



Speech by

Jason O'Brien

MEMBER FOR COOK

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TRANSPORT LEGISLATION AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Mr O'BRIEN (Cook—ALP) (12.31 pm): I think there are over 35 speakers on the list, so I will endeavour to keep my comments brief. However, I would not want this legislation to pass without putting my support formally on the record of parliament.

I think every member has so far spoken in favour of the introduction of random drug testing in Queensland. I could not imagine why anybody would be opposed to the introduction of such a measure unless they were a drug driver themselves. I think it is a good measure, a measure that should decrease the accidents on Queensland roads. But I do not think it is going to be the be-all and end-all.

Human beings always find one method or another to alter their consciousness, whether that be with illicit drugs or legal drugs like alcohol and prescription drugs. Many sorts of mind-altering substances can be used and abused. People can get behind the wheel of a car while they are on prescription drugs and all sorts of other substances. I think in the future, as technology improves, we are going to see more legislation come into this House to try to prevent people from driving a car while under the influence of all manner of substances. I think that is what we need to do to try to reduce the road toll in Queensland and throughout Australia.

I also support the provisions of the bill that deal with changes to licensing conditions, particularly those affecting young people. Young people statistically are more likely to be involved in an accident on Queensland roads, and that is a shame. We have all been young. Some of us, like the members for Hinchinbrook and Ashgrove, are still young. They may or may not be revheads. I was certainly a revhead when I was young. I note that in a previous debate the minister for police asked us all to put our driving history on the record of the parliament. I am ashamed to say that I do not have a clear driving record. I still have to get some points back in the next few months.

Mr Choi: Has that changed your behaviour?

Mr O'BRIEN: Yes, it has changed my behaviour.

Mr Johnson: I reckon you should sit down while you are behind.

Mr O'BRIEN: I will put myself further behind. In relation to fixed speed cameras and the signage—and people have talked about signage here today—I was so stupid that I saw the speed camera on the way into town and it got me on the way out of town. It is lucky that I am representative of my constituents! Many of my constituents are going to see the signs and they will drive straight past them at speed, and that is going to add to the revenue that we get here in Queensland. I have no problem with that. I will put my hand up. I have had a few speeding tickets in my life. When you get done, you get done. I think the only people who complain about speed cameras, whether they be fixed cameras or radar guns, are those people who speed. If you do not speed, you do not get done.

I have absolutely no problem with the introduction of fixed speed cameras. As I said, my last contact with a speed camera was over 12 months ago now. I learnt my lesson and it does help change behaviour. Some people say that it is just revenue raising. I do not believe that. I do not accept that for a second. I certainly believe that my behaviour since getting a speeding ticket has changed considerably. I do try hard

not to speed. I spend a long time on the road. I just about live in my car during the dry season. It is difficult to keep up your concentration. There was a discussion in here last night about cruise control. It is not safe to use cruise control on dirt roads. I do not use cruise control on dirt roads, and I do not recommend that people should. You have to keep up your concentration over long periods of time. Sometimes on the long stretches you find your speed picking up. But when you do get done, like I have been done, it does change your behaviour. It does make you more conscious of your speed, and I think in the long term it does change driver behaviour.

I want to raise one issue that is pertinent to my electorate and the bill before the House—and that is the issuing of licences in remote Indigenous communities. This is a particular issue for me and one that members will be hearing more about from me in the near future. It is particularly difficult for young people in remote communities to get a licence, to get breadth of experience. Some of them get experience driving on dirt roads and some town streets, but when they go to the city or the provincial towns they get frightened and they do not know how to handle it. Some people coming from the country who go to Brisbane experience that same phenomenon as well.

One thing that would help the economic independence of young Indigenous people in the communities that I represent is greater participation from Queensland Transport and the Queensland Police Service in assisting them, training them and supporting them to get their licence. That is something that I will be raising more formally in the near future. That has ramifications across the spectrum—giving those people a good start in life, giving them the opportunity to get work out of the community in the country or in towns where work opportunities might be. With those few comments, I commend the bill to the House.