




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

MOTION

Women

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (3.18 pm): I rise to support today's motion and with it the thousands of Queenslanders who participated in the March 4 Justice. Not only in Brisbane did they demand change but also right across Queensland. In fact, in my electorate of Townsville the message was as clear as a bell. More than 120 of our cities' residents marched and called upon our federal member with a list of recommendations and a petition calling for change.

I stand with them in calling for change. I stand with the courageous women who have shared their stories of sexual assault, violence and harassment. They are united by personal experiences that none wanted and in seeking justice and action. I stand in solidarity with them. It is on all women and men—all women and men—to stand together to effect cultural and generational change. We all need to stand up and say that we will not allow this behaviour to happen—not on our watch. It is time for justice, accountability and equality. I do this as a husband; I do it as a father; I do it as a son; but I also do it as a brother and an uncle. We all need to stand together.

As North Queensland Women's Legal Service solicitor Danielle O'Connor said, 'The harmful attitudes and behaviours towards women, they must stop, they cannot continue any longer.' I stand here today amongst my colleagues as we condemn harassment and assault. We do so because this government supports women across Queensland and their right to be safe.

I heard the member for Condamine talk about the women who have been strong and important in his life, and it reminded me that I too have been surrounded by some great women over my time, whether it is my own family or some of the strong female principals I have worked with, including a strong Premier and a number of her ministers. They have influenced me and my life and I appreciate everything they have done for me.

Stories of assault and harassment have been shared already by those in Canberra and our colleagues in this chamber. It is now time for the federal government to rise up, to listen and to take action. I hope the stories of survivors bring about real—real—ongoing change in our homes, workplaces and, more importantly, in our communities. Enough is more than enough.