




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.16 pm): I rise to support the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. In a number of contributions so far in this debate we have heard talk around statistics and the number of victims of crime that has been reported. I would say that what we have seen over the last decade in particular is a much greater spotlight on the scourge that is domestic and family violence in our communities. It has been through work that Minister Farmer, Minister Fentiman and Minister D’Ath have done over a number of years in the women’s space in terms of the Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce—the two reports they have done—and all of those recommendations that have come through that we have been deploying. That is why we are seeing more victims come forward to seek the help that our government is providing.

I think we need to put into that conversation the importance of the work that we have been doing over the last 10 years to address domestic and family violence. I want to commend the work of organisations like Small Steps 4 Hannah and Sue and Lloyd Clarke, who have done an incredible job in advocating and raising awareness of domestic and family violence and the supports that are out there. I think that is a very important thing to recognise.

I also want to recognise the work of the new Interim Victims’ Commissioner and his office. He is currently conducting a roadshow across Queensland. I know that he will be out in the Redlands in December talking to agencies that are in the game supporting victims. The roadshow of workshops across the state will look to: raise the awareness of the rights of victims of crime and the services available to assist them so we can keep delivering the help that people need; identify, develop and provide additional resources for victims of crime to understand their rights, the criminal justice process, which we know is extraordinarily complex, and how to access support and assistance; and also identify the training needs for government agencies to interact with victims in a trauma informed manner.

There is a whole heap of work that is happening in that space by the Interim Victims’ Commissioner’s office. I do not think we could have a better Interim Victims’ Commissioner than Jon Rouse APM. We know of the great work that he did with Task Force Argos. He is a former Queensland Australian of the Year. He is extraordinarily well placed to connect with our communities and our agencies across Queensland to ensure that we can continue to provide the best supports for victims of crime.

I noted that in the member for Oodgeroo’s contribution he did not mention any of the organisations that are doing fantastic work across the Redlands. I think about the work that the Redlands Centre for Women does in the domestic and family violence space providing support and assistance and the Centre Against Sexual Violence in Cleveland that is also doing fantastic work. As I said, the Redlands Centre for Women does incredible work. We have Crime Stoppers. I had the opportunity to host Crime Stoppers in forums at Victoria Point and across our southern Moreton Bay islands. It does a fantastic

job in assisting victims of crime to do that reporting piece. It does great work in helping people put themselves into a better preventative space from seeing crime occur. In the e-scam space it does an amazing job as well, and we know how that has increased over the years. It does a great job.

We then have our Volunteers in Policing in the Redlands who do a fantastic job under the stewardship of Sergeant Chris Hebblethwaite and Sergeant Brendan Winslow. They do an absolutely amazing job. While I am on my feet, I want to give a shout-out to Sergeant Chris Hebblethwaite. Last week he was awarded Crime Stoppers Queensland Police Officer of the Year. That was a fantastic award for him—very well deserved. He works tirelessly across our communities in that community police liaison role working with victims of crime and providing support to Redlanders. Thank you to Chris, Brendon and to all of our Queensland police who are on the front line. The work that they do in providing support to victims cannot be underestimated, so I want to thank them for all of that work.

I had not seen comparative data with other jurisdictions, but this legislation will have Queensland in the position of providing the best compensation scheme in the nation. The closest at the moment is Victoria at \$60,000 for the primary individual. This bill will see an increase to \$120,000 for the primary individual. Chris Minns and the New South Wales Labor government are looking at their victims of crime legislation which is well below Victoria and even further behind us, as it is similarly in South Australia and Western Australia. This is gold standard legislation. It really is. It is rolled gold legislation to ensure that we continue to support victims of crime in Queensland.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of those organisations that work on the front line, and the submissions to this inquiry validate the great work that is happening. I note that there is huge support for these increases and the reclassification of that domestic and family violence provision. Thank you to everybody who helps support victims. Nobody can ever put themselves in the position of a victim of crime, but we need to ensure that our Palaszczuk government continues the good, sound work that it has been doing over many years to increase that level of support. That is being done in that service delivery. As I said, Jon Rouse is very well placed to ensure that we continue to always improve our systems. I commend this bill to the House.