



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2021

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Federal Budget, Women and Girls**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.12 am): The year 2021 has given women across Australia their voice—a chance to call out inequality and outdated attitudes and to share their experiences with toxic culture. These brave, courageous women spoke up and said enough is enough, and they took this all the way to Canberra.

I welcome the federal government's investment in women and girls in the 2021 budget, and I thank them for their investment, but last night the real thanks should have gone to the incredible movement of women across the country who marched, spoke out and said, 'See us, hear us and believe us.' Because of these women, including many of our wonderful nurses and midwives, the national conversation is now focused on women's safety, women's health and women's economic recovery. I welcome the much needed funding for women's health, the commitment for a national partnership for domestic violence frontline service funding and additional childcare funding, and I also want to thank the Premier for putting these issues firmly on the national cabinet agenda.

We know that women were some of the hardest hit economically from the pandemic and continue to face ongoing challenges. Whilst I welcome emergency payments for women to leave violent relationships, what about paid domestic and family violence leave? One of the biggest barriers for women leaving these relationships is fearing that they will lose their jobs due to violence. Again, whilst I welcome the increase in funding for domestic and family violence services—\$250 million per year—this funding is then cut by 99 per cent, down to just \$2.3 million, in 2025-26. I know we all hope that violence against women will have ended by then, but I think we are going to need much more money in the system to continue to support our frontline services.

We know that older women in particular, the fastest growing group of homeless people in our country, are victims of domestic and family violence. We need affordable housing so they can re-establish their lives. As the Minister for Housing has said, where is the housing investment? As QCOSS has said—

The federal budget was a missed opportunity to act on the housing crisis. We were disappointed to see no funding in this budget to build more social housing in Queensland.

We are also still waiting for the federal government to finally ensure that superannuation is paid on paid parental leave. How is paid parental leave the only leave on which superannuation is not paid? That means that women continue to be financially disadvantaged and left insecure. As Annabel Crabb said about the budget last night—

It's probably as close as you'll ever get to an apology from the Treasurer and the Prime Minister, and an acknowledgement that they got the gender balance badly wrong six months ago.