



Speech by


**Hon. David Crisafulli**

**MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA**

Hansard Tuesday, 31 July 2012

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## **PENALTIES AND SENTENCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (5.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Penalties and Sentences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill delivers on some of our pre-election commitments and at the same time helps us mop up the mess left by those opposite. The bill will increase the value of the penalty unit from \$100 to \$110 and will impose a court administration fee, aptly known as an offender levy. The bill will also ensure the reclaiming of overpaid wages as a result of the Queensland Health payroll train wreck.

My brief contribution today will focus on the offender levy. Law and order is one of the chief concerns of my electorate. The people of Mundingburra want to see offenders take responsibility for their actions. Perhaps what concerns the people of my electorate the most is that those who break the law never seem to have to face up to the consequences of their actions. This bill is a small step towards correcting the injustice of the blameless always footing the bill. A \$300 administration fee in the Supreme and District courts and a \$100 fee in the Magistrates Court if an offender is found guilty will relieve some of the cost pressures of justice being served. The millions of dollars that these administration fees will raise are dollars that are sorely needed. Can I tell members why? Because of a legacy of disgraceful financial management; of poorly planned infrastructure projects, which we will pay for for generations; and of operating expenses that are simply out of control because of a government that failed to plan and was full of waste and mismanagement. To tie that to this bill, it is about time criminals found out that crime never pays but that they, in fact, should. I put it to members: why should decent, law-abiding taxpayers have to constantly put their tax dollars towards the cost of court cases at a time when the state is in such financial peril? This government has made the right decision to get offenders to pay something towards the expense of their wrongdoing.

Whilst I am sure the Attorney-General will do a magnificent job in summing up, it would be remiss of me not to comment on something that the member for Inala said when she was proposing her amendment of a \$50 offender levy. She said, 'To increase the fee would exacerbate the problem.' I firmly disagree. I believe what exacerbates the problem is the fact that governments have been weak on these matters. They have not been willing to accept that we must have adequate deterrence in this state. That is the problem that permeates our legal system. It is a problem that we constantly look for excuses as to why somebody should not face the consequences rather than reflect the views of the majority and ensure that offenders pay the just price for their offence.

This issue is something that we took to an election—how refreshing! A government that actually highlights what it plans to do and sells a vision—and it is an issue that I believe the House should support. The silent majority of good, hardworking people know that they have a government which has the vision and the courage to find ways to relieve the burden on those who will never appear before a judge or a magistrate. I urge members to support this bill.