




Speech By
Ali King

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Record of Proceedings, 14 March 2023

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Women

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.50 pm): Queensland has so many brilliant, passionate, talented women. I was pleased to join the Attorney-General at the Queensland Women's Week reception last night to celebrate the impressive women in so many of our communities. I say a special thankyou to Barbara Grey of the Caboolture Older Women's Network for being my guest at the event.

As the oldest state electorate in Queensland, older women in Pumicestone do so much heavy lifting to support our community. They could be putting their feet up but they are organising community groups, leading beach clean-ups and working to prevent domestic and family violence. I also pay tribute to our Pumicestone women who are working into their 60s and 70s. When I go to our local aged-care centres sometimes there are more silver heads amongst the workers than there are amongst the residents. I also pay tribute to the women raising grandkids, giving kin care or providing care to foster kids.

Our government makes a big deal of Queensland Women's Week because we believe in women and we back women old or young. Our latest gender equality report card was released last week and it showed that there is still some work to do. The gender pay gap is slightly lower at 15.6 per cent. The number of female magistrates and judges increased by 2.8 per cent. We absolutely smashed our 50 per cent target for the number of women on government boards at 54 per cent, but sadly the number of women CEOs and managing directors in the private sector was down 6.3 per cent to 17½ per cent.

Our government will keep working for better outcomes on issues that matter to women, whether it is supporting more women into full-time work with our free and cheaper kindy program or getting more women elected to parliament. Women tell us all the time that they want to see more women in their parliaments. Labor has been working on this for the last 30 years because we know that diverse parliaments make for better governments.

With women making up over half of all voting Queenslanders, people would think it would be a priority for all political parties. What do women in Queensland see when they look at the tired, third-term LNP opposition? They see a group of blokes who overwhelmingly voted for it to be a crime for women to make their own decisions about their pregnancies. They see a so-called leader who travelled 1,500 kilometres to knock off the then youngest woman ever elected in Queensland. To this mob, a woman in a safe seat is an opportunity. They smell blood and the sharks start circling.

The women of the LNP can fit into a maxi taxi, but we constantly hear that the good old boys of the LNP are looking to roll their female shadow ministers. When Queensland women look at the LNP they see a 83 per cent male party room who refuse to take real action to get more women elected. When the LNP had the chance to get a woman into a safe seat—a woman who might have been a future leader of their party for decades to come—they chose the member for Callide.

The LNP pretend it is about merit, but international research proves that affirmative action raises the quality of political candidates by giving great women a chance ahead of mediocre men. There is a real reason the LNP is so scared of endorsing affirmative action. It is because so many of their men are mediocre; they are just not up to the job. The LNP's 'Queensland Solutions' whingefest is coming up so maybe instead of inviting businesses and trying to squeeze them for money, they should invite Queensland women to sit down and tell them how they can resuscitate the failing LNP brand.

Likely it is too late. Queensland women know exactly what the LNP stand for. The LNP showed us when they cut funding to NGOs that provide domestic and family violence services. They showed us when they would not speak up against the appalling Morrison government. They showed us when they teamed up with Cherish Life to run a cynical campaign to strip women's rights. Women in my community were devastated and hurt by that LNP campaign. They showed us and keep showing us with their nasty, misogynistic attacks on our hardworking Premier. The LNP is dead in the water when it comes to women. Women do not like the cuts, they do not want to get sacked and they do not want to see Queensland assets sold.

At the end of the day, it is not just women that the Queensland LNP have alienated; they have alienated young people with their cuts to the Barrett centre when they threw young people with terrible vulnerabilities when it comes to their mental health out on the street. Just today Peter Dutton is out calling for cuts to the NDIS so they are alienating people with disability. They are alienating public servants that they attack time after time. They alienate people who believe in public ownership. The list goes on and on and on. When we add up all the groups the LNP have alienated—women, young people, people with disabilities, public servants—all we can see is the tired LNP opposition sitting opposite us.

(Time expired)