




Speech By
Wendy Bourne

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (9.42 pm): The bill before us was referred to the Education, Arts and Communities Committee for thorough consideration on 30 April 2025. I would like to begin by thanking fellow committee members and the amazing staff who support our committee. They provided us with incredible support during what was, at times, harrowing evidence. I would also like to thank our very hardworking frontline police officers. Domestic violence has no place whatsoever in our community. Every home should be a safe one.

As a member of that committee, I had the opportunity to hear directly from frontline services but I also read some 75 submissions. I thank all of those organisations who contributed. The professionals who work every day with those impacted by domestic and family violence shared their insights on how this legislation will function in practice, not just in theory, and how it will affect the lives of those it is intended to protect. That is why I rise today to speak clearly and firmly against the proposed introduction of police protection directions, PPDs.

PPDs would allow police officers to issue protection orders on the spot—similar in scope to domestic violence orders but with a crucial difference. These orders would remain in effect for up to 12 months without any court oversight. Let me be clear: this places responding police officers in the role of judge and jury, making decisions with profound and long-lasting consequences without the checks and balances our justice system demands. I have contributed to a statement of reservation outlining my concerns, and I strongly urge every member of this House to inform themselves fully before casting their vote.

As noted in that statement, the Queensland Labor opposition recognises the enormous challenges facing the Queensland Police Service in responding to domestic and family violence. We thank them for their dedication and the work they do to keep our communities safe; however, gratitude must not blind us to the risks. Out of the six committee members, three of us submitted statements of reservation. That alone should serve as a red flag—a signal that the concerns raised by stakeholders are not fringe or minor; they are significant.

Services on the front line have warned us that PPDs may enable systems abuse. We have heard that perpetrators, often skilled at manipulation, may present as the person most in need of protection while the true victim-survivor is misidentified. Let's be honest: victims from marginalised groups often lack confidence in the system and do not have the resources or support to challenge that misidentification. A review process, while technically available, does little to help those who have already been silenced by fear or disadvantage.

The requirement of a senior officer to approve a PPD has been presented as a safeguard; however, stakeholders remain unconvinced. They know, as we do, that this is not sufficient judicial oversight. We know that misidentification is already occurring in Queensland and that we do not yet have the appropriate systems to detect and correct that. Victims are being labelled as perpetrators and

the impacts are devastating—criminalisation, potential imprisonment, loss of children and barriers to employment and housing. Let me share one stark and sobering fact: nearly half of all the women murdered in domestic and family violence incidents had at some point been listed as a respondent in a protection order. Let that sink in. Who is most at risk? It is our most vulnerable—First Nations women, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with disabilities, neurodivergent individuals, those living in rural and remote communities, LGBTQIA+ communities and people facing mental health challenges or addiction.

Our role as members of parliament is to be the voice of those who cannot always speak for themselves. Our job as a committee was to listen to those stakeholders. It is not me who has decided that PPDs are not best practice. It is listening to and respecting those expert voices on which I base this opinion. During estimates we saw, once again, a blatant display of disrespect. This government has chosen politics over evidence, ignoring the clear evidence of experts in the domestic and family violence sector and introducing PPDs despite sector-wide concern. This move, unsupported by those on the front line, shows a worrying disregard for expert advice, a minister not listening to those on the ground and a dangerous prioritisation of political agendas over community safety. Our duty in this chamber is to act on—

Government members interjected.

Ms BOURNE: Our duty in this chamber is to act on what we have heard. PPDs may be well intentioned, but intention does not protect people; good legislation does. Strong systems and a skilled and confident workforce is what protects victim-survivors. Let's not rush to implement a tool that could do more harm than good. Let's take the time to get this right for the sake of every victim-survivor who needs us to stand up and speak out today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Ipswich West, when you are being provocative, members in the House are entitled to make comments, so when you freeze and look at me for guidance, that is a different opportunity.

Ms BOURNE: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.