

Media Release

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Violence at night and under bright lights Only Yes means Yes ! says candidate for Women

The “Reclaim the Night” march will be held across the globe tonight. Traditionally the march evolved in the 1970’s when women united together to protest against all forms of violence. What Women Want (Australia) supports the march and Madeleine Love, rural Victorian Senate Candidate, says it is vital to repel violence against women at night, as it is under bright lights.

“Nowhere is this more poignant than in the case of the women who were sexually assaulted under the bright lights and trust of full medical examination”, she said, commenting on the Melbourne dermatologist who this week pleaded guilty to fourteen charges of rape and sexual assault against his patients, in the Melbourne county court.

Ms Love acknowledged the courage of the seven women who came forward to make this abuse known, saying “Statistics tell us that only 20-25% of sexual assault is reported, and even though this particular case was publicised it is possible there may have been more victims who didn’t report,” she said.

Speaking directly to people who had suffered sexual abuse and violence, Ms Love said she and the WWW party understood the many reasons for victims to be reluctant to tell their story, but encouraged them to call CASA - the Centre against Sexual Abuse, for support. “There is no need to make a statement – you can have confidence that you will be understood, believed, and protected. Look at the women around you, and know that every second woman will understand personally, the short and long term effect of sexual abuse”, said Ms Love.

The What Women Want party is also aware of the impact of sexual abuse for males. Older statistics suggest that one in six boys under the age of 18 have been abused, but the true numbers may be higher.

“Where is Tony Abbott, Minister for Health, speaking against this outrage by an Australian doctor? Where is the PM John Howard, whose ministers can wrongly vilify a doctor for international terrorism, but who has nothing to say about this horrendous serial abuse of power over women by a registered medical practitioner”, said Ms Love.

“John Howard’s concern for women seems to go about as deep as his vacuous campaign of “Australia says NO to violence to women”, said Ms Love.

“Many women are already shocked and violated before they are able to say ‘No’ to sexual assault. Within the WWW party women say **only YES means YES**. Medical practitioners need to be told immediately, violation against women is malpractice, no excuse, and the Medical Practitioner Boards need to continue to adopt this stance”, said Ms Love.

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www.casa.org.au To contact any CASA and the after hours Sexual Assault Crisis Line (SACL) simply call 1800 806 292 or Email SACL at ahcasa@rwh.org.au

www.whatwomenwant.org.au