



Speech By
Corrine McMillan

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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MOTION

Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (5.30 pm): I move—

That this House condemns the member for Whitsunday for their failures in their ministerial duties to protect vulnerable Queensland children, victims of domestic and family violence and Queenslanders recovering from natural disasters.

Children of the child safety system, those experiencing domestic and family violence and communities subject to cyclonic weather are victims of circumstance through no fault of their own. It is the responsibility of any and every government to protect them, especially our most vulnerable, our children. The situation that has been unfolding for the past 14 months demonstrates a series of ministerial leadership failures and maladministration. This failed ministerial leadership means the system is not safer, it is more fragile, it is opaque and more unstable than it was before.

The minister's absence overseas on safari while the state was dealing with a cyclone and the child safety system was in turmoil sends a disturbing message about this LNP government's priorities. Child safety is not a portfolio that pauses. Children do not get a holiday from abuse. It is clear that the department under this minister is in turmoil. Acting appointments and executive reshuffles are becoming the norm, undermining the stability needed to safeguard our most precious, our children.

Ministerial leadership failure is at the heart of the events unfolding. We have a department in crisis, yet the minister remains. Election commitments remain unmet: promised reductions in residential care, more child safety officers, a professional foster care model, proper monitoring of children. Without clear data there is no evidence of progress. Minister Camm turned on an IT system that an independent audit found was, 'Unfinished, poorly tested, missing critical functions and rolled out despite frontline warnings.'

Mr Head interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Callide, you are not in your seat.

Ms McMILLAN: Intakes slowed, backlogs exploded, making response times unknowable. Nearly 40,000 children flagged as at risk were left in unsafe environments. The minister herself admitted that without a doubt there were children put at greater risk for a period. That admission alone should have triggered urgent transparency and accountability. Instead, Queenslanders got silence. When children are at risk, when a department is failing and falling apart at the seams, strong, decisive and deliberate leadership is needed. The minister must be present. The data blackout which has now lasted 11 months is one of the most concerning aspects—a data blackout that the minister knew would occur before the system went live.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Lytton and member for Nanango, if I have to call either of you again you will be warned.

Ms McMILLAN: Even the Queensland Family and Child Commission has raised the alarm. Queenslanders are being asked to trust a system they are no longer allowed to see. Mr Allsop put it plainly: we should be in a better place but we are not. Without transparency the public experts and advocates cannot assess the state of child safety or hold this government accountable. The loss of key metrics such as harm, response times and safety outcomes just fuels mistrust. On the front line morale is at rock bottom. Workers facing immense stress with dangerous workloads are being silenced, fearing retribution if they speak out. Any confidence in this minister has been lost. A staff survey rated the system 1.79 out of 10. A child protection system that neglects its workers will inevitably fail the children it is meant to protect.

The systemic issues surrounding domestic and family violence, including the absence of prevention programs and the failure to report on recommendations from key inquiries, show a broader problem with this LNP government's approach to safeguarding children exposed to violence. Further, it is clear that the minister did not advocate to prevent the de-establishment of a crucial domestic violence command in the QPS, which advocates have called out as a backward step. Exposure to domestic and family violence is one of the largest contributing factors to child maltreatment in Queensland, an issue this minister has failed to take seriously.

Further data released in May 2025 showed that more than 100 of 400 serious repeat offenders were living in state care. Additionally, more than 200 children in state care were under strict supervised youth justice orders. This is not acceptable. Silence is reprehensible, ignorance and disregard is immoral, obfuscation is intolerable and delay is dangerous, perhaps life threatening.

Leading child advocates are calling for the Premier to step in. Our children, our most vulnerable, deserve leadership that is stable, transparent and accountable. Queenslanders deserve a minister worthy of trust, a minister who will protect them.