




Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

---

Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2020


**COMMUNITY BASED SENTENCES (INTERSTATE TRANSFER) BILL**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.58 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for communities, I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Community Based Sentences (Interstate Transfer) Bill 2019. As articulated by my colleague the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for police and corrective services, the member for Toowoomba North, the Liberal National Party has concerns regarding the possible outcomes of this bill; namely, that our state could potentially turn into a dumping ground for interstate prisoners to live in the Queensland community. To understand these concerns it is important to first note the current reciprocal arrangements that have been in place for some time.

In Queensland, convicted adult persons—and that is who we are talking about today as this bill applies to adults—can receive and serve community based sentences with respect to a number of orders, including: probation orders, community service orders, graffiti removal orders, intensive correction orders, and drug and alcohol treatment orders. As it stands, Queensland has in place informal arrangements that exist with other jurisdictions to supervise offenders on community based sentences when they move or travel interstate. With all jurisdictions except Queensland and the Northern Territory participating in a national legislative scheme, the objective of the legislation before the House is to formally establish Queensland's participation in this scheme to facilitate the transfer and enforcement of community based sentences between Australian state jurisdictions.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

---

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.00 pm), continuing: As per the public briefing on 30 August 2019 by Queensland Corrective Services to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, Queensland managed approximately 87 interstate community based offenders, predominantly from New South Wales. In contrast, at the time of the briefing 147 Queensland offenders were managed in other states and territories. This means that, as it stands, Queensland is a net exporter of prisoners serving community based sentences. As I alluded to earlier, there are genuine concerns that Queensland will become a dumping ground through the formalisation of these existing arrangements, which is why it is imperative that Labor not allow Queensland to become a net importer of such prisoners.

I also noted the detailed submission of the Queensland Law Society and some concerns that it raised. The facilitation, transfer and monitoring of community based transfers requires the ongoing utilisation of police resources and the efforts of our fine men and women of the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Corrective Services. There can be no question that an increase of interstate prisoners, particularly to the point of becoming a net importer, will only serve as a further drain on these resources. As communities right across Queensland from the Gold Coast to the Far North and everywhere in between sadly know all too well, under the Palaszczuk Labor government our police resources are already stretched enough with significant crime waves occurring not only in North Queensland but also on the Gold Coast and other parts of Queensland.

It also stands to reason that, in addition to the drain on Queensland's police resources, the Queensland taxpayer will pay for the provision of rehabilitation and other support services for interstate prisoners which already could be used for Queenslanders under such orders who have gone through the criminal justice system. Such funding could otherwise be spent on reducing recidivism rates and preventing crime right here in Queensland and should be allocated for that purpose.

Our police are at the forefront of dealing practically with community based orders and ensuring that our loyal communities remain safe. With that in mind, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Moggill electorate's own hardworking men and women of the Police Service. In particular, I welcome Senior Sergeant Lee Fortune as the recently appointed officer in charge of the Karana Downs Police Station.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle):** Member, can you return to the long title of the bill, please?

**Dr ROWAN:** I look forward to meeting Senior Sergeant Fortune in the coming weeks. It goes without saying that our police service, communities and citizens play an integral role in promoting and ensuring community safety and, in doing so, provide an invaluable resource and service in collaboration with other agencies. Under the Palaszczuk Labor government, we know that crime rates across Queensland are skyrocketing. Police resources are already stretched to the limit and, when serious and ongoing concerns are raised about adequate policing numbers, Queensland can ill afford to find itself in a position where it becomes—

**Mr RYAN:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, quite rightly you have already identified that the member is straying from the long title of the bill. The member is straying once again and I ask you to bring him back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I did not hear the member's comments, but I do ask the member to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr WATTS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the police would have to deal with these offenders if they breached the law. It is directly relevant to the long title.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order. Please resume your seat.

**Dr ROWAN:** My point is that some of the submitters and key stakeholders have valid concerns that under the legislation Queensland could become a net importer of interstate prisoners and that will have significant flow-on effects when it comes to resources. It is absolutely critical that these matters are considered as part of the debate and that is why I raise those matters.

In closing, I thank all members of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for their consideration of the bill. Specifically, I thank my LNP colleagues, the member for Southern Downs and particularly the member for Lockyer who, as a former serving police officer, comes to this place with a lot of knowledge and experience. I also thank all the key stakeholders who made submissions, including Sisters Inside, the Queensland Law Society and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service Queensland. Those stakeholders certainly provided invaluable input when it came to the committee process in terms of the oversight and consideration of the legislation and the implications of it for offenders not only in Queensland but also from other jurisdictions around Australia, and also what that will mean for resourcing for various agencies in Queensland and beyond.

With those closing comments, this bill needs due diligence, oversight and consideration in a methodical and considered way. That is what we should have here in this great parliamentary democracy. As the member for Moggill, I conclude my contribution.