




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MOTION

Women

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (2.37 pm): It was very moving for me to join so many of my colleagues from the government at the March 4 Justice rally last week. The last few weeks have been challenging for our community. I was distressed to read about the experiences of my colleagues who are also very close friends. It has taken incredible bravery for these women to tell their stories. I admire them even more now. It is shocking how widespread this treatment of women is by men. It is so widespread that for every story told there are hundreds that may never be told. This behaviour at work and everywhere else cannot be accepted any longer. The way to change behaviours and culture has to start with leadership. It has to start at the top.

The Sex Discrimination Commissioner published a very detailed report about sexual harassment. She made 55 recommendations. It has been left gathering dust on a shelf somewhere. Surely if the Prime Minister were serious about this issue that would be a pretty good place to start. He has the recommendations; he just has to implement them. Until we see real policy change it is just more political spin.

The Prime Minister should have gone out and met the March 4 Justice protesters at their request. He should have met them in a place where they felt safe, not in a place where he felt safe. Even John Howard met with pro-gun protesters, wearing a bulletproof vest because of threats of violence. These women never threatened to shoot the Prime Minister; he should not have demanded that they be grateful he did not shoot at them. He should not have needed his wife to tell him that rape was bad. He should not have reacted as a father; he should have reacted as a human. He should not have disclosed an allegation he was either aware of or made up about another person in another organisation because he did not like a question at a press conference. He should not have lied about when and what he knew about the Porter allegations. The government should have believed and looked after Brittany; they should not have sent in the cleaners and they should not have briefed against her in the media.

The Leader of the Opposition is toying with the idea of a quota and quotas matter, but culture and leadership do too. It is not good enough for people to experience things like this in the workplace, in their homes or in the community and anything I can do to support women I will do. I commit to doing whatever I can to support change and justice for women.