




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Scams

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (10.09 am): We want to make sure Queenslanders know how to be smart consumers. Today is World Consumer Rights Day and it is a timely reminder for Queensland shoppers to be on the lookout for scammers and, importantly, to know what to do if you think you have been scammed. We know scams are becoming more sophisticated. The statistics show Queenslanders are losing more money to consumer scams.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, please cease your interjections.

Ms FENTIMAN: Alarming, Australians reported losses of more than \$4 million to buying and selling scams in January alone—this is up from \$3.5 million in January last year—and Queenslanders have reportedly lost more than \$481,000 to scams. It is a 20 per cent increase since last year.

With many Queenslanders feeling the pressure from the rising cost of living, we want consumers to be smart with their money. It is not just scammers they have to be aware of. It pays to know your consumer rights. Queenslanders need to know that they deserve to get what they pay for and consumer laws apply regardless of whether an item is on sale, if it was purchased in-store or online. My tip to Queenslanders is: do your research. Whether you are buying goods or engaging the services of a trader, it is so important to check reviews online. Ensure online payments are secure by checking that the website is secure or uses a secure payment service. While we are talking about payments, always be cautious if you are asked to pay up-front for a service before the job is complete.

However, my biggest piece of advice is: if the offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is. I would encourage all members of the community to continue to talk to their friends, family and neighbours about being savvy consumers. We need people sharing their stories and raising awareness about scams to remove the shame of being a victim of a scam. One simple conversation could stop a friend, family member, neighbour or even yourself falling victim to a scam.