




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

MOTION

Women

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (2.13 pm): I join my parliamentary colleagues in acknowledging and paying my heartfelt thanks to the tens of thousands of women across the country and right across Queensland who marched for justice, who marched for respect and who marched for equality, who used their voice to speak for those victims and survivors who have been silenced and who together said, 'Enough is enough.' I was there, I saw you all, I heard you and I want you to know that we support and believe you.

Right now we have a Prime Minister who is failing women. Like so many Queensland women, I have been angry, frustrated and saddened by the words and inaction of our nation's leaders, because if we want respect for women in our community then we need respect for women at the top. Women are not safe—not in their workplaces and not even in the nation's parliament.

I support this motion in its strong condemnation of harassment and assault of women right across Queensland—assault and harassment in their homes, in their communities, in their workplaces and on our streets. I am proud that we have led the way in tackling violence against women. We will continue to look at ways to eliminate harassment and assault for women in our community. We do need the federal government to implement all 55 recommendations in Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins' *Respect@Work* report. That would be a good start. We know that there is always more to do, but we will always look at what more can be done to keep women safe.

This month we established the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, a task force that will conduct a wideranging review into women's experiences in the criminal justice system. It will look at all issues, from education in our schools, prevention programs and support services to how to remove the many barriers that women face when they come forward and report violence. As a priority, the task force will look at how best to legislate against coercive control, a dangerous form of ongoing oppression used to instil fear in victims. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce will also report findings in relation to other areas of women's experiences in the criminal justice system.

We know that this has to be about more than just the law itself. We know that we need to look at everything from attitudinal change to early intervention and prevention to how our service system supports women—how we can make it so that the criminal justice system does not re-traumatise women. This is another step in the right direction to protecting and saving Queensland women's lives. We support you, we hear you and we believe you.