

**FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE —
TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL SILENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MEMORIAL MARCH**

Statement by Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) [12.18 pm]: In the 12 months since this time last year, 28 lives have been lost to domestic homicides in Western Australia. This includes women and men, and nine children aged between two and 15.

Last Friday I attended the annual silent march, hosted by the Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA), to acknowledge the lives lost in the most unimaginable ways. As the CEO of the women’s council, Ms Angela Hartwig, said on the day, “One death is too many, so the killing of 28 Western Australians at the hands of loved ones is indeed shocking and unacceptable.” As the state’s first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, I could not agree more. It is unacceptable that Western Australia still has the second highest rate of reported physical and sexual violence perpetrated against women across the country. It is unacceptable that the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ Personal Safety Survey continues to show that fewer than 20 per cent of women who experience violence from an intimate partner reported the most recent incident to the police.

However, it is encouraging to see community leaders standing up and speaking out about family and domestic violence and violence against women—leaders like the Anglican Archbishop of Perth, Kay Goldsworthy; the Chief Commissioner of Police, Chris Dawson, APM; and the Premier of Western Australia, Hon Mark McGowan, MLA. It is encouraging to see colleagues and members in this place agreeing that we must “stop the violence” and wearing the orange badge to mark the Government’s 16 Days in WA to Stop Violence against Women. Because we all have a role to play in changing the conversation that allows violence against women to go unchallenged.

I congratulate the Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services (WA) for the incredible effort in bringing together last Friday’s 28th Annual Silent March. I would also like to thank my parliamentary colleagues who attended this event. It is important that we as leaders in our communities continue to acknowledge and advocate for change to address this important issue.