



**National Women's
Safety Alliance**



21 June 2023

Senator the Hon. Katy Gallagher MP
Minister for Women
Minister for Finance
Minister for Public Service
Manager of Government Business in the Senate
Senator for the ACT
Unit 3 40 Corinna Street
Phillip, ACT, 2606

Via email: senator.katy.gallagher@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister,

We, the undersigned, representing survivors of domestic, family, and sexual violence, as well as the allies who stand beside them in their journey towards a violence-free society, feel compelled to address the recent display of parliamentary conduct in light of the 2021 Set the Standard Report.

Sexual violence, unfortunately, remains one of the most underreported, under-prosecuted, and under-convicted crimes. The attrition rates for complainants are disheartening, as survivors face immense challenges when making the difficult decision to report such crimes. Many survivors choose never to disclose their experiences of sexual violence.

Our dedicated members, who tirelessly serve in front-line services, advocacy organizations, primary prevention of men's violence against women and women's legal services, are fully committed to preventing and addressing gender-based violence. They are deeply invested in realizing the objectives of the National Plan within a single generation but to do this we need Parliament to uphold the highest community standards.

Therefore, we implore all members of the Australian Parliament to recognize the profound impact of their words and behaviours on survivors of sexual violence, as well as on their friends, families, and the frontline workforce that supports them. It is crucial that all Australian Parliamentarians, especially men, uphold the highest standards of respect and empathy in their actions.

The 2021 Set the Standard Report serves as a reminder of the urgent need for change, and it calls upon each member of Parliament to lead by example. By demonstrating empathy and accepting disclosure, you can play a pivotal role in fostering a safe and supportive environment for survivors.

Let us work together to ensure that survivors of sexual violence are heard, believed, and supported. It is our collective responsibility to create a society that upholds the highest standards of respect, where survivors can find solace and justice.

We kindly request your attention and action on this matter, as it holds profound significance for the lives of countless individuals affected by sexual violence. May we stand united in our commitment to address this issue with the urgency and compassion it deserves.

Yours faithfully,

Katherine Berney,

Director
National Women's Safety Alliance

Allan Ball,

National Director
White Ribbon

