

Legislative Council

Hansard

Thursday 20 August 2026

The President, Mr Farrell, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

[excerpt...]

QUESTIONS

Family Violence Act Reforms - Definition of Family

Ms WEBB question to MINISTER for WOMEN and the PREVENTION of FAMILY and SEXUAL VIOLENCE, Ms PALMER

[2.33 p.m.]

Minister, I note that government announced today its intention to pursue reforms to the state Family Violence Act 2004 in the wake of public consultation on the discussion paper which was released earlier this year. While it appears positive that further reforms are in the pipeline, I note that the joint statement released by yourself and the Attorney-General was silent on addressing longstanding concerns over the definition of family violence in our laws. Minister, can you confirm that currently Tasmania is the only state to limit the definition of family to intimate partners and significant relationships, unlike other jurisdictions which recognise other forms of family violence? And minister, can you clarify whether the proposed reforms to the Family Violence Act 2004 will include revising the current definition and scope of the family violence definition, as called for by stakeholders including the Tasmanian Family and Sexual Violence Alliance, the peak body?

ANSWER

Legislative reform is certainly a key part of strengthening Tasmania's response to family and sexual violence, and it was great to work with the Attorney-General, the work that he is leading across this space. I think that what we can do from a legislative perspective is one of the real levers that we do have in this space. It's been excellent for the Attorney-General to get that feedback through the discussion paper. This is just one part of a number of reforms that the Attorney-General is looking at. It was certainly referenced in the feedback, as you said from the discussion paper. There have been a number of discussions around that terminology and that definition. This work sits with the Attorney-General and with the Department of Justice, but I certainly have appreciated being able to work very closely with him, and I will certainly be advocating in this space.

Family Violence Act Reforms - Definition of Family

Ms WEBB question to MINISTER for WOMEN and the PREVENTION of FAMILY and SEXUAL VIOLENCE, Ms Palmer

[2.36 p.m.]

I appreciate the minister's comments that weren't answers to the question. I know that she is very committed to this area. Even though the legislative reform may sit with the Attorney-General, I'm asking you in your capacity as Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family and Sexual Violence. Firstly, can you confirm that Tasmania is only state to limit the definition in the way that we do in our legislation? Can you clarify whether it's your expectation as the minister responsible for this area that when the legislative reform is undertaken, the definition and scope that's in the act will be an element of that reform?

ANSWER

I would need to take on notice the element of your question about every other jurisdiction in Australia and I will do that.

As I say, it does sit with the Attorney-General, and it wouldn't be appropriate for me to in this place make any commitment with regard to the body of work that sits with him. What I can say is that I take very seriously my role as an advocate across this space, and I have very much appreciated that the Attorney-General is wanting to work very collaboratively with me as the minister in this space, and with all of the stakeholders that we both manage together. This is a significant program of family violence reform and we are working through what came back from the discussion paper, but also the advocacy from numerous amazing stakeholders that we have in this space. They're conversations that I will be part of.