



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Thursday, 25 March 2010

**TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL;
TRANSPORT OPERATIONS (ROAD USE MANAGEMENT-
INTERLOCKS) AMENDMENT BILL**

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.50 pm), in reply: I thank members for their contributions in this cognate debate of both LNP and government legislation. In summing up the LNP's Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Interlocks) Amendment Bill, I am proud to be part of an LNP team which has put our policy into parliament, leading the way on an important initiative to save lives on our roads in Queensland through the introduction of laws for alcohol ignition interlocks.

It is time to get off the road the idiots who repeatedly drink drive and who seem to be getting away with it. Of the 29,000 who are caught drink driving each year, 12,000 are repeat or high-level offenders and 22.9 per cent of fatalities are due to drink driving. The public is fed up with it. The families of the victims of this carnage are fed up with it. The government, which promised to act nine years ago—first trialling alcohol ignition interlocks in 2001—has been promising almost yearly to implement this program. Well, we also got fed up with waiting and introduced our own bill to the parliament five months ago. That spurred the government to bring in its bill this year.

I am pleased that the government is finally responding but, while Labor members can argue about the relative merits of who has the tougher bill, the facts are that the parliament could have debated our bill before Christmas last year. It is unfortunate that even this further delay of another five months has meant that more innocent people have died in the meantime unnecessarily due to repeat drink drivers.

The LNP bill and the government bill in regard to alcohol ignition interlock laws are very similar, but we would argue that our bill does go further in some key areas. Two fundamental differences are: the LNP bill also includes provisions to make drink drivers undertake rehabilitation; and the LNP bill has a 'three strikes and you're out' provision for very high level repeat drink drivers, over and above the interlock provision.

In regard to rehabilitation, this provision is not in the government bill, despite its own drink driving discussion paper which came out a few weeks ago noting the importance of education and rehabilitation to making the best use of alcohol interlocks. This paper recognised that both measures need to go hand in hand to bring about great change in personal drinking behaviour. The LNP will be moving amendments to insert our provision for rehabilitation and the three-strikes rule into the government bill, as in this cognate debate the government bill will be voted on ahead of the LNP bill. This will mean that, due to the rules of the parliament, the second bill will not be considered in the consideration in detail stage.

The government's delay on alcohol ignition interlocks has definitely cost lives in Queensland in the last nine years. Since 2001, when this concept was first trialled in Queensland, about 600 people have been killed due to crashes involving drink drivers. As I have said, we have a further delay of another five months. By introducing our legislation last year on the important issue of alcohol ignition interlocks—a bill which has matured and had to be debated this week—we have forced the government to act. In the last

two days I believe we have had an informative and committed debate from members across the chamber as the Queensland parliament sends a strong and collective message that drink driving will not be tolerated and that it is an abuse of the privilege to drive.

The LNP is proud to put our policy into parliament. If we can save one life by leading this debate and driving the agenda on this important issue, we know that we have contributed to a better Queensland. Ultimately, laws alone will not make roads safer. There must be effective, well-resourced enforcement so the offenders who risk the lives of others are caught and then removed from driving on the roads. No law is 100 per cent guaranteed but there is evidence, as has been shown in other jurisdictions such as Victoria, that the recidivism rate can be substantially reduced—by up to 60 per cent—where alcohol interlock initiatives are applied effectively, particularly where rehabilitation and education is employed.

I commend the LNP bill to the House. I commend the support of this parliament to finally address what is critically needed—a crackdown on repeat drink drivers.