

NICK DAMETTO

Katter's Australian Party

Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

13/6/2019

DVO legislation needs reform: Dametto

HINCHINBROOK MP Nick Dametto has called for wide-ranging reform of State legislation governing Domestic Violence Orders, labelling the system "a failure".

In a bold speech to parliament on Wednesday night, Mr Dametto criticised the effectiveness of Domestic Violence Orders (DVOs) and conversely, how they can be applied to someone with virtually no evidence of an offence committed.

"DVOs are doing absolutely nothing to deter repeat offenders from breaching those DVOs and committing more violent offences. In the words of one victim, a DVO is not worth the paper it is printed on," he said.

"People are also presenting to my office with the disturbing story of false domestic violence claims being made against them. Both cases make me sick. Our system is broken and we need to fix it."

Mr Dametto said domestic violence had "no boundaries".

"It affects couples, siblings and even the elderly. Domestic violence has no social or economic constraints. As a community, our attitude towards domestic violence needs to change," he said.

"We would not put up with this kind of behaviour if it happened in the street. People should feel safe in their house and should not be fearful of going home."

Mr Dametto said it felt hypocritical for him to attend a recent street march to raise awareness against domestic violence when he had met with a "victim in my office who I am struggling to help".

"When people reach a point where they no longer feel that reporting a breach of a DVO to police will help, there is a major problem," he said.

"On the other side of the coin, I have had broken men coming into my office and swear on their children's lives that they would never be violent towards anyone, especially their partner...Imagine having the police show up out of the blue after a break-up to slap you with a DVO with no evidence to prove that an offence has even taken place, except the victim's statement or a statutory declaration," he said.

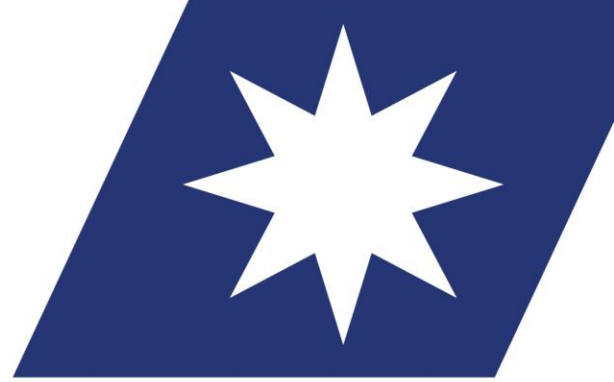
"To think that a court order that is designed to protect our State's most vulnerable against violence is being used as a weapon by others to keep ex-partners from seeing their children, or to have them arrested on alleged DVO breaches, or even to have their firearms removed without evidence that a crime has even occurred, infuriates me.

"We need to amend this legislation. In its current form, males and females in our society are being victimised by a clunky system of loopholes that open up opportunities for people to make false claims without consequences."

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In addition to his speech in parliament this week, Mr Dametto also asked two questions on notice to Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence Di Farmer and Police Minister Mark Ryan regarding DVOs.

—ENDS—

Media Enquiries

Michael Serenc – 0423 108 848