




Speech By  
**Joseph Kelly**

**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

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**VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT  
BILL**

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.31 pm): I would like to start by acknowledging that very thoughtful and sincere contribution of the member for Southport. I had the great pleasure of working for about a year with the member for Southport on the inquiry into mental health and alcohol other drug services. What the member described there do not surprise me at all. If you had the opportunity to work with the member, you will know that that is his standard operating procedure. He has been a good advocate for those people in his community who do it tough. I think the member's statements are extremely genuine, but I wonder how they reconcile with his party's position in relation to removing detention as a last resort for juveniles. I will move onto this bill.

A few years ago, I read a very thought provoking book by Leigh Sales called *Any Ordinary Day*. It was a series of essays about how people healed and recovered after traumatic events. Many of these stories would be well known to members of this chamber. They involved victims of crime. Of course there are other traumatic events that did not involve crimes, but a large number of them involved victims of crime. It gave a great insight into the challenges facing people who are victims of crime and their journey to recovery, and how complex and difficult that is.

I first encountered a person impacted by crime as a fairly new nurse. I was probably only 18 or 19 at the time. We had a patient who chose to spend her entire admission with the curtains pulled, choosing to bathe and toilet at her bedside, which was strange and unusual in the old Nightingale wards where there were 20 people in a room. She seemed like a very nice lady, but you could tell that she was deeply traumatised. Eventually I learned that her ex-husband, just over a decade before I nursed her, had committed a terrible crime—one of the most infamous in Queensland's history—just a short distance from the hospital where I was caring for her. I remembered how terrible this crime was for the victims. Some of those victims' families still reside in my electorate to this day. There is also the terrible impact that this had on the perpetrator's family and how far-reaching crimes can be in creating victims. I do not recall any of the people in the book by Leigh Sales being described as 'choosing to cloister themselves away for eternity', but that was this woman's response.

On many subsequent occasions I would care for victims of crime. I saw the terrible physical and emotional damage people endured. I saw some recover and I saw some that would never fully recover. I certainly witnessed the terrible financial impacts, often intergenerational, that occur when someone is a victim of crime. One of the main reasons I support this bill is its attempt to deal with that part of the victim of crime experience.

For over 25 years, Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre in my electorate has been providing support for girls and women aged 12 to 25 and their children who have been victims of sexual assault or domestic violence. Despite the incredibly difficult work that they do, every time I meet them the staff are always so positive and hopeful. Most importantly, they are always 100 per cent focused on the victims that they support. They quietly tend to the people who seek their help, looking to support them with all their needs, whether that is counselling, health care, accommodation, finances, employment or

anything else. I have learned much from the staff at Zig Zag over the years, have tried to help them with various issues and have made many representations on their behalf to ministers. One of the key things I have learned from this is how often women who are victims of sexual or domestic violence are left financially destitute. The provisions in this bill will definitely provide further assistance to the women supported by Zig Zag. I also acknowledge the work of the Women's Legal Service who support women at the Holland Park Courthouse when the domestic violence court is in session. I was pleased to work with them to improve the courthouse so that victims could be properly separated from the accused perpetrators and properly supported by that service and other services.

In her book, Leigh Sales described many ways that victims try to recover and heal. One of the common reactions was to attempt to prevent what had happened to them or their loved ones from happening to anyone else. In my community, I have seen this in practice. Hannah Clarke's family have endured a terrible crime but have since created an effective foundation, the Small Steps 4 Hannah Foundation, that is bringing real change to our community through their advocacy to government and their education in the community. I want to pay tribute to Sue and Lloyd Clarke.

After her daughter was a victim of domestic violence, Carolyn Robertson created Beyond DV. Carolyn came to see me very early in her journey, and I was able to assist her with some initial funding. The organisation has grown considerably and is focused on supporting women and their children to recover from domestic violence.

Voice for Victims was set up by Ben Cannon following an incident in our community. I met with Ben several times before he set up the organisation and I assisted him to meet with ministers. Voice for Victims is a strong advocate for better support for victims. I am pleased that the government has been listening to them and all of the other groups that advocate on behalf of victims.

I will always listen to victims, their advocates and community organisations and work hard to ensure victims are well supported on their journey to recovery. I have outlined just a few organisations in my community that support victims, but there are so many other great people and organisations doing so much important work right around our state. I want to particularly acknowledge my parliamentary colleague Jonty Bush and her long advocacy on behalf of victims.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the very hardworking police officers in my community based at the Coorparoo, Holland Park and Camp Hill stations. They dedicate their life to preventing crime and are the first point of contact and recovery for many victims. This bill, like all the people and organisations I have mentioned, is focused on improving support for victims of crime. We must continue to work nonstop and tirelessly to prevent crime, but we know that sadly there will always be victims of crime. We must ensure there is good support for those victims. This bill works to improve the available support for victims. I commend the bill to the House.