



Speech by

Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Hansard Tuesday, 26 October 2010

POLICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (3.56 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Police Legislation Amendment Bill. It appears that the government may be starting to get the picture. Under its watch, public disorder and public nuisance have increasingly consumed the time and efforts of not only our tireless police officers but also our court system. Therefore, a ticketing approach to public nuisance associated offences is a step in the right direction. The rationale underlying the provision of on-the-spot fines as an alternative method of dealing with relatively minor offences committed predominantly in the course of non-criminal behaviour is a sound one.

This bill will allow police to allocate their resources and, most importantly, their time to more pertinent and onerous matters. Exposing those who commit these offences to the criminal justice system is unnecessary and unjustified both on economic grounds and on the grounds that those who have early exposure to the criminal justice system have a greater propensity to engage in other criminal activity, especially if they are part of a vulnerable demographic. Here the bill seeks to initiate a more proportionate response to this degree of offending. In relation to the amendments to the Police Service Administration Act 1999, the new use of CrimTrac will undoubtedly make the screening process more efficient by doing away with physical handling. I note that the bill also amends the Prostitution Act particularly with respect to the disciplinary processes within the Prostitution Licensing Authority.

Before I conclude this short contribution I want to reiterate comments made by members on both sides of the House confirming the fantastic work that police officers do throughout our state and certainly echo that for the electorate of Glass House. However, I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Minister for Police to fast-track the upgrade of the Maleny Police Station. He would be well aware that I have asked a question on notice on this matter and eagerly await his reply to that. As he also would be aware after having recently visited Maleny, the residents of Maleny were very successful in their call to have the number of officers servicing that great community increased. Where once we had two, we now have four. I and the community are extremely grateful for that, but we are concerned about the substandard accommodation. At present it is a couple of modified Queenslanders that barely catered for the two officers that we had there in the past and which are far from suitable for the increased police presence that we now have. I would ask the minister for police to reconsider the priority rating for any upgrade to the Maleny Police Station on these grounds and to bring forward the construction of a new facility within the community as a matter of some urgency.