



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Domestic Violence

SPEECH

Monday, 12 October 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Speaker Marles, Richard, MP	Question No.

Mr MARLES (Corio) (10:56): Sixty-nine women have died so far this year from acts of violence in Australia, in the home. In my home town, Geelong, we have also seen a spike in family violence incidents, with more than 1,200 incidents reported last year. A Geelong women's refuge is getting 40 domestic violence referrals a week from police. This is an appalling scourge on our society. The women being subjected to violence at the hands of someone they know, usually a husband or partner, behind closed doors is not something that discriminates based on the size of the house, the suburb or the brand of car in the garage. The White Ribbon Foundation, of which I am an ambassador, makes it clear that violence against women is more than just physical violence. It is an attitude we bring to how we treat women as a society.

A survey conducted by VicHealth of 16-24 year olds nationally on violence against women found that younger people were more ambivalent about the question of violence and its appropriateness in relation to women. In releasing the report, VicHealth Chief Executive, Jerril Rechter, said:

We know that if we can change young people's views at that critical life stage, when they're still shaping their views about the world and about society, that we can create a generation of young people who say no to violence against women.

That is why it is so important, as leaders, we make it crystal clear that violence against women is not okay. So when a senior Liberal figure—the Mayor of Geelong—attends a public event wearing a t-shirt of a naked woman hitchhiking, with the accompanying slogan, 'Gas, grass or ass, nobody rides for free,' he is guilty of more than just poor taste in clothing. This is a Geelong leader, a man the Liberal Party has flirted with sending to Canberra, and he thinks it is no big deal to publicly send this message.

The first policy announcement by the Turnbull Liberal government was a new domestic violence package, with Malcolm Turnbull declaring he wanted to change the national culture to make disrespecting women un-Australian. He should be applauded for these comments. But what does he say today about the Liberal Mayor of Geelong? We know that the member for Corangamite thought so as well, taking to social media to retweet the Minister for Women's comments:

Proud to stand with @TurnbullMalcolm @RosieBatty1 & Ken Lay to announce \$100m Women's Safety Package.

Yet the member for Corangamite has also on countless occasions been proud to stand by the Liberal mayor, Darryn Lyons, and be effusive in her praise of him. What does she say about the Liberal Mayor of Geelong today? The local Liberal leadership needs to actually take a stand and show they are about more than just slogans. I call on the member for Corangamite and the Prime Minister to today condemn the Liberal Mayor of Geelong, Darryn Lyons.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Wicks): In accordance with standing order 193 the time for constituency statements has concluded.