




Speech By
Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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**TRANSPORT OPERATIONS (ROAD USE MANAGEMENT) (OFFENSIVE
ADVERTISING) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (4.33 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) (Offensive Advertising) Amendment Bill—a bill that will address the longstanding issue of offensive advertising on vehicles in Queensland. It is not my intention to restate in detail the new provisions contained in the bill. Other speakers before me have already done so ably. What I will say is that the vast majority of advertising displayed on vehicles complies with the relevant advertising code of ethics and meets community expectations. Where breaches have been identified, data compiled by the Advertising Standards Bureau and cited in the Transportation and Utilities Committee report places compliance at over 97 per cent over the past five years, so we know that the overwhelming majority of advertisers are doing the right thing.

However, it has been a cause of concern for some time now that some complaints about particularly offensive advertising on certain vehicles are going unaddressed. Complaints about breaches of the code of ethics are made to the Advertising Standards Bureau and determined by the Advertising Standards Board—an independent board of 20 people representing the diversity of Australian society. A good friend of mine is on that board and is a passionate advocate for the work of the board, which has been very well regarded within the industry for many years now. While most advertisers comply—and earlier I quoted a compliance rate of over 97 per cent—in a small number of cases where an advertiser decides not to comply with the board's determination, neither the board nor the Advertising Standards Bureau currently have any powers to enforce the determination. This has been the case with the well publicised issues with Wicked Campers' vehicles displaying highly sexualised and explicit images and slogans that vilify women and girls which has incited considerable community uproar and has been mentioned repeatedly today.

Australians have a wonderful sense of humour and I think it is fair to say that we have a great tolerance for tongue-in-cheek, clever or witty advertising, but the images that this legislation will address go too far. They are not funny and they are not entertaining. They are demeaning, offensive at best and promote violence at worst. As cited in Micah Projects' submission to the committee—and I understand Micah was mentioned earlier by the member for Southport—some of these offensive slogans have even gone so far as to threaten harm to prominent women who have challenged them. Like many of my colleagues, I feel very passionate about this bill. As a woman I have found many of the images displayed degrading and personally offensive and as a mother I have struggled to either avoid or explain the graphic content of these images or slogans to my young boys. These images do not depict how my husband and I are raising our boys to view women, to refer to women and to treat women. It is not how I as a Queenslander want visitors to our great state thinking we view women in our community.

This bill will address the lack of enforcement powers currently undermining the Advertising Standards Board's capacity to meet community expectations in this regard. The bill will allow the chief executive of the Department of Transport and Main Roads to cancel a vehicle's registration to enforce Advertising Standards Board determinations where no action has been taken by the advertiser to modify

or remove an advertisement that breaches the code of ethics. Importantly, the bill strikes the balance between allowing the Advertising Standards Bureau's current process to run its course, including any review, before deregistration takes place. Every opportunity is afforded to the registered operator to comply with the bureau's determination whether by modifying or removing the advertisement before deregistration. This legislation responds to and restores community expectations of advertising and further empowers determinations of the Advertising Standards Board.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Attorney-General, Yvette D'Ath, and Minister for Main Roads, Mark Bailey, for working collaboratively to find a solution to this issue and bring this legislation before the House. Similarly, I want to thank the committee chair and member for Kallangur, Shane King, and members of the Transportation and Utilities Committee who unanimously recommended that the bill be passed. Finally, I want to acknowledge the ongoing valuable work of the Advertising Standards Board and commend the bill to the House.