




Speech by

Jarrod Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (7.55 pm): Tonight I will contribute to the debate, as briefly as humanly possible, on the bill currently before the House—the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2011, or TOLA. This is an omnibus bill which relates to the amendment of some 11 acts of parliament. I would like to initially discuss the consequential amendments in the bill to the Criminal Code, specifically in relation to dangerous driving.

Under the bill before the House, the middle alcohol offence is considered as any other drink-driving offence when considering a charge of dangerous driving with the circumstance of aggravation. The creation of a new middle alcohol limit offence applies when a driver records a blood-breath alcohol concentration level of 0.10 or above but less than 0.15. The maximum penalty for this new category of drink driving will be higher than what can be applied in the general alcohol limit offence.

As stated in the explanatory notes, the crash risk for drivers with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.10 is almost five times the crash risk of a person with no alcohol in their blood or breath. Some 80 per cent of the drink-driving related fatal crashes in Queensland between 2000 and 2007 occurred with people who had alcohol recordings of 0.10 or greater. Those people who stupidly take the risk of driving their vehicle when they are over the legal alcohol limit should be punished accordingly.

With an increasing binge-drinking culture, particularly for younger Queenslanders between the ages of 18 to 29, the punishment for driving under the influence higher than the legal limit needs to be kept current and modern. A simple blanket offence for all drink-driving offenders is not sufficient.

We do need to invest in programs particularly for 18- to 29-year-olds. I am reminded of a driving program that Kawana Waters State College is involved in called Roadcraft. It is held at Gympie. Kirsten Ferdinands is the principal of the Kawana Waters State College. Each year she struggles to get business sponsorship to fund this program to make sure that all year 12s can attend. Unfortunately, last year they only sent a small number of year 12s. In an ideal world I would love to see the day when all of our students in year 12 could do programs like Roadcraft. This is after a lot of them have got their licences. It is money that a lot of schools do not have in their budgets so they have to rely on businesses for sponsorship. I congratulate the Kawana Waters State College on getting involved in the program. After they have their licences it preaches good driving techniques. It looks at what can happen if one is over the legal limit and driving a vehicle.

I was just speaking to the honourable Minister for Community Services and Housing in relation to another project called MOVE. It is these sorts of projects that I fully support us investing in.

In April 2010, there was an article published in the *Sunshine Coast Daily* titled 'Teen drivers caught drink driving'. It stated—

POLICE say a teenage woman charged with high range drink driving is proof those responsible for many fatalities were not getting the message.

The 19-year-old Alexandra Headland P-plate driver allegedly returned a blood alcohol level of 0.156 after she was stopped at Hancock Street at 1.10am yesterday.

The teenager was one of two drivers police caught allegedly intoxicated behind the wheel in Maroochydore's overnight Operation Blitz Kreig.

Police say a 37-year-old Mooloolaba man had a blood alcohol reading of 0.170 after he was stopped at the corner of Maroochydore Road and Greg Street at 11.20pm.

The approach taken by government in discouraging drink drivers needs to be on three different levels: penalties need to be applied that will act as a deterrent to discourage the practice in the first instance; advertising needs to be relevant and appropriate to the target ages and genders that have the highest offender rates; and it is important to determine the causes of drink driving and how a culture of binge drinking can be included in any measures that involve drink driving as well.

Former Labor ministers for transport have been ruling out studies into the root cause of drink driving, despite a number of drink drivers being caught behind the wheel. I seek the new minister's indication of any such studies she will undertake as part of a holistic approach to tackling the cause behind those who continue to think that driving under the influence of alcohol greater than the legal limit is acceptable.

In the chamber this morning, we saw the Premier and the long-term government adopt yet another policy commitment led by the LNP. In fact, they are so worried about Campbell Newman that they are copying his policy announcements—can-do copycats. The LNP leader, Can-do Campbell Newman, has a proud record of transport infrastructure reform throughout the city of Brisbane, which includes how many buses?

Mr Rickuss: Seven hundred.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer—including that many buses on the network grid.

Mr Reeves interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: For the Minister for Sport, I say to the member for Lockyer: how many additional buses?

Mr Rickuss: Seven hundred.

Mr BLEIJIE: There were 700 additional buses on the network grid. Not only have we had an extraordinary amount of additional buses on the network grid; they have all had a full carbon offset.

This government has a legacy of weak sentencing and inadequate penalties that is well known throughout the Queensland community. The shadow minister for transport and main roads, the member for Maroochydore, has led the way in terms of alcohol interlocks. Alcohol interlocks were first peddled by this long-term toxic Labor government back in 2001, but it took proactive legislation from the shadow minister in 2009 to force the government's hand on this issue. Like so many other issues, alcohol interlocks are another example of Labor delay and inaction. We saw it again today with water.

They first touted alcohol interlocks in 2001 and had a small trial. They promised it in 2002 and then nothing. They announced they were considering alcohol interlocks in 2004 and then nothing. They were apparently at the planning stage for alcohol interlocks in 2006 and then we heard nothing. They started working on the legislation for alcohol interlocks in 2007 and then we heard nothing. Then there was another announcement in 2009 after which we heard nothing.

I support the provisions in the bill before the House which relate to alcohol interlocks, the amendment of the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 in relation to the middle alcohol limit penalties and the amendment of geographical locations for the implementation of alcohol interlocks if the installer is not reasonably accessible. The technology is obviously new. We as legislators always have to be mindful of the fact that Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia, with residents living in all corners of the state.

The amendments in the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill that relate to civil bans as punishment options for troublemakers on transport are important, but ultimately they will only be useful if they are appropriately enforced. This is another deterrent that, when combined with criminal sentencing exclusion orders, will protect the safety and security of public transport passengers as well as preserve the amenity and the condition of the public transport network.

Unlike the government, the LNP is committed to viable public transport across Queensland. We have a dedicated shadow minister for public transport as we on this side, in all things we do, have a can-do approach to the provision of public transport for all Queenslanders.

Drink drivers kill. Drink drivers are a danger to not only themselves but also to innocent motorists and pedestrians who share the road and reserve. This is an issue that governments of all political persuasions need to address. It is important that we as legislators keep current on this issue, including the latest research and technology that is available to protect the broader community.

I promised the member for Toowoomba North that my contribution tonight would be short so I will not dishonour my promise to him. I will close my argument tonight by supporting the contributions in this second reading debate of our shadow ministers, the members for Maroochydore and Aspley, and their reservations in relation to the transit lane enforcement and the sale of surplus land clauses in the bill.