




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MOTOR VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT)
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.34 pm): I rise to support the introduction of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. First of all, what is the purpose of the bill? In a nutshell, it is simply to stop antisocial behaviour. That is it in a nutshell. There is an expectation over time that introducing these more substantive penalties will result in a reduction in these types of offences, and that is the important thing. If we were to look at this legislation in isolation and assume that the number of people committing these offences continued to be the same, then the reality is that the legislation is not working. It is the desire of the minister to stop antisocial behaviour and bring about a change in behaviour, as has been alluded to by others here, in order to reduce the number of offences of this type over time. That is a very important point. The chapter 4 amendments of the bill include evade police offences, which are type 1 offences, and high-end speeding and other types of offences such as that which are regarded as type 2 offences. Other members have mentioned the actual penalties and discussed the length of time the vehicles will be off the road for and so forth, but tougher laws are essential. They are an essential part of the whole process that we as a society need to go through to change attitudes. The tougher penalties are needed and the penalties that are outlined are absolutely imperative.

However, we also need education, and that is an incredibly important part of the whole way of addressing these problems in our society. Education is absolutely imperative. I spoke here a few weeks ago about an organisation called QTOP and very briefly mentioned a young fellow by the name of Rhys, whom I spoke to just about an hour ago on the phone. I finally got a mobile telephone number for him from QTOP and he was happy to talk to me. I do not know whether he was happy to talk to me, but he agreed to talk to me. I asked him a little bit about his background. Rhys told me that under the old rules he was hit with a failure-to-stop fine and he copped a \$300 fine and a suspension. Do members reckon that changed Rhys's attitude? Not at all, because guess what? Unbeknownst to him, we changed the rules and brought in a \$5,000 fine and a two-year suspension and poor old Rhys copped the new fine not too long after the last one. So poor old Rhys now has a \$5,000 fine and a two-year suspension and—listen to this; this is very important stuff, extremely important stuff—he was driving his mate's car. You know what that means and he thinks—this is how close a mate it was—it was impounded for 'a while'. I do not think they are real close mates anymore. He told me that he was just generally mucking around. He was not involved in any of this hooning activity where 50 cars meet up and do what they do and then bolt from the police; he was just generally mucking around in his mate's car and he copped this \$5,000 fine and a two-year suspension.

But you have to hand it to the young fellow, because he went through and completed QTOP, and I will talk about that in a moment. I asked him if he has ever been involved in those hooning events where you have 50 cars turn up at an industrial estate. He said, 'Oh, yeah, but only as an observer.' Members could probably take that with a pinch of salt. He was an observer only in those events; he never actually got into it. That was probably because he did not have a car. I asked him, 'What was the effect on you?' He said, 'I lost my licence and it's going to take a lot to pay off the fine.'

I asked him how it affects his mates. He said that he was telling anyone and everyone who will listen to him. He is not pulling any punches. He is letting them all know. So the message is getting out there. That brings me back to the point that I made earlier when I said there is an expectation of a reduction in these types of offences over time. Certainly, we are not going to see Rhys doing a similar thing again and I reckon a few of Rhys's mates might rethink their way of going about what they do and whether they are going to evade police. At the end of the conversation I asked Rhys, 'Mate, what did QTOP do for you then, because you copped a two-year suspension and the \$5,000 fine? What is the point in going to QTOP?' He said that he thought that QTOP probably saved him from jail time. So that is the importance of the education side. Yes, he was sent along to the program. He had to pay \$165 to go through QTOP, but he thinks it probably saved him some jail time. In my view, a combination of stiff penalties and education will work.

I have the statistics for the whole of Queensland. There are quite a few offences listed in the whole of Queensland, but I take note that in what is regarded as the south-east region—Coomera, Gold Coast and Logan, soon to be Gold Coast and Logan—the combined number of offences under type 1 were 158 and there were 124 vehicle impoundments. So in those two areas—or three areas currently and two after 1 July—20 per cent of all offences throughout Queensland occurred. That is an amazing figure. The figures show that, for type 2 offences, there were 9,915 of which 1,888 vehicles were impounded. Once again, that is an astounding figure when we consider that that area is just one small part of Queensland. That is 20 per cent of the total offences, but 25 per cent of the vehicle impoundments occurred in that area. That rings true to me, because the statistical data that I have been collecting from my constituents over all of the years that I have been in this place tells me that more than 80 per cent of my constituents regard policing as the most important thing for us to do as legislators. We have to get on top of the policing issues. My constituents talk about all types of things—safety in their homes, hooning, speeding; all of those things. Policing in general is what it is all about.

We have to impose these tougher penalties on these young people—and older people as well—who are out there in the marketplace causing fear among our constituents, causing fear among the people of Queensland, because that in itself will change their attitude and reduce the number of offences of this sort. We also have to educate people as well. I again refer to QTOP, which is for people who have already offended. I also mention the BRAKE program. Many members may have heard of it. It is a program that targets year 11 students in our schools. The BRAKE program in the Jimboomba area is absolutely fantastic. I suggest that all members take a look at the BRAKE program. I know the member for Beaudesert would be able to tell members a little bit about it. It should be a program that is conducted in all of our high schools. Certainly, year 11 students would benefit greatly from it. The final thing is that I think we should facilitate the—

(Time expired)