




Speech By  
**Joan Pease**

**MEMBER FOR LYTTON**

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**DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (11.35 am): Domestic and family violence has no place in Queensland. It is a scourge in our local communities, our state and our nation. There is simply no place for it, and that is the position of the opposition. Our commitment is clear: we will support any reforms that are evidence-based, that protect victim-survivors and that strengthen our justice and support systems. Unfortunately, some aspects of this bill as currently drafted fail that test. The centrepiece of this bill is the introduction of police protection directions, PPDs. The government has promised to listen to the experts and it promised to put victim-survivors first, yet the introduction of PPDs breaks both of those promises. The evidence from the sector is crystal clear. PPDs, as drafted, are unsafe. QCOSS, the peak organisation for the sector, strongly opposes them. In its words—

... PPDs ... are an efficiency measure that does not prioritize the safety and wellbeing of victim-survivors.

This is not a minor concern; this is a fundamental flaw. The Women's Legal Service Queensland echoed this, warning that misidentification—which is already a deeply entrenched problem within the system—will only get worse under this framework. It said—

... misidentification often happens due to a lack of information and a need to respond in the moment ... that will be crystallised even more when that response in the moment then becomes a 12-month order.

Queensland has made progress in addressing misidentification, but we still have a long way to go. Data revealed through question on notice 490 this year shows that 31.1 per cent of respondents to domestic and family violence matters are women.

**Ms Camm:** That's not correct.

**Ms PEASE:** Let us compare that to the Queensland Police Union benchmark of 7.8 per cent.

**Ms Camm** interjected.

**Ms PEASE:** I take that interjection from the minister, because it was actually in the response to question on notice 490. Thank you very much for that, but you provided that information, so thank you.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Direct your comments through the chair.

**Ms PEASE:** This is not evidence of equality; it is evidence of systemic failure. Misidentification is not just a bureaucratic error; the consequences are devastating. Misidentified victim-survivors can lose access to housing, employment and custody of their children. They can be criminalised, stigmatised and socially isolated. Most tragically, they can be left without the protections they desperately need and exposed to further violence—violence which in too many cases has proved fatal. QCOSS made this point starkly during the committee process—

... the consequences of misidentification can be severe and potentially fatal.

Further submissions told the committee in June—

Under this bill, victim-survivors must navigate a more complex and less transparent system with fewer safeguards and reduced oversight. Those misidentified as the offender will bear the burden of correcting the error, often without access to legal support, all while continuing to face violence that they may now feel is emboldened by the system.

A further warning was—

It is well established that police misidentify victim-survivors as perpetrators at an unacceptable level in Queensland.

Another core flaw is the removal of court oversight. Currently police protection notices must be brought before a court within 14 days. That judicial check and balance is a vital safeguard. This bill strips that away, allowing police to issue a 12-month direction without any automatic court involvement. Submissions from the legal sector, including the Queensland Law Society, warned of the dangers. They told the committee the consequences of being inappropriately named as a respondent to a police protection direction will be dire. This is not a hypothetical risk. In Tasmania, where a similar system exists, police issued directions have been made at three times the rate of court orders, with a doubling of the applications to revoke. That experience should serve as a flashing red light for Queensland, yet this government is ignoring it.

The voices of those on the front line could not have been clearer. The majority of the submissions to the committee opposed PPDs or raised significant concerns. Legal Aid Queensland, Sisters Inside, DVConnect, the Red Rose Foundation, QCOSS and many others all said the same thing: these reforms risk putting victim-survivors in greater danger. The answer cannot be to pass the burden on to victim-survivors by stripping away safeguards and court oversight.

The opposition has always supported evidence-based reforms to ease the pressure on police. That is why in government we introduced a significant suite of reforms through the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2004. The reforms had wideranging support across the DFV sector. The difference is that those reforms put safety first. This bill does not.

The bill also includes provisions for electronic monitoring pilots and the expanded VREC framework. While there is some support for these measures, submissions again highlighted significant concerns. Victim advocates warned that electronic monitoring may create a false sense of security, particularly in regional areas with patchy coverage. Others raised the danger that victim-survivors may become reliant on technology that cannot guarantee their safety. The committee also heard that victims have expressed that they have concerns about the technology and what this means for their safety planning, particularly around a false sense of security and the dangers that might arise from that. While the VREC framework expansion statewide is welcomed in principle, many stakeholders stressed the need for proper training, accessible information and adequate resources. Without these the reforms risk becoming another hollow promise.

Today in the gallery I welcome students from Wynnum State High School who are active participants in the work that we do locally against domestic and family violence and are regular attendees at my candlelight vigil at Pandanus Beach. I thank them for their participation in that which highlights the importance of making sure that everyone has the right to feel safe and secure in their own homes.

This bill was an opportunity to strengthen Queensland's response to domestic and family violence. Instead, it is a missed opportunity. By prioritising administrative efficiency over safety, the government has put victims at risk. The opposition cannot support reforms that experts across the DFV sector say will increase misidentification, remove essential safeguards and potentially place lives in danger. We urge the government to go back to the drawing board, to listen to the experts and put victim-survivors back at the centre of this system. At the end of the day this is not about political pointscoring, it is about protecting lives. On that test, this bill fails. Let us not forget that the vast majority of domestic and family violence is perpetrated against women.