

The Sex Party's Merinda Davis, the only female candidate contesting the Broadmeadows by-election, today decried the policy vacuum surrounding women's issues.

"Domestic violence, sexual abuse, female genital mutilation: too often issues such as these are ignored by government and left to not-for-profit organisations to pick up the pieces," said Ms Davis. "Government inaction leaves many women without access to vital support necessary for their health and well-being."

The candidate expressed concern that community safety was suffering due to ineffective 'knee-jerk' policies, with dire implications for women's safety.

"Moral panic about city nightlife and inflated reports of 'ultra-violence' have led [Victorian Police] Chief Commissioner Overland and the government to promise more police on CBD streets," Ms Davis stated. "These unnecessary measures divert resources from suburban issues such as domestic and sexual violence."

"The *Hume Leader* reports domestic violence peaked over the holiday period. Service providers, like the Broadmeadows Community Legal Centre who support women suffering abuse, are to be applauded for addressing genuine community concerns. However, they remain critically under-resourced," she explained.

"The Sex Party's policies put women's health back on the political agenda," she said. "As the only female candidate, I will voice concerns about women whose rights and welfare have long been ignored at all levels of government."

The Sex Party will empower women to make informed choices about their lives through education and access to services.

"Services must be culturally relevant – in women's preferred language where appropriate," Ms Davis explained. "We need integrated delivery models to prevent women from having to visit

Sexual Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation – Go Unfunded in Broadmeadows

Written by ASP Staff

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multiple sites for basic healthcare. Community health centres are vital for adequate access to support.

“We need to implement proven, effective public health models, as well as support innovation, social enterprise and pilot programs to better support our community.”