




Speech By
Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 18 February 2025

MOTION

Safer Families, Safer Communities

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (11.44 am): Domestic, family and sexual violence should be above politics, and what we have seen today is the government come in and rush through a motion with no notice to the opposition, in regard to Queenslanders who are victims of domestic, family and sexual violence, without any genuine opportunity to have a sensible conversation about important reforms. So let's be clear: if the government was serious about reform, then they would have introduced a bill into this House. They would have allowed victims, stakeholders, Queenslanders and elected members of parliament to actually critically analyse important reforms, reforms that are designed to protect particularly women who are experiencing domestic and family violence.

I think a number of us probably take great offence to some of the claims made that members of the opposition do not care about domestic and family violence because that is simply untrue. That is untrue. When you look at our track record in government, we were a government that was focused on making sure that we reformed the criminal justice system so the response was significantly better. We implemented reforms around coercive control and around affirmative consent, around stealthing, overhauling the criminal justice system. As the shadow health minister pointed out, we tried to do that in a bipartisan way. We acknowledged the work of the former LNP government commissioning that review. We took that work on and we implemented it, but today we have cheap politics rather than actually supporting victims of domestic and family violence.

Given that is the tone the government has set today, I think it is important that we recognise what some government members have said. I would like to bring the House's attention to the police minister who was, at the time, the shadow police minister who, when asked by the Queensland Police Union his views on the commission of inquiry, a very important inquiry that was established, he said, 'Oh, look, I haven't even reviewed it, and it's not on my big to-do list at the moment that I've been made since getting the job.' It is pretty astounding that the shadow police minister—now Minister for Police—in this state was evidently not interested in such a significant piece of reform. It was not a big priority for him.

When I talk to police in my community, they tell me that the biggest issue they are responding to is domestic and family violence. I want to acknowledge some of the fantastic men and women in blue and also those incredible organisations who are responding every day to instances of domestic and family violence. I will give a shout-out to the senior sergeant and team in my electorate in Nerang who have done a fantastic job of creating a dedicated space so that it is a safe space for victims to come to. They have a victims' advocate in there and they are doing some really important work. We should be supporting them and not playing politics over these issues.

As well as all of those law reforms, our government brought in significant investment. There was over a billion dollars worth of investment, but mostly recently the \$588 million investment to implement the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. Can I say that with all of that good work, it is disappointing

that we are here today with government members who are playing politics over an issue that really deserved careful consideration. Of course we support reforms that will keep victims safe, particularly victims of domestic and family violence.

Ms Bates interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the minister and I ask her to do the right thing. No notice was given to this side to be able to make a meaningful contribution to—

A government member interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from one of the men in the government who has—

A government member interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Gaven has the call.

Ms SCANLON: It is disrespectful to rush through a motion on such a significant issue without any notice. The Making Queensland Safer Laws were rushed through and we saw where that ended up, so I think it is important that Queenslanders have a genuine opportunity to provide feedback, particularly when the track record of the LNP—

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. I remind her that it was the LNP that slashed funding to Gold Coast DV services. They know your track record. We want to make sure that we support meaningful reforms, and we will continue to do that.

(Time expired)