




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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**CHILD PROTECTION (OFFENDER REPORTING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (4.02 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I would like to acknowledge the good work of the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee on this bill and the related report, report No. 28 of the 55th Parliament. The committee was briefed by officials from the Queensland Police Service. We took submissions from interested stakeholders. At the conclusion of our deliberations we made a number of recommendations in our report.

There is no more important recommendation than recommendation No. 1, which states that this bill should be passed. I agree with the member for Broadwater that when we consider giving police extra powers we as a parliament should scrutinise them very carefully. It was good to work with the committee and you, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, on this bill. The committee learned a lot of things.

We talked to the police. We must take our hats off to the police who work day to day in the area of child exploitation. The things they must see are mind-boggling and horrific. We were fully briefed. Congratulations once again to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and the secretariat. It opened my eyes to a lot of things that I did not realise went on behind the scenes and the great work that the Queensland Police are doing to stamp this out.

This bill came about as a result of a CCC inquiry. It is a good bill because the police should have these powers. In my opinion, if a person has been convicted of a crime against a child then they should lose rights. The police should have the powers to go in and check the cloud and the devices that these criminals have access to. It was great to speak to police officers and have them tell us what these powers would mean. These powers are not going to be used against ordinary citizens, which is something some people were concerned about. The powers are going to be used against people who have been convicted of offences against young children.

As a father I stand here and think that this bill should have come in a lot earlier. I am glad the Palaszczuk government has taken on board the recommendations of the CCC in its report. I am glad we have brought in these changes to the legislation to give the police more powers to make not only our streets safer but also our children safer. When we think about the damage that is done to young people by these offenders and the ongoing effect it has on their lives and on society, it is little things like this that we can do that will change lives and enable the police to keep a better eye on these offenders.

The police who look after this particular area of crime do a magnificent job. On behalf of my electorate, I thank them for the great job they do. I do not think they get paid enough. They are keeping our society safe, our children safe and our grandchildren safe. On behalf of my electorate, I say thank you for the great job they are doing in making sure that children have a child's life and grow up to be the good young adults we want to see in our state.

I thank the police minister and his department for pushing ahead with this. Being politicians is about making sure we are looking after the young ones in our society who cannot look after themselves, we have to keep abreast of the way technology is going and the way things are changing.

It was unnerving for the committee to find out that police cannot access some devices. That is not correct in this day and age. If a person offends, is convicted and sent away by their peers they should lose a lot of rights in society. It is especially the case when the crime is offending against children.

I would like to see more done in that field to help the police as we progress through this parliament and even into the next parliament. I think there should be more powers given to police in terms of crimes like this. They need to have the necessary powers, equipment and money to make sure that we keep these people locked up behind bars or monitored. We know that we cannot keep them locked up forever. When they are released we have to make sure they are monitored very closely.

In talking to people who have been affected by these types of offences, I know that it really impacts their life. In my electorate I have had a couple of constituents tell me what happened to them as young people. It is pretty distressing. One lady is in her 50s now and what happened is still having a major impact on her life and affects her life with her grandchildren.

It was good to work on the committee. We were all in agreement and all worked very well. I thank the members of the opposition on the committee who stood with us and worked hard to make sure we reached the right outcome for young people and the police to make sure they keep these criminals in check. I commend the bill to the House and thank the police minister for the great job he and his department have done.