



Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**

**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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**CRIMINAL LAW (COERCIVE CONTROL AND AFFIRMATIVE CONSENT) AND  
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; CRIMINAL CODE AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION (DOUBLE JEOPARDY EXCEPTION AND SUBSEQUENT  
APPEALS) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.54 pm): I, too, acknowledge the member for Greenslopes' contribution and the complete and utter tragedy he referred to. There are no other words to describe it. I know that the Clarkes have a very close connection to Kingaroy. It is with such a heavy heart that we are talking about this topic once again. However, talking about it really does keep alive the memory of Hannah and those three beautiful children. It also keeps alive the memories of many others who have been faced with not only domestic violence but any form of violence—family, emotional, financial.

Many people in this House who have been here over the years have heard me speak about why I came into this House and why I entered politics. I reflect upon a time in around 2010 when on a Sunday night I took a phone call from a concerned community member about a person they wanted me to assist in my role as a lawyer. I had taken a call previous to that evening, on a Sunday afternoon, from someone from the Queensland Women's Legal Service requesting that I, as a private lawyer, just try to help this same person. That was something I did many times. I had no problem, as the only female lawyer in the South Burnett, doing that type of pro bono work no matter the day of the week. I recall that both I and a local police officer assisted that woman and her child to escape her brutal, horrendous, horrific husband. We found them a safe spot to go. In this small town, I had to front court the next day to make sure she could get a protection order for herself and her child. I think that was one of the first times that I understood and appreciated the extent of coercive control.

As the member for Currumbin so ably spoke about when reflecting upon someone who submitted to the committee, it is quite often the case that lawyers in these courts see someone with a bruised eye or a hurt part of their body, but there are other cases where they cannot see the pain that a client is going through.

I was very proud, along with then attorney-general Jarrod Bleijie, to propose a policy to make sure we supported the Women's Legal Service. Why? I was the only lawyer in the South Burnett who took these calls on a Sunday on behalf of my female clients. There were others who should have been supported in the 14 years prior, under Labor governments, through state funding for regional women, for a support base. The then attorney-general provided an extra \$750,000 to the Women's Legal Service in Queensland to make sure a women's hotline could be set up so that regional women had someone to call. That came after a 20 per cent cut by the Labor government to the Queensland Women's Legal Service. I cannot sit here and be preached to by members such as the member for Bundaberg who do not know the history of not only why members come into this place but also what goes on in governments of their colour.

That is why the then premier brought in the *Not now, not ever* report—a report not only coupled with the largest historical funding for domestic violence that this state has ever seen—

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection—and the highest historical funding for child safety in this state. That is what the LNP did in government. We stood up for women and we stood up for children. We had our priorities right. Members opposite can grunt and groan all they like, but what has happened in the past nine years? In 2017, when we were in opposition, the member for Mudgeeraba announced landmark domestic violence policies including coercive control and financial and elder abuse. Where did they go? Absolutely nowhere under this incompetent Labor government. Then in 2020 I stood in this House and demanded changes to coercive control legislation. What was I met with? I was met with ridicule and silence. Members opposite should not come in here and tell me that we do not support women. Never tell me that the women on this side do not deserve our seats in parliament.

**Ms Enoch:** Who said that?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Who said that? I will take that interjection. Every single day we sit here and get ridiculed by those opposite because we are women standing up for our communities—that, because we are centre-right women, we do not deserve a voice. This absolutely must stop. I am so sick and tired of it.

I want to move on to the other debacle. While the government is making sure we do not have enough time to talk about the issues that are important to us, what about the DNA lab debacle? We on this side of the House stood up on behalf of the victims and said, 'There is an issue with the DNA lab.' We said it over and over again. What did the then attorney-general and the health minister say? They said it was pure politics. Let me tell the House that it was the LNP who stood with those families and the victims of that DNA debacle. It is the LNP who still stand with those women and we stand with the whistleblowers of that DNA debacle.

Make no mistake: we are making some of the largest changes to the criminal justice system in this country's history. Why are we here today doing that? It is because this Labor government failed to act. They abused a whistleblower. They abused a media person—Hedley Thomas, who was standing up for the Shandee Blackburn story. They abused victims of crime. They refused to listen to people who were standing up on behalf of their communities saying, 'There is a problem with the DNA lab.' There was not one inquiry but two inquiries. That is what it took for this government to make changes.

Where are we right now? The figures have been given but I am going to say them again: over 103,000 samples—103,000 samples—that might have to be retested and 37,000 cases. Let me say this once again: this is the biggest debacle in Queensland's history. When you are taking samples from a man's private parts and not finding DNA—that is what victims were telling this mob. What did these people say? 'There is nothing to see here.' We are playing pure politics.

This is a government that is all about the media release. They only care about what things look like. They do not actually like the detail. Let me tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, the devil is always in the detail when it comes to this Miles government. They can come in here and pretend they have not been in government for nearly the last decade, but they have. They have been in government and what have they done to support women and domestic violence victims? They refuse to listen to our constituents. They refuse to listen to whistleblowers. They refuse to listen to people on this side of the House because they think they know better. I can tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, enough is enough.

It is about time this government started listening to the real people in Queensland—the victims of these terrible crimes. I say this: the biggest crime of all is that this government have left murderers and rapists and who knows who else walk away because of their incompetence. I say shame—shame on this government!