




Speech by

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MEMBER FOR STRETTON

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CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (8.06 pm): I have listened with great interest to this debate on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and I thank my LNP colleagues and the member for Gladstone for their kind words of support for our brave police officers. The member for Broadwater, even with her young years, gets this. This bill is about sending a message that our society will not tolerate criminals and murderers getting away with assaults on police officers by giving them a ridiculous punishment, a punishment that can only add more pain to the loved ones of a police officer struck down like an animal. These seven in the corner, twice her age, do not get this.

As the mother of a police officer, I thank you all for supporting this bill. I know the Police Service thanks you, too. No-one other than a mother, wife or husband of a police officer knows how we feel when we see a police car pull up in our driveway. Your heart stops while you wait and you pray to God that they are not there to tell you that your loved one has been taken from you. Sadly, this has happened to too many mothers, wives and children. At least this government has the decency to try to do something about this.

Some have suggested that because a police officer knows that he puts his life at risk it somehow negates the seriousness of attacks against them, and that is reprehensible. During her speech the Leader of the Opposition gave plenty of platitudes to police officers, but she continuously went back to defending the criminals' rights over those of our brave police officers. Of course all lives are valuable. If I had my way, I would include the ambulance officers, the child safety carers and all those who stand in the line of fire. As one of our members said today, police officers have no choice. They put themselves between the evil in our society and the innocent. For that sacrifice, we must show them respect by having legislation that sends our Police Service the message that we appreciate that sacrifice.

I know a lot of police. What they endure is beyond comprehension: they are spat upon, called dogs, accused, abused, lied to, unappreciated. I recall the young officer who was tending to a young girl who was lying on the ground at a party that was out of control, as they often are these days, when a coward hit him on the back of his head. For weeks that officer was in intensive care, in an induced coma. Why should that coward not pay for his stupidity? Let us please send a message to our police and to criminals by supporting this bill.