




Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—LNP) (5.22 pm): In speaking to the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2009, I note that the government has taken its cue from the LNP and is finally implementing the alcohol interlock system for which we have been calling and which it has been promising for almost 10 years. From the early seventies until the late nineties road fatalities steadily decreased from over 30 per 100,000 Queenslanders to less than 10 per 100,000. This is still far too many but this is where the statistics have stayed for the last 10 years because successive governments have failed to take a tougher stance on drink driving. The LNP has been pushing for tough penalties, more stringent enforcement and greater investment in police resources. A key policy in this legislation put to the House in 2009 by the LNP was the introduction of alcohol interlocks.

I am glad the government has abandoned the ridiculous and unworkable idea of reducing the legal blood alcohol limit from .05 to .02. This would have served to target only sensible, law-abiding people who drink responsibly and know their limits. Research shows that it is not the drinker at the lower end of the scale who drives with a blood alcohol content greater than .05 who causes deaths on Queensland roads, and the introduction of tougher penalties for alcohol offences in the middle range is a sensible deterrent. However, research also shows that the rehabilitation program for drink drivers is an important component of any road safety strategy. It is a hallmark of this government that a proposal to reduce the legal blood alcohol limit was released for public comment when common sense should have been enough to cause the government to realise that most Queenslanders would be opposed to the banning of a beer or a wine with a meal.

It is also common sense to ensure that drink-driving policy includes provisions for better education and rehabilitation for offenders with tougher penalties for habitual reoffenders. This legislation lacks the practical policy of better driver education and tougher penalties for habitual reoffenders. Education and rehabilitation programs were part of the amendments put forward by the LNP in 2009. This government should follow our lead to ensure greater safety on Queensland roads by providing education and rehabilitation programs.

In this legislation the government has decided to remove automatic offers to landowners who have been forced to relinquish their land for the purpose of public roads. Land rights in this state are under serious threat and the proposed amendments further erode the rights of landowners. There are no reasons for removing automatic offers to previous landowners and plenty of reasons for their retention. These landowners have little say in the resumption of the land for the purpose of road development. In many cases, this has caused extreme heartache or has forced landowners to scrap plans for their own future.

The removal of automatic offers to buy back surplus land adds insult to injury for those who have been required to sacrifice their dreams for the development of essential infrastructure. I call on the government to remove this amendment from the bill before the House. To include this amongst many changes that will improve the safety of our roads is a cruel tactic that provides no advantage to anybody involved in the resumption of private land for the purpose of public works.