




Speech By
Hon. Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 11 December 2024

MOTION

Women and Girls' Health Strategy

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.27 pm): I rise to speak to the amendment, in particular the way the former Labor government has failed women in relation to the youth crime crisis. Vyleen White, Kate Leadbetter, Natalie Merlehan, Emma Lovell, Sheree Robertson, Michale Chandler, Kelsey Davies, Leanne Barsby, Maira Capiello: these are the women—the wives, the mothers, the daughters—who have paid the ultimate price at the hands of the youth crime crisis started by the former Labor government. These women—these daughters, these wives—lost their lives and suffered egregious harm. Leanne Barsby was the victim of a violent and armed home invasion where a 14-year-old punched her in the chest and head, leaving her with seizures. Maira Capiello was a woman who was sexually assaulted by a 10-year-old boy in Cairns.

These are the women who have paid the ultimate price because of the youth crime crisis that started under the former Labor government which they failed to do anything about. Why? Every single time before the election that Labor stood up and said youth crime was going down, they knew it was going up. The incoming government briefs—

Mr SPEAKER: I will ask you to talk to the motion and not the bill before the House.

Mrs GERBER: Absolutely. The amended motion talks about the women who have suffered at the hands of the youth crime crisis.

Mr SPEAKER: I am also conscious we have a bill before the House.

Mrs GERBER: Certainly, Mr Speaker. I am talking about youth crime and I am talking about the increase—

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs GERBER: It is in the motion; youth crime is in the motion. Read the motion, people! Read the motion. The reason those opposite are interjecting is they do not want to hear about the fact that youth crime continued to go up under them, they knew it and they continued to deceive Queenslanders. The youth crime crisis went up 12 per cent in the last financial year under the former Labor government, and every single time they stood up and said it was going down they knew they were deceiving Queenslanders and they continued to say it. They continued to say it because it suited their political game, because they wanted to hold on to power and because they cared more about the politics than they did the people. They cared more about the politics than they did the women who were victims of crime in this state.

Mr SMITH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I taught Kelsie Davies in year 7 and in year 9. I would appreciate—

Mr SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr SMITH: I take personal offence and I would ask for a withdrawal.

Mr SPEAKER: A point of order is not an opportunity for you to get up and make a speech.

Mr SMITH: I take personal offense.

Mr SPEAKER: No, that is not personal offence. No, I am going to rule that out of order. Member for Currumbin, while youth crime might be mentioned in the motion, be very careful. We have a bill before the House about youth crime.

Mrs GERBER: Certainly, Mr Speaker. I want to talk about the Labor government's record when it comes to failing women in the DNA debacle that they failed to fix. When we in opposition raised it time and time again in question time, we raised the individual stories of those victims of the DNA lab. We put those to the Labor government when they were in power. We put them as individual stories of victims, and what did they tell those victims, those women? They said we were making it up. They denied that the DNA lab debacle was even happening. They denied it, they failed to act on it and those women will not and have not seen justice. There could be rapists and murderers currently walking our streets as a result of the massive maladministration and failure of those opposite when it came to the DNA lab. It is the biggest failure of a government I have seen in my lifetime. It is absolutely disgraceful and still they laugh about it and still they continue to act like they have no accountability for the complete and utter failure that was the DNA lab.

Women in this state deserve so much better than those opposite. They deserve so much better than what they got from Labor. Under a Crisafulli government they will be heard.

(Time expired)