



Speech by

Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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SCHOOLCHILDREN, SAFETY

Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (10.37 pm): I rise this evening to follow up on a previous speech that I made in this chamber on 20 May this year with regard to traffic safety and in particular a school close to my heart, Meridan State College. Some time ago I was contacted by members of the P&C from the school with respect to a road safety issue. The main intersection outside Meridan college has a set of traffic signals and, due to the road network around the school, motorists often do U-turns at the lights, which in this case is illegal. I have raised this issue in the parliament before, but I do have an update for the House. Due to the proximity of the footpath, these U-turns—apart from being illegal—are highly dangerous. I did come up with a solution for this unacceptable problem, and that was to have a 'No U-turn' sign made available. I table a copy for members opposite of me standing with my sign.

Tabled paper: Photograph of the member for Kawana [725].

Neither the state government nor the local government wanted to claim responsibility for the road or traffic lights. I subsequently met with the regional director for Main Roads on 27 May and raised this matter with him. I was advised that the department did not want to put a sign on the busy intersection as this would set a precedent for other signs to be erected and that motorists should know the road rules.

By the level of interjection I received from those opposite last time I spoke about this issue, I would think that they were affirming this position. I agree with the argument that motorists should know the road rules. But would the department use that excuse when a student is hit by a car? I think not. Well, motorists also know that speeding is illegal. But do we stop the police from using speed cameras and radar guns to prevent and educate our drivers about the dangers of speeding and the simple fact that it is illegal? No! From the conversation I had with the department of main roads, I came to the conclusion that it was going to be hard to get this sign erected. But I nearly had an accident myself two weeks ago. Driving along Bowman Road in my colleague's electorate of Caloundra, imagine my surprise when I saw a 'No U-turn' sign at a traffic light. Oh, the irony of all of this! If it was not so serious, it would be funny!

I table photographs of the sign and the intersection to show the department and the minister that this is indeed the case—a no U-turn sign.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs of an intersection [726].

The government was telling me that it will not put up a sign to save a child's life because it sets a dangerous precedent. I say to the minister: here is your precedent. Here is the precedent that the department has set—not my precedent; your department's precedent.

One could attempt to blame the council, but more digging into this issue reveals that this is not a council road; it is, in fact, a main road. I table for the benefit of members opposite a copy of the Main Roads regional map showing that Bowman Road is on the state grid.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government Department of Main Roads map of the North Coast Region [727].

Now that the minister's own department has set the precedent, I call on the Minister for Main Roads to immediately call the Main Roads branch on the Sunshine Coast and order that a no U-turn sign be erected at Meridan State College before a child is seriously injured.

I say to members opposite: heed my warning. The government is on notice. We have the sign made. It has now set the precedent it has so furiously protected. Now just get on with the job and erect the sign.