




Speech By  
**Tarnya Smith**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2016

**SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (4.55 pm): I rise to oppose this bill. I think it is a sad day in this House when a government comes to the chamber and tables a bill that puts the safety of all Queenslanders at risk. I want members of the House to cast their minds back just over three years to Friday, 27 September 2013 when all was well on the streets of Broadbeach, families were enjoying dinner in the warm Spring air, but minutes later 50 Bandido bikie gang members started a public brawl in a restaurant in front of men, women and children who were simply enjoying dinner and a night out. As other colleagues have said, the sight of 50 bikie gang members pulling up is intimidating in itself, let alone the public brawl that ensued.

What is clear from the replay of the CCTV footage and reports on that night is that criminal motorcycle gang members have no respect for the police or the law. Eighteen thugs were charged as a result of that brawl. After that brawl was broken up, the remaining gang members then went to the Southport Police Station and attempted to intimidate police, demanding that they let the charged gang members out of the watch house. For gang members to be in the arrogant position to think that they can walk down to the Southport Police Station and say, 'We want our gang members out,' I think indicates how serious the bikie problem is, especially in the Gold Coast area. I need to point out that sadly this was not an isolated incident but followed a series of incidents on the Gold Coast and across Queensland that involved criminal motorcycle gangs and other forms of organised crime.

I have lived in towns where there have been no-go zones, where gangs have basically intimidated, terrorised and threatened individuals going about their business. Police are reluctant to go into certain parts of a particular town because of the criminal activity going on there. That leaves a whole group of vulnerable and helpless people unprotected. Do we want our communities to live in fear? Is that what we want for our children in the future? I can tell members that when gangs walk into a city and the city is under siege, as the mayor has said, and when gangs say, as was reported on the front page of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, day after day, 'We run this town', that certainly says that any responsible government needs to act.

Community safety must be the No. 1 priority. Law and order must be maintained. Our police must be able to do their job with the support of a government that introduces effective laws. That is exactly what the LNP government did. We said 'enough is enough' and introduced strong laws. I have been listening carefully to Labor members. They are using the old union tactic which focuses on the process and not the results. The reality is that the community wanted to see action and the LNP members introduced legislation, which I remind those on the other side was supported by the opposition at that time. Labor politicians on the other side have to accept that the current laws are working.

This is a government that continues to contradict itself when it comes to introducing legislation. Only this morning we heard the Labor government talking about the increase in the number of ice users and the impact that ice is having on families, yet this afternoon the Attorney-General introduced this bill which allows the drug trade to flourish.

As I said, the LNP introduced a strong suite of laws based on the successful antiracketeering legislation of the United States. Our laws were dubbed the toughest antibikie laws in Australia. The laws are working. They were backed by the police on the ground and are still backed by the police on the ground, and they have been upheld by the High Court. As my colleagues have said, those laws were so successful that even South Australian and Victorian Labor governments have sought to adopt the same tough stance on crime.

It is this state that has felt the fury of organised crime and I have given examples of that. The Palaszczuk Labor government is putting the interests of thugs for hire over the interests of ordinary Queenslanders. As the member for Mermaid Beach asked, why would Labor seek to do that? Again, like the member for Mermaid Beach, I answer by mentioning only five letters: C-F-M-E-U. That is right: the construction arm of the Labor Party is the reason Labor is taking such a weak and pathetic approach to these laws. Recently in this House I mentioned two individuals from the CFMEU who have consorted with gangs, thugs and criminals. That is the very same cashed-up union that bankrolls the Labor Party opposite.

We have to respect the fact that our community is crying out for tough laws. On the Gold Coast we have proven that those tough laws work. Now we see a Labor government that is soft on crime and has absolutely no desire to stand up to organised crime. One of the key questions that needs to be asked is: is this bill in the best interests of the community? The answer is a resounding no!