




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.46 am): Queensland's domestic, family and sexual violence service providers have been stretched to the limit over the past year. During the pandemic, violence against women started or became worse for many. The national conversation on women's safety and sexual assault and recent tragic events have seen more women reach out for help.

I thank the Premier for taking action on ending violence against women with today's announcement of \$30 million for domestic, family and sexual violence services over the next four years. The Queensland Sexual Assault Network welcomed this announcement this morning saying, 'This commitment is a first step towards adequately funding specialist Queensland sexual violence services. I thank the Queensland Sexual Assault Network and the Queensland Domestic Violence Service Network for their strong advocacy.

This funding could not come soon enough to services that have seen a dramatic increase. It allows providers to have certainty and stability over the next four years to better support Queensland women and children. An increase in calls and long wait times have been reported across Queensland. Over the past 12 months to two years, most organisations have reported increases in the number of clients—up to 157 per cent for some services. For January and March of this year, when compared with the same period last year, one organisation reported a 90 per cent increase in the number of young women receiving specialist sexual assault counselling.

The Palaszczuk government is providing this record investment because we know how important it is for women to be able to access support and help across Queensland. I welcome the federal government's investment, but I cannot help but notice that it is short-term spending. Whereas, the Palaszczuk Labor government has made sure that certainty of funding over the next four years is there to support the services when they need it.

Respect for women starts at the top—it starts with our leaders—because we know violence against women is inextricably linked to gender inequality. As important and critical as this funding is, we also need cultural change in the way we view and treat our women and girls. That is why our government has established the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce to examine the whole system and the barriers that women face—from the training of first responders to attitudinal change in the community.

My deepest condolences go out to all of the families who have lost a loved one due to domestic and family violence. With May being Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month it is a time to reflect, to raise awareness and to say, 'What can I do to protect women and girls?' We all have a part to play in ending violence against women.