




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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CORRECTIVE SERVICES (NO BODY, NO PAROLE) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.21 pm): Can I acknowledge that contribution read into *Hansard* on behalf of the Pullen family. I think it reflects a sentiment of a lot of members, if not all members, in this chamber this evening. I often say to constituents in the electorate of Glass House when they ask me why is it so adversarial in the chamber that they would be surprised at the level of bipartisan support there is for the vast majority of legislation. It is certainly pleasing to be here tonight knowing that there is bipartisan support for this bill.

The Corrective Services (No Body, No Parole) Amendment Bill 2017 looks to amend the Corrective Services Act 2006 to introduce the policy that is colloquially referred to as no-body no-parole here in the state of Queensland. The policy is predicated on the notion that by making parole release for particular prisoners contingent on them satisfactorily cooperating in the investigation of an offence to identify a victim's location it will encourage and provide incentive for those prisoners to assist in finding and recovering the body or remains of a victim.

I do speak of the bipartisan support because in November last year the LNP released our policy supporting no-body no-parole laws in Queensland. It had been our desire to see these laws come into effect back in May—a little sooner than today—by moving some amendments that were voted down unfortunately. Following recommendations from the Sofronoff review into parole, the government have announced their support for these laws. Therefore, we are here this evening debating and hopefully passing them.

I want to make a short contribution that reflects on what others have already said and what was picked up in the review. The review report expressly acknowledged in the case of homicide offences that withholding the location of a victim's body or remains prolongs the suffering of the families and that all efforts should be made to attempt to minimise this sorrow. The review report states on page 235—

A punishment is lacking in retribution, and the community would be right to feel indignation, if a convicted killer could expect to be released without telling what he did with the body of the victim. The killer's satisfaction at being released on parole is grotesquely inconsistent with the killer's knowing perpetuation of the grief and desolation of the victim's loved ones.

I want to reflect on one family who I know have experienced that grief and have experienced it for a considerable period of time while they searched for their son's body. Taryn, my wife, and I and our then two kids moved to the community of Palmwoods in March 2003. It was only later in that year that Daniel Morcombe, a fellow Palmwoods resident, was tragically taken from a bus stop not far from our family home. I want to commend Bruce and Denise Morcombe for their tireless efforts to get a level of closure first by finding Daniel, by seeing justice in seeing the conviction of his killer but then in taking his story and turning it into a positive—turning it into a positive message for all children and for all families through their child safety work.

I want to quote from a couple of *Sunshine Coast Daily* articles. The Morcombes joined with the LNP when we made our announcement in November 2016 in support of the proposed changes. They said that they had met families who have not had the opportunity to say farewell to a murdered loved

one. Mr Morcombe had told ABC Radio on the Monday preceding this that their family put finding Daniel as their highest priority. It was then followed by finding justice for his killer. For them it was paramount that they found Daniel's body, even more so than they found out who it was who killed him. They are quoted in a subsequent article from earlier this year saying—

"Our extensive travels around Queensland supporting the aims of the Daniel Morcombe Foundation have allowed us to engage with family members who have not had the opportunity to say farewell to a murdered loved one.

"This policy will assist them greatly by providing some comfort with a place to reflect."

With those words, I commend the bill to the House.