



PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Motion Accorded Priority

8 March 2017

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (15:52): International Women's Day was originally called International Working Women's Day. The earliest observance of Women's Day was held in 1909 in New York and was organised by the Socialist Party of America—not the Republican Party of America. I acknowledge the Wallsend Woman of the Year, a wonderful woman named Tomika Riley. I had the opportunity this morning to sit with her partner, Bree, her sister Carly, her mum, Cheryl, and her dad, John. It was a wonderful day and Tomika is certainly a wonderful ambassador for Wallsend.

We should, on this day when we celebrate working women around the world, look back at the original aim of International Women's Day. It was to achieve full gender equality for women of the world, but that aim has not been realised—and that lack of realisation was, sadly, not recognised in the contribution by the member for Port Macquarie and it has not been recognised by members of the Government. A gender pay gap does exist across New South Wales, and I ask members of the Government—my female colleagues on the other side—what they are doing about the gender pay gap in Government right now.

There are a disproportionate number of women affected by penalty rates and, whether or not it is a Federal Government decision, it is women workers of New South Wales who will today be unable to celebrate International Women's Day—because they are the women who work at Coles or Woolworths, who work on Sundays. They are the single mums who will not be able to get the penalty rates they deserve.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Why don't you talk about the women in your electorate? Why don't you talk about the great things women do?

Ms SONIA HORNERY: I am talking about a lot of things—about the equality of women. There is another matter I want to raise. I have concerns about the woman who has been selected for the women's leadership role—Minister for Women—in the Government. Early on questions were raised by the Women's Electoral Lobby. They said that most women in New South Wales did not share the new Minister's pro-life view. In fact Clare Pullen said:

The overwhelming majority of people in New South Wales are pro-choice and we would want a Minister for Women who is prepared to trust women and doctors to make personal medical decisions.

Ms Melanie Gibbons: Point of order: The motion is about the Women of the Year awards and International Women's Day, not the personal opinions of the Minister. I ask you to bring the member back to the leave of the motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I uphold the point of order. The member for Wallsend will return to the leave of the motion, which is about celebrating International Women's Day.

Ms SONIA HORNER: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, but I refer you to paragraph (2), which is: "recognises the invaluable contribution women ...make to our society." They cannot very well make an invaluable contribution if they are not treated equally and they do not have rights of their own. That is something that would deeply upset many women in my electorate and certainly on this side of the House. Clare Pullen said:

The overwhelming majority of people in New South Wales are pro-choice and we would want a Minister for Women who is prepared to trust women and doctors to make personal medical decisions.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Point of order: The member is flouting your ruling. You upheld the previous point of order. I ask you to bring the member back to the subject matter of the motion, which is not about the Minister's view on any particular issue. It talks about congratulating this year's winners, about which we have not heard anything from the member.

Ms SONIA HORNER: You are not listening.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wallsend will return to the leave of the motion.

Ms SONIA HORNER: I have recognised the Wallsend Woman of the Year, and I recognise all women. I also talked about the history of International Women's Day, which is about equal rights for women. If we are talking about equal rights for women, then we are talking about women having the right to make choices about their bodies—for now and for their children in the future. The selection as Minister of— **[Time expired]**