



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2021

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Shield Laws**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.59 am): I am pleased to inform the House that consultation has now commenced on the development of shield laws for Queensland. The discussion paper, *Shielding confidential sources: balancing the public's right to know and the court's need to know*, has been developed to guide this consultation. The discussion paper is available on the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's website and I table a copy.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Discussion paper: Shielding confidential sources: balance the public's right to know and the court's need to know: Shield laws to protect journalists' confidential sources [909](#).

Our government committed to consult on shield laws and we are delivering. The commitment is a significant step in strengthening our laws to further protect Queenslanders when they come forward with important information. The discussion paper sets out key issues for consideration in the development of shield laws, including the scope of the laws, the context for their application and the circumstances in which the shield may be set aside.

Alongside public consultation, I am also undertaking targeted consultation with key stakeholders. Shield laws are not just important to the media. I encourage all stakeholders, the media, the legal profession and members of the public to have a say on this important issue. Feedback can be given as a written submission or via an online survey on the Get Involved website which will take approximately five minutes for members of the public to complete. It is important that we as government hear from as many people as possible. A wide range of views is important to ensure we get the right approach for Queensland.

We understand that shield laws have been introduced in other jurisdictions, but this is now about creating good laws that work for Queensland and better protect Queenslanders. Shield laws are complex. They must strike the right balance between a journalist's obligation to maintain the confidentiality of a source and the ability for a court to have access to all relevant information in the interests of justice.

We have committed to consider shield laws in the context of recent Queensland case law and how shield laws are applied in other jurisdictions. This process, in combination with broad consultation, is crucial to developing new laws. I look forward to receiving feedback on the discussion paper and thank all stakeholders in advance for their time and participation in the consultation process to inform the development of these important laws for Queensland. Consultation on the development of shield laws for Queensland is open for the next few weeks and will close on 13 July 2021. The government will consider all feedback received during consultation and I look forward to introducing a bill on this vital legislative reform later this year.