



Speech by

Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Hansard Thursday, 25 March 2010

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

Mr CRANDON (Coomera—LNP) (3.32 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the cognate bills. The bills intend to amend legislation across a number of acts. On 11 November 2009 the shadow minister and member for Maroochydore introduced a private member's bill, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Interlocks) Amendment Bill 2009. That bill could have been debated in the following sitting week that commenced on Tuesday, 24 November. On 10 March 2010, four months later, the Minister for Transport introduced a government bill, the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010.

The bills are designed to achieve the same objective: to establish an alcohol interlock regime. The bill introduced by the member for Maroochydore was specifically designed to enable the courts to impose restrictions on drivers with a view to curbing problematic drink driving. As noted a moment ago, the government bill proposed to achieve the same outcome, in addition to amending a number of other transport related acts: the Acts Interpretation Act 1954, the Adult Proof of Age Card Act 2008 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2007 for various purposes.

The bills differ in such ways as who orders and who administers the alcohol interlock conditions. The bill introduced by the member for Maroochydore aims to have a court ordered mandatory regime for high-alcohol limit repeat offenders and a discretionary court ordered regime for high-alcohol limit first offenders and low-alcohol limit repeat offenders. The government bill provides for a mandatory administrative regime.

The length of time that an alcohol interlock condition applies is also a point of difference between the bills. The member for Maroochydore's bill provides for a minimum of one year with a maximum of eight years for high-alcohol limit repeat offenders and one to four years for high-alcohol limit first offenders and low-alcohol limit repeat offenders. The government bill provides for a one-year period for a person convicted of a drink-drive offence who, as a result, has been disqualified from holding or obtaining a Queensland driver's licence.

The bill introduced by the member for Maroochydore contains two other elements. The first relates to drink driving education and rehabilitation and the other relates to the 'three strikes and you're out' rule. Education is a cornerstone of all rehabilitation programs. It is logical to include a mandatory education program for repeat offenders and yet this government is silent on the matter. Importantly, to attach a big stick to the equation is also logical. By the time someone is facing the court for a third time in five years for exceeding the .15 level they have sent a pretty clear sign that they are just not getting the message. By then it must be apparent to even the slowest thinker that a mandatory loss of the right to drive on our roads is needed. We do not want them there, do we? By forcing them off the roads for good we are just about guaranteed to be saving lives, pain and suffering into the future.

When compared to the member for Maroochydore's bill, the government bill contains two extra provisions relating to mandatory zero blood alcohol limits for all drivers required to install an alcohol interlock to their car. I have to say that that sounds very logical and the government could easily have moved an amendment of that sort to the member for Maroochydore's bill and had it included. The government bill also provides for a right for an exemption to be applied to not have the alcohol interlock fitted to their car. By the time someone has reached the point where an alcohol interlock has been ordered to be fitted I hope that the chief executive would look very carefully at any excuse. It seems to me that, if someone cannot provide enough breath to be registered on an alcohol interlock device, I wonder if they could provide a breath sample the next time they are pulled up for a random breath test.

As the member for Maroochydore said, the Minister for Transport admitted that over 600 people have been killed as a result of crashes involving drink drivers in the eight years to June 2009 from 2001—almost a quarter of all road fatalities in Queensland and an average of 75 per year over that eight-year period. In the last year to 30 June 2009, 84 people were killed in crashes that involved a driver over their legal alcohol limit—well above the average of the past eight years. This seems to suggest that the problem is on the increase. Why has it taken this government nigh on a decade from the first time the concept was mooted to do something about it? A cynic would say that the government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to this point. Thank goodness the shadow minister and member for Maroochydore had the determination and the resolve to develop a private member's bill that clearly has forced this government's hand. More to the point, why did the government not allow the member for Maroochydore's private member's bill to be debated last November?

Sadly, on the statistics above there is no doubt that by implementing alcohol interlock registration last year before the silly season commenced we could have saved lives. The arrogance of this government and this minister to delay the debate has most likely cost lives on our roads. I hope and trust that government members can see the only sensible course of action for them is to support the amendments put forward by the member for Maroochydore. I commend the bill to the House with the amendments I have just referred to.