




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2017

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Weapons Licensing

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.51 am): Last night this parliament voted to support Labor's stronger gun laws in Queensland after a disallowance motion brought by Katter's Australian Party to halt the Weapons Legislation (Lever Action Shotguns) Amendment Regulation was voted down. This regulation limits access to high-capacity lever action shotguns in the community and increases community safety in Queensland.

The Weapons Act 1990 is based on John Howard's world renowned National Firearms Agreement and includes the underlying principles that weapon possession and use are subordinate to the need to ensure public and individual safety. Although the National Firearms Agreement was born out of Australia's deadly Port Arthur massacre in 1996, it is every bit as important almost 20 years later, if not more so. The serious issue of gun control and community safety is an important debate that has again been given public prominence in the wake of last week's deadly massacre in Las Vegas. Australia's gun laws have become the gold standard internationally, cited each time a gun related tragedy occurs internationally.

Community safety is further improved by imposing strict controls on the possession of weapons, and the weapons regulation categorises weapons in line with the National Firearms Agreement. Lever action shotguns with a magazine capacity of up to five rounds will now be classified as category B weapons in Queensland and those with a magazine capacity of more than five rounds will be classified as the more restrictive, highest category, category D weapons. This reclassification brings Queensland into line with the COAG decision in December 2016 to strengthen the National Firearms Agreement. Jurisdictions around Australia are also following suit. New South Wales, Western Australia and the ACT have already legislated to reclassify lever action shotguns in accordance with the agreement and other jurisdictions are now in various stages of implementation.

The Palaszczuk government has always acknowledged that the vast majority of firearm owners in Queensland are decent, law-abiding citizens and the facts show that Queenslanders and firearm owners also take gun control seriously, because during the recent weapons amnesty here in Queensland over 16,000 weapons were surrendered. This reclassification will improve public safety whilst ensuring farmers have access to the weapons they need to do their job. Under the Palaszczuk government, Queensland will remain part of the National Firearms Agreement and Queenslanders' safety will be our priority. We will never water down gun controls in Queensland. We will never betray John Howard's courage in relation to the NFA because Australia is a safer place and Queensland is a safer place as a result of that courage.