



Speech By  
**Jonty Bush**


**MEMBER FOR COOPER**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2024

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Media Reporting**

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (2.22 pm): Over the past 24 hours, insinuations have been made that I, in my capacity as deputy chair of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee, and other government members have advocated for the media to be gagged from reporting on matters relating to crime. That is not true. When my sister was murdered in July 24 years ago, it was with the support of local journalists and editors that we were able to highlight the impact of domestic violence. When my father was murdered in October later that year, 24 years ago, it was with the support of the media that I was able to develop the One Punch Can Kill campaign, a campaign that I know has gone on to save lives. I have worked productively with media syndicates throughout this country for 24 years.

Responsible media reporting is essential in the investigation and prosecution of crime. Investigative journalism, like the revelations recently in *Shandee's Story*, are essential to revealing injustice or policy gaps, and I and our government embrace that. Our government recently introduced legislation to enable victims of sexual violence to speak freely to the media. Now that the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee interim report has been tabled, we can all see the recommendations, including the recommendation that we made for greater transparency and opening up the courts to victims of crime and the media. That was in response to issues that victims raised with us. Government members listened and suggested the recommendation. Why would the recommendation not be made public?

Victims of serious and violent crimes have also told us that there are times when media reporting has caused secondary trauma. In my sister's case, the local TV network had captured footage of my sister's body being wheeled out of the hotel and into the back of an ambulance. The footage clearly showed her bloodied arm, as it had slipped out from under the sheet that covered her on the trolley. The network ran that footage for over a week as part of their advertising package to demonstrate how responsive they were at reporting on the issues that matter to locals. Our family and my sister's teenage friends were exposed to those images repeatedly until finally the network agreed to remove the footage. For many victims of serious and violent crime, this is also their story. While I have a deep respect and appreciation for the media and while I acknowledge the many caring professionals, there are times when networks get it wrong.

Twenty-four years on from living through two horrific family homicides, I have the rare privilege to serve in this House and to elevate the voices of victims of crime. While I do and when there is an opportunity to advance the rights of victims, even if it means calling on the media to be more sensitive in their reporting, then I will make that ask. I am disappointed that the LNP would clutch at these straws and mislead the House and the public in such a way.