




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (8.59 pm): I rise today to support the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a bill that will introduce the toughest anti-hooning laws in Australia. Mr Deputy Speaker, I have four sons—need I say more. Can I say as a dad that the changes proposed in this legislation are an important deterrent not just for my boys but for all young people in Queensland and for those who would choose to engage in such antisocial behaviour.

As much as I love my boys and as hard as Melinda and I have worked to teach them good values and act responsibly, the fact is that boys always want to push the boundaries. A police warning and the risk of impoundment put the wind up one of my boys a few years ago when a lapsed moment of judgement almost led to him losing his licence and the threat of impoundment of his vehicle.

Mr Johnson: It would still put the wind up me.

Mr MOLHOEK: It would put the wind up anyone. As a result of the threat of impoundment even back then, he drives like a nanna now. Also, one of my other boys—because boys always want to test the limits a little—learnt a costly lesson after a failed attempt at drifting in a shopping centre car park late one night around a roundabout.

Mrs Frecklington: What's drifting?

Mr MOLHOEK: That is when you go sideways and pull the handbrake on, member for Nanango. That was a fairly costly exercise because there was one car rim and a tyre that did not really bear up too well as they hit the side kerb. But they were lucky. Sadly, the son of a very close family friend tragically has permanent brain injury as a result of some poor choices he made in his late teens. He is now permanently consigned to a wheelchair and requires around-the-clock care as a result of brain acquired injury and other significant disability.

The bill before us today is important on so many levels. These new tougher penalties for hooning offences send the strongest possible message to our young people that we are serious about their safety and personal wellbeing. We are also serious about the rights of others in our communities and that is why it is important that we increase these penalties. These penalties will increase: for first offences, the offender's car will be clamped and then taken off our road for three months; and for subsequent offences, within five years of the first offence the offender's car will be forfeited or crushed. It is sad that we have to introduce such tough legislation, but unfortunately the level of antisocial behaviour that some within our community continue to inflict on our neighbourhoods has made this legislation very necessary. If these individuals cannot be responsible members of our community, they do not deserve the right to be driving on our community's roads. Enough is enough!

Some constituents from my electorate of Southport, particularly car enthusiasts, have contacted me regarding their concerns. They have suggested that these new sanctions will be a burden on them, that they are unfairly targeted towards a minority of road users and that they threaten their

rights as citizens. I have told them and other constituents that if you respect the law and other community members then this legislation will not be a burden on you or your fellow car enthusiasts, provided you do the right thing. I believe this legislation is fair. It will only affect those who choose to flaunt the law, disregard police orders and disrupt communities with their bad hooning behaviour. There is a responsibility for all enthusiasts no matter what field they explore to respect the law and rights of their fellow members in our community.

Many Southport constituents have contacted me about ongoing hooning and antisocial behaviour that they have had to put up with for years. During my campaign, hooning was among one of the most common concerns raised in the electorate. As a former Gold Coast City councillor, I received complaints almost every week at my regular listening posts and mobile offices. I note that in the south-east region—those areas covering the Gold Coast, Coomera and Logan—we saw some 158 type 1 hooning offences and 124 type 1 vehicle impoundments just last year. For type 2 offences, hooning behaviours such as unlicensed driving and driving an unregistered vehicle, there were some 9,915 offences and 1,886 impoundments—with 509 of these were just on the Gold Coast. These statistics tell me that hooners are just not getting the message. They tell me that hooners do not consider the penalties for these offences serious enough to stop them hooning, to stop them offending.

I would like to share the contents of an email I received from a constituent some months ago. It clearly highlights his frustration with the current situation. It states—

Dear Rob,

I have phoned the Southport Police and reported this guy on approximately 20 occasions. He lives just down the road from me. He lives in a run-down fibro shack. You can't miss it. He hides the vehicle out the back of his property, out of sight. His property is fully fenced and he only takes the vehicle out for weekend joy-rides and, every time, he does a massive burnout up our road and screams past our place. He actually has THREE CARS. One is a high top van, (Silver). One is a Black Honda Prelude. The 3rd car is a DRAG CAR. This is the one he does the burnouts in.

Whenever he takes the drag-car out, he parks one of his other cars across his own driveway.

Rob, all I am asking is for the cops to go around to his house, politely knock on his door and have a quiet word with him and ask if he has seen anybody doing burnouts in this street. Maybe they could ask him to step outside and take a little stroll down the end of the road and show him where the skid marks are, just in case he ever sees anyone doing anything like this in future.

He says maybe they could ask for his help. They may even ask him to call them if he sees anyone doing burnouts in the future. Maybe the threat of police intervention would slow him down. I am advised by the Southport police that they have visited this gentleman on a few occasions in the past and it has not modified his behaviour. My constituent says that his request is pretty simple, that of course while they are there they could always ask if they could have a quick look at his car and see what kind of reaction he gives. He says maybe they could have a look around the back and see if there is a methamphetamine lab out the back or bring a sniffer dog or two! This constituent is pretty angry. He has been putting up with these issues for quite a while. He goes on to say—

Rob his car is a DRAG CAR. It is TOTALLY BOMBED! It is so extreme that he 'hides it' in a special shed around the back of his house. He always locks his driveway fence gates whenever he takes it out for a spin, and he always leaves his 'other car' parked right across his own driveway, until he returns.

Please Rob, help us take this idiot off the road.

Why don't the Police just go and have a word to this guy????

Simple.

Thanks mate!

This constituent has asked a simple question. It is the same question that many in our communities ask. It is a very good question, one that we can hopefully address and answer by passing the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Motor Vehicle Impoundment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and introducing the toughest hooning laws in the nation. I should point out that since I raised this with my district officer at Southport they have been out and pretty much followed my constituent's advice and they have dealt with the offender—something my predecessor, the former Labor member for Southport, after 20 complaints failed to address.

Under our government's new rules, the inefficiencies in administering and operating the laws as well as the current lenient penalties will be adjusted to help police keep hooners, like the one I have just described, off our streets. Hooning is not the behaviour of an individual who respects the law or their neighbours or other community members. It saddens me that we have to take these steps today, to legislate for idiots, if you like, but it is necessary for the peace and safety of all constituents, not just in Southport but it is also important for the safety and wellbeing of all Queenslanders. I commend this bill to the House.