



Speech By **Hermann Vorster**

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (11.23 pm): I rise to support the Domestic and Family Violence Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This bill puts victims first. It holds perpetrators to account, and it helps restore safety where every Queenslander deserves it—right in their very homes. The reality of this scourge—and we have heard it described as a scourge—is confronting. Calls for help in domestic and family violence matters have increased by more than 200 per cent in the past decade. Behind those numbers are people, mostly women, living in fear, children robbed of security and families torn apart. It is incumbent on all of us here to be honest about the challenge we face. Domestic and family violence is not just criminal behaviour; it is a cultural rot that must be confronted head-on.

For far too long, it was left to fester. Under Labor, victims were failed. They were left waiting for help. They were let down by systems more concerned with process than protection. This bill draws a line. It ensures police can issue immediate 12-month protection orders, it pilots GPS monitoring for high-risk offenders, and it also expands the use of recorded evidence to reduce the trauma of a court appearance. Each measure is about putting the rights of victims first, something that the former government would not do.

Let me acknowledge those who have stood on the front lines long before this bill—NGOs, community legal centres and specialist DFV organisations that are often the very first call for help. They provide shelter, guidance, advocacy and hope in the darkest of moments. In particular, I want to single out Ross Lee, President of My Community Legal Inc. on the Gold Coast, and his management committee for their tireless work on behalf of victims.

The Queensland Police Service also deserves the recognition of this House. Across the state, officers confront the harsh realities of domestic and family violence every day. They are the experts. They are the experts that we should be listening to.

I want to make very special mention of a friend of mine, retired detective inspector Marc Hogan who headed the Gold Coast District Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Taskforce. In 2017, Mark and his colleagues were formally recognised for their leadership in prevention and community engagement. Their work and the dedication of officers who followed set a benchmark for the kind of policing we now seek to support and strengthen with this bill.

I also want to acknowledge the courage of victim-survivors who have chosen to champion change when many others simply could not because of the trauma, fear or risk of speaking out. Closer to home, I think of Suzee Dearlove from Varsity College who has turned her own horrific story into a beacon of strength. Her work at Varsity College and in the media has been nothing short of remarkable. Her story, which she shared with me, left an impact on me personally, and I know her story has left an impact on many others as well. Suzee's advocacy brings hope to those still struggling, and she deserves the thanks of this House.

My sincere hope is that these reforms do more than just respond to violence. I want them to deter it. I want perpetrators to think twice before raising a hand or sending a threat. If these measures can spare even one family the horror of domestic violence, they would have been worth it. This is the fresh start that Queensland had voted for, because they had been waiting for action. After a decade of decline under Labor, Queensland were desperate for change. I am so very grateful to our Attorney-General and to Minister Camm for progressing these laws and to Minister Purdie for backing them in because it demonstrates that in just 10 months the LNP can be relied on to deliver the reforms that Labor could not or would not act on. That is the contrast: a decade of decline versus 10 months of delivery. This bill proves the difference. It shows that we are a government actually prepared to confront hard truths to back our police and support our frontline services and, for goodness sake, to put the safety of victims first.

During the course of this debate, I have heard plenty of coulda, woulda, shoulda from those opposite. They claim that they were working on reforms in this space. They had 10 years to deliver reforms! Ten years they had to deliver reforms! I lament those victims who were put in difficult situations because the former Labor government was not prepared to do the heavy lifting, the hard work and what was necessary to put victims first.

This is a government that is interested in the welfare of victims but it is also a government that is interested in reducing the number of victims in the first place. This trial of GPS monitoring is a fantastic initiative. It will ensure we can keep a vigilant eye on those with a propensity to commit the most heinous of crimes. I am sure—although we will never know—that lives will be saved because of the reforms progressed by this government. I feel the amendments proposed by those opposite are merely a way for them to stand in opposition to our reforms because they are not prepared to put victims first. They are hopelessly divided as a caucus and they will not do what is necessary. It is an act of obfuscation, and that is why I commend this bill to the House.

(Time expired)