




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 10 May 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, Report

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.47 am): I am so pleased to join with the Premier today to announce our government's response to the landmark first report from the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, *Hear her voice*. On 2 December last year the task force released its first report, *Report one: addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland*. The report makes 89 recommendations for reform to our criminal justice system, including the creation of a new offence to criminalise coercive control. The task force received more than 700 submissions from right across Queensland. We have listened to every single one. Now is the time to take even further action to end all forms of domestic and family violence.

Today's announcement of a \$363 million reform package is historic. It will fundamentally change the system to be trauma informed and place victims and survivors at the forefront. The package is not just about new laws; it is about expanding specialist DV courts, increasing funding for perpetrator programs, increasing respectful relationships education for all young people in Queensland, expanding our high-risk teams and funding co-responder models to ensure that victims receive a joint response from police and domestic violence services.

We know that non-physical violence is just as dangerous as physical violence and that coercive control is the biggest predicting factor for intimate partner homicide. Queensland women and children deserve to live free from the threat of violence and without fear for their safety. We are committed to doing everything we possibly can to eliminate domestic and family violence in our state and ensure the tragic deaths of so many women have not been in vain.

I acknowledge all of the hardworking frontline service workers and advocates who have joined us here today as well as Hannah Clarke's parents, Sue and Lloyd; Allison Baden-Clay's family, Vanessa, Geoff and Priscilla; Kelly Wilkinson's family, Danielle Carrol; and also the families of Doreen Langham and Mary Benedito. Thank you for your incredible advocacy and incredible strength; your work is making a real difference.

The Palaszczuk government welcomes the task force's report and is supporting the recommendations. These strong recommendations collectively provide a road map to the introduction of legislation to criminalise coercive control. In our government response, which I now table, we agree with the recommendation of the task force to implement their recommendations in a four-phase approach to ensure that we are both reforming the criminal justice system and educating the community and training first responders.

Tabled paper: Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report titled 'Hear her voice—Report 1 Addressing coercive control and domestic and family violence in Queensland, government response' [602](#).

Laws will be amended, including modernising the offence of stalking. As well, we will change the system's current outdated approach of responding to a single—usually physical—incident of domestic violence, given what we know about the dangers of non-physical violence, and respond to patterns of controlling behaviour that happen over time. We said from the beginning that we are committed to legislating against this insidious form of abuse and we want to make sure we get it right.

We especially want to acknowledge the survivors in Queensland who shared their experiences with the task force. We know that sharing your stories was not an easy decision to make, but we are very grateful for your contribution—it does make a difference. Thank you again to the Hon. Margaret McMurdo AC and all of the task force members for the critical work they do. I look forward to continuing our work as we strive to eliminate domestic and family violence here in Queensland.