



Speech by

ELISA ROBERTS

MEMBER FOR GYMPIE

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ROAD SAFETY

Miss ELISA ROBERTS (Gympie—ONP) (7.16 p.m.): I rise to bring to the attention of the House an issue which is of grave concern to the people in my electorate, that is, the tragic loss of many of its young through road accidents. The community I represent has expressed its belief that something proactive has to be done in order to address this situation. This will not be an easy task, as we are all aware that the major proportion of fatal accidents and trauma occur, particularly with regard to our youth, as a result of speeding, overconfidence, impatience and peer pressure. It is these contributors and basic driving attitudes of our young which need to be addressed.

The majority of those either maimed or killed result not from a lack of driver knowledge or knowledge of road rules. All drivers have had to read the comprehensive Queensland Transport driving manual and have subsequently passed their written test. So they do know what is right and what is wrong. I personally have complete faith in the accredited driver trainers in Queensland and believe that they pass only those they believe to be competent drivers.

We really need to tackle the issue of driver attitude and the view of many young drivers that 'it won't happen to me', that they are invincible. I am no expert on the behaviour patterns of 17-year-old males, but whether or not this is achieved through increased education in our schools or stricter deterrence via legislation, something needs to be done. One way we could work towards reducing the road crash statistics may be to reintroduce the display of learner and provisional plates and the promotion of defensive driving as a prerequisite for obtaining a licence. There could also be restrictions put on the number of passengers that drivers under a certain age are permitted to carry, similar to the situation applying to motorcyclists and the restrictions on them carrying pillion passengers. I realise that this is a very emotive issue and one that will be difficult to find a solution to, but nevertheless we as legislators have a responsibility to respond to the community's concerns.
