their experiences, and the continued reports of sexual assault. That is borne out in the figures as well.

We heard just this morning that in January and March, when compared to the same period last year, one organisation reported a 98 per cent increase in the number of young women receiving specialist sexual assault counselling. We know how important it is that young people have a voice in the political process to advocate for these important issues.

It appears that those opposite do not share those same views. I refer to a recent retweet from the former LNP premier and the new member of the LNP executive, Campbell Newman. The tweet said that young people under the age of 30 should not be involved in politics at all. That is it—banned. I table that particular retweet.

Tabled paper. Extract, dated 30 March 2021, from the Twitter account of Mr Campbell Newman, in relation to employment of ministerial and parliamentary staff [639](#).

Shockingly, the tweets featured an image of Brittany Higgins, a 26-year-old former staffer on the Gold Coast who spoke out bravely about what happened to her in Canberra. Her efforts have driven a movement for women around the country to say enough is enough. What does this retweet say about the attitude of the LNP? Does the LNP think that the solution to the problem of sexual harassment is removing young women from politics—that I should not be in politics, that even the member for Bonney should not be in politics?

I was a staffer in federal politics at around the same age as Brittany Higgins when she was working in Canberra. I have young women who have worked in my office. We all know the member for Burleigh has young women—he has talked about how the pendulum has apparently swung too far the other way.

Mr HART: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the words of the member personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member for Gaven, the member for Burleigh has taken offence. Will you withdraw?

Ms SCANLON: I withdraw. The Leader of the Opposition said the LNP must create the environment within its party that provides women with the same opportunity to succeed. Now they have promoted a bloke who thinks kicking out young women is easier than dealing with the rotten culture within their own party. Does the Leader of the Opposition—a cabinet member of the Newman government who cut \$125,000 from the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Service and \$34,000 from the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence—back those comments?

Campbell Newman is now the newest member of the LNP executive. While those opposite might think silencing young people is the way to get rid of a culture of alleged rape and sexual assault, I do not and I certainly know my colleagues do not. We will continue to support young people, listen to their voice and we will not shut them out of politics.