



Speech By  
**Joan Pease**


**MEMBER FOR LYTTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 December 2024

**MOTION**

**Women and Girls' Health Strategy**

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.01 pm): Improving the lives, rights and wellbeing of women and girls in Queensland across all facets of society is impressive. I would like to comment on the member for Callide's words with regard to standing up for his constituents. That is very noble, and I think all of us would do the same, but what have you done this week with regard to standing up to make sure the workplace attraction fund isn't going to be cut?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton—

**Ms PEASE:** I do not know if I have heard any words from you—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, you will direct your comments through the chair, not start quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms PEASE:** Thank you for your direction. I would like to hear from the member for Callide. If he is standing up for his constituents, what is the date and what are you doing? What have you done to stand up? One of the things the member for Callide actually pointed out in your speech was that you were advised there was a shortage of health service providers in your electorate. You are aware of that being a problem, yet have you stood—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton—

**Ms PEASE:** Member for Callide, have you stood up to make sure that the attraction fund is not being withdrawn?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Lytton, focus your delivery to me, not across the chamber.

**Ms PEASE:** Thank you for your guidance, Speaker. It is important to remember that 50 per cent of Queensland is made up of women. When women and girls are well and healthy throughout their lives and can participate equally in social, economic and cultural activities, then society is much stronger for it. Female contributions in science, business, government—and maybe more so on this side of the House in government—and all aspects of Australian life are on the up.

The Labor Party I proudly represent played a significant role in the advancement of women, particularly in this state. I am a proud member of the Labor Party and I am proud of our achievements on behalf of Queensland women, yet sometimes it feels like the clock has stopped in Queensland when it comes to the protection, participation and advancement of women. My interstate friends are absolutely aghast when I tell them it was not until 2018 that termination of pregnancy was decriminalised here in Queensland.

Recent polling from the Australian Institute found that a woman's right to choose is supported by an overwhelming majority of Queenslanders—men and women alike—prompting their executive director to say that Queenslanders are more progressive than commentators give them credit for. But do not let the public sentiment get in the way of the LNP dogma on the issue of women's rights! Despite

significant progress and advancements on women's rights by successive ALP governments, every time the LNP forms government in Queensland it is as if women have donned weighted moon boots and they walk around in slow motion. Women are stunted by those opposite.

What we saw this week with the gag in this parliament on women's rights was evidence of this sentiment. It certainly will not take very long for Queensland women to work out that the Crisafulli government is a hindrance to our lives. The gag this week was absolutely shameful. It was embarrassing. It was a poor precedent from a new government that should be sharp, positive and purposeful in its infancy. Even Hayden Johnson in the *Courier-Mail* stated—

Queensland's democratic institution has been trampled in the Premier's desperate attempt to avoid a politically deadly backroom revolt on abortion.

Silencing your own government in this manner, effectively telling your own party room, ministers and colleagues—some of whom are women—that you have no faith in them not to honour a commitment, does not bode well for the new Premier of Queensland. It is poor policy and it is weak. For instance, what if there were a technical or medical advancement that helps a woman's right to choose? 'Oops, sorry, we can't make any changes to that because there is a gag order on that topic so we cannot talk about it.' It is irrational. It is nonsensical. It shows the ineptitude of this new government. It is weak, and it is shameful.

However, on this side of the House we are not afraid to talk about women's rights. What stunned me the most was the deafening silence of the female members of the LNP in this parliament. There are not many of them, but did they speak up in their LNP party room before or after this gag was voted on? Were they bullied, as we are bullied by those opposite, into silence? Were they too afraid to speak? I fail to understand how they stood and voted for this week's gag, like turkeys voting for Christmas. Compare the LNP's actions this week with Labor's record on women's rights.

*(Time expired)*