




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Sexual Violence Awareness Month

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.03 am): Sexual Violence Awareness Month takes place each October to remind us that everyone deserves to live in a society free from the threat of sexual violence. I want to acknowledge all of the survivors, even those who have not yet spoken their truth. We see you. We believe you. This year we have seen women marching in the streets demanding change and safety for women. The Palaszczuk government is committed to this in all our communities.

In October 2019, we launched *Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's framework to address sexual violence* to prevent and respond to sexual violence in Queensland. The framework focuses on addressing all forms of sexual violence and bringing together existing work and new directions and commitments. Today I am pleased to launch the first Sexual Violence Prevention Action Plan 2021-2022 to implement the framework. The whole-of-government action plan is the next step to address sexual violence and work towards our vision of a Queensland where everyone is free from the fear, threat or experience of sexual violence. As the first of many action plans under the framework, this action plan sets the path forward, with signature actions including implementing training on preventing and responding to sexual violence for frontline staff including health and disability services staff, and supporting implementation of the recommendations of the Respect@Work report.

Much has happened since we released the framework. The challenges experienced due to COVID-19 have had a significant impact on our health system, our economy and our communities. Brave women like our Australian of the Year, Grace Tame, and Brittany Higgins have spoken out against sexual violence and encouraged more brave survivors to come forward. Despite these challenges, the Palaszczuk government has continued to work hard to implement the strategies outlined in the framework. Since 2015, we have invested record whole-of-government funding of more than \$600 million for domestic, family and sexual violence programs, services and strategies—but we know there is still more to do.

Today I am also pleased to announce \$150,000 in funding for the Queensland Sexual Assault Network. This will support their advocacy for specialist sexual assault services that have been under enormous pressure. I want to thank all of the incredible frontline workers who provide assistance to victims across Queensland. I look forward to continuing to work with our sexual violence sector partners and the broader community to end sexual violence in Queensland.