



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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WEAPONS [HANDGUNS AND TRAFFICKING] AMENDMENT BILL

Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (12.27 a.m.): The Weapons (Handguns and Trafficking) Amendment Bill 2003 seeks to further protect the community from despicable attacks by persons who have had access to concealable firearms. All of us in this chamber will remember the Martin Bryant rampage in Tasmania and the Monash University tragedy where two people were killed and five others were seriously injured. As a result of these tragic incidents, it was decided by the Queensland government, together with the Commonwealth and the other states and territories, to tighten hand gun controls. An agreement was signed at the Council of Australian Governments—COAG—meeting. Our government is committed to a national approach to firearm law reform.

As a result of this legislation, there will be a major reduction in the number of hand guns in the Queensland community. All members in this House should support this. There will also be the strengthening of controls over access to hand guns. The COAG agreement requires further restrictions and requirements to be imposed on historical collectors of temporarily inoperable hand guns and the introduction of a graduated access system to hand guns for legitimate sporting shooters. This will be based on their training, experience and participation in events. There will also be mandatory minimum participation rates in club-organised hand gun shoots for people who are sporting shooters. Hand guns held by sporting shooters under a prescribed barrel length will be banned. Hand guns held by sporting shooters that are over .38 calibre, or nine millimetres, will also be banned.

Other agreed positions include broader licence revocation powers. This may include refusing a licence or revoking a licence based on criminal intelligence. It could also be based on the negligent storage of firearms. There will also be substantial penalties for the illegal possession of a firearm. These are set out in new section 50 of the legislation. The community will welcome such heavy penalties. There will also be a new section 50B relating to the unlawful supply of weapons. Maximum penalties in certain circumstances are 13 years imprisonment.

Our community should be protected from people who indiscriminately start attacking innocent people and using firearms in this process. Our community needs to be protected from such lunatics. Our community needs to know that our government, the Beattie Labor government, is doing everything in its power to protect Queensland people from acts of violence.

I would like to congratulate the Minister for Police, Tony McGrady, and the Queensland Police Service for this legislation. It will go a long way in making our community a safer place to live in. I commend the bill to the House.