



Speech By  
**Hon. Shannon Fentiman**


**MEMBER FOR WATERFORD**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 April 2024

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women) (10.06 am): This year we have seen one woman killed every four days at the hands of a man. We are not even five months into 2024 and already the number of women who have lost their lives is almost twice as many as this time last year. That is dozens of women who are no longer with us today because of a man, fuelled by disrespect, entitlement and an all too often normalised rage, who made the decision that she did not deserve to live. This cannot go on.

On Sunday, tens of thousands of people took to the streets across the country to call for an end to men's violence against women. Whilst it is heartening to see so many people step up and advocate for women's safety, it is also the case that rallies like this should not have to happen. Women in this country should not be accustomed to looking over their shoulder or crossing to the other side of the road when walking home. They should not be used to having to ask their friends to text them when they get home safely or share their location when they are on a first date. They should not have to instinctively grip their keys between their fingers whilst walking to their car at night. Women should not have to ask men to stop killing them, yet here we find ourselves—just days after another man was charged with murdering a woman in Western Australia—with women having to assert their basic right to feel safe in their own community.

All too often it does fall to women to have to make this simple argument and all too often we hear men shy away from their responsibility to have difficult conversations with themselves and their friends, instead hiding behind the chant of 'not all men'. Obviously not all men commit violence—and that has never been asserted by those calling for an end to men's violence against women—but men absolutely have a huge role to play. It is a role that may not always be easy or comfortable. Men have a role to play in assessing how they view and speak about women, how their friends and their sons and their brothers view and speak about women because, fundamentally, at the heart of gender-based violence is a lack of respect, and that is something men must address.

Our government is doing our part too. We have invested more than \$1.75 billion towards ending domestic, family and sexual violence and keeping women safe. We established the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. We have criminalised coercive control. We established a commission of inquiry into police responses to domestic and family violence, resulting in widespread changes across the QPS. We are building more crisis shelters, investing in men's behavioural change programs and enacting tougher penalties for DVO breaches.

Just yesterday the Premier and the Attorney-General announced \$36 million more for our hardworking frontline domestic, family and sexual assault services. However, unless men step up and play their part and help to build a safer, more respectful community, all of that could be in vain. I am asking every single member of this House, as leaders in their local communities, to do everything we can every day to tackle the causes of violence, because together and only together can we end men's violence against women.