



Speech By  
**Nikki Boyd**

**MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS**

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## **CORRECTIVE SERVICES (PAROLE BOARD) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (2.57 pm): Today I rise to support the Corrective Services (Parole Board) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. In commencing, I congratulate the minister on the recent arrival into his family. The minister and I both serve our communities in the Moreton Bay region, so on occasion I get to go along to events with the minister and get to witness him interacting with kids. I have to say that he has a very special touch. He has a great rapport with children and I am sure that both he and his wife, Holly, will make fantastic parents and I congratulate them on the recent arrival of baby Daniel.

In response to a community tragedy that occurred in Townsville on 26 July 2016, the Palaszczuk government announced an independent review into Queensland's parole system. The review, headed by Walter Sofronoff QC, was charged with ensuring that the parole and corrective services system delivered community safety and crime prevention through the humane containment, supervision and rehabilitation of offenders. On 1 December 2016 the *Queensland parole system review: final report* was handed down. It identified systemic inefficiencies in the operation of the three existing parole boards and found substantial room for improvement in the outdated, antiquated parole system. This bill seeks to establish one centralised, independent and professional Parole Board—the Parole Board Queensland. In doing so, it makes substantial changes to its membership as compared with the existing parole boards.

The bill provides that Parole Board Queensland supplants the three existing parole boards operating in Queensland and will be responsible for all decision-making with respect to parole in Queensland. Additionally, this bill clarifies that, when a person is granted parole, whether by a court or by Parole Board Queensland, a condition may be imposed requiring a prisoner to comply with and abide by any monitoring directions given by a Corrective Services officer.

I would like to acknowledge the work done by the department, the committee staff and also the stakeholders throughout this process. I particularly want to acknowledge the work done by the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence, which made a submission on what constitutes prisoners as being serious violent offenders. We know that non-fatal strangulation in a domestic setting is a precursor to homicide, with victims seven times more likely to die at the hands of their partner. I commend the minister for picking up on this point and including it in section 315A of the Criminal Code through amendments that he will move today.

The parole review report recommended that the new Parole Board should be required to decide applications within 120 days rather than 180 days. This bill delivers upon that recommendation. The amendment will mean that, although a prisoner can apply for parole up to six months prior to their parole eligibility date, the Parole Board will need to make the decision about the application within four months. In cases where the Parole Board decides to grant parole, that could mean that Queensland Corrective

Services and the prisoner have up to two months advance notice about the parole decision before release. That is two months in which to plan and prepare for that prisoner's release and transition from prison into the community, setting them up to succeed with that transition.

This bill will deliver important changes to improve the fairness of the parole and corrective services system. Many submitters to the bill highlighted the need for improved wraparound systems. Our government is not a lock-them-up-and-throw-away-the-key government. Our government is committed to affordable social housing. Our government invests in high-quality health care. Our government recognises the role that drug addiction plays in antisocial behaviour. I take this opportunity to commend the Premier on the work that she is doing to tackle the scourge of ice in our communities. This government will invest in front-line services for mental health. I am so pleased that, under this government, the local hospital in my community will see much needed infrastructure and service improvement. Our government is committed to investing in victim support services.

I want to pick up on the point that was raised by the shadow minister about no-body no-parole. I was not present at the committee's public hearing on Wednesday, 29 March, but I read the meeting papers quite thoroughly and, as the shadow minister was speaking, I again reviewed them. I stand to be corrected, but it seems to me that the no-body no-parole scenario or policy was not picked up and canvassed in any great depth during this committee examination process. I think it would be very remiss of me not to highlight the fact that, as a committee member, it is not an issue that I have a familiarity with at any level of detail through the committee process of examining this bill.

There is no one quick fix or measure that will see a foolproof system, but many steps to better transition offenders back into our communities and to stamp out recidivism will create a robust and rigorous system that will make our communities safer. I commend this bill and the minister's amendments to the House.