



Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**


**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 19 March 2024

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Leader of the Opposition, Performance**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (2.43 pm): In my first speech in this place, I recited the following quote—

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

As a 24-year-old at the time on a 0.7 per cent margin, I knew the importance of taking a position on difficult issues, even when it is hard. The Leader of the Opposition has been in politics for a really long time. He has learned how to be slick and slippery, how to duck and weave on any question where he has to actually articulate a position of his or the LNP's. No clearer was that than yesterday—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to parliamentary language. The words that were used were clearly unparliamentary. In fact, they were ruled out of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Thank you for your point of order. I will take some advice.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I was not looking for advice from you, Leader of the Opposition. I apologise, but I did not hear the contribution as I was reading something. The Clerk has advised me of the language used. The Speaker made rulings earlier in the day in relation to a number of words that have been used. I encourage members to write them out of their speeches. I ask the minister to withdraw that unparliamentary language.

**Ms SCANLON:** I withdraw. No clearer was that than yesterday and today when the Leader of the Opposition failed to make the tough decision and actually front the media and tell people what their position is on the Olympics. Instead, he hid behind the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr Crisafulli:** 43,074 Queenslanders on the social housing waiting list and this is what the minister is focused on.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. We have no indication of what the opposition's plans or values are so all we can do is judge what you did last time. On International Women's Day, the Leader of the Opposition said—

Imagine how much we as a state, all of us, will be stronger if we can have more women at the table making the decisions that matter.

We do not have to imagine it because we actually have women in this government who sit at the cabinet table and are a part of our caucus and make decisions, but I understand why those opposite might need to imagine it. Even a *Brisbane Times* article pointed out this week—

The LNP's team in the single-house Queensland parliament has the lowest proportion of women of any parliament in the country. The Leader of the Opposition pretends like he is some ally of women—

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Bonney, you are warned.

**Ms SCANLON:** He pretends like he is some ally of women, but his actions demonstrate otherwise—like voting to keep abortion a crime in Queensland, like cutting funding to domestic and family violence in his own community, like funding BreastScreen Queensland. In fact, when an MP in his own party actually broke the record of being the youngest woman elected to parliament, rather than backing her, he literally moved from one side of the state to the other to take her seat for his own political ambition. He says he is an ally of women—unless they get in his way. What has he done for the Gold Coast since he was elected and took that seat off the youngest woman in parliament? He made a big song and dance about promoting someone to be the shadow minister for integrity. I do not know where the Leader of the Opposition was when there was story after story about his long-held friend, the member for Fadden, Stuart Robert. He did not seem to be too interested in integrity then.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, you are under a warning. You can leave the chamber for an hour. You have continued to interject.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 2.48 pm.*

**Ms SCANLON:** I take the deputy leader's interjection. Just last year, where was the Leader of the Opposition when his own colleagues in Canberra blocked investment in 30,000 social and affordable homes? The member for Bonney might think it is funny, but I can assure him that those vulnerable Queenslanders do not think it is funny when the opposition block investment in housing. We know that they have a track record of opposing housing. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition promoted the very same man who cut social housing last time by 428 homes. They cut the social housing construction program, they did not commence a single social home on the Gold Coast when the member for Everton was the minister and they sacked 1,600 QBuild workers. They took the extraordinary step of actually defunding Tenants Queensland and then saying no to Commonwealth government funding. At almost every opportunity, the member for Everton comes into this House and has a go at renters.

I know that the deputy leader also gets up and wants to talk about the private market. Well, here are some facts for him. On average, there have been fewer homes commenced, approved and constructed under the LNP per quarter than there have been under our government. It is only a Labor government that will deliver through our Homes for Queenslanders plan—a plan that those opposite have suggested is too much. We know that means they are going to cut. There is a very real possibility that the Leader of the Opposition will be elected to be the Premier of this state, so he needs to stop being weak and articulate what their plans are. In the absence of that, all we know they will do is cut.