



Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**


**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2018

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Public Safety**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): It is my firm belief that the first responsibility of any government is to protect the public. It is a principle that is supported by the Liberal National Party. It is a principle that is supported by millions of Queenslanders. Modern governments have a huge number of responsibilities, but the safety of the public remains the most important to them. The public expects politicians to keep them safe from those who would harm them. The Liberal National Party will always keep our families safe, our streets safe and our communities safe.

In government we recruited more than 800 extra police and we gave them the tools to fight crime, we gave the victims a voice, we introduced the toughest sex offender laws in Australia, we increased the non-parole period for murder to 20 years and we smashed Queensland's outlaw motorcycle gangs. We made community safety a priority. When the Supreme Court rejected an application to extend the supervision order on Robert Fardon, the LNP was deeply concerned. We immediately urged the government to pursue all available avenues to ensure his supervision continued. The Attorney-General and the Premier dithered for days before saying they would appeal the decision. When we asked the Premier what she would do if the appeal failed, the Premier refused point blank to answer that question. There was no valid reason for the Premier not to respond. The Premier chose—let me say that again: the Premier of this state chose—to say nothing. That is what we have come to expect from this open and apparently transparent government. What a joke!

While Labor dithers on crime, the LNP acts. We all know urgent action is needed. The Labor Party is reluctant to link legislation with any identified individual. Let us be open and transparent. The bill we had hoped to put before parliament today has been prompted by the possible end of the supervision order imposed on Robert John Fardon. Labor seems to have forgotten that the Attorney-General herself has already made a public statement on this case naming this man. The Attorney-General's statement said, 'I want Robert Fardon to be strictly supervised in the community.'

**Mr Bleijie:** She didn't?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** She did. I take that interjection. That is the quote from the Attorney-General.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** When the opposition wants to talk about this individual, Labor says that this topic should be off limits. The LNP will discuss this problem and we will act on it, too, because that is our job. I am not worried by Labor's lectures, but I am afraid about what might happen if this man is released unsupervised into the community. Let us put the facts on the table: Fardon has sexually

abused and raped children. Fardon has wounded children. Just 20 days after he was released from prison in 1988 he raped and brutally assaulted a woman. The women and children of Queensland—all of them—have the right to be safe from offenders like this man. The rights of victims should matter. The rights of victims should matter more than the rights of repeated rapists.

The LNP will defend those rights with the Protecting Queenslanders from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill. Unlike the legislation the panicking Palaszczuk government announced yesterday, the LNP's bill will keep people like Robert Fardon's supervision order in place. Our bill will apply to all violent repeat sexual offenders. I am happy to repeat that: the LNP's bill will apply to all violent repeat sexual offenders. That is the distinct difference between what is in our bill and what is contained in the Labor bill.

The LNP bill will also include indefinite GPS tracking of all violent repeat sexual offenders. We heard in this chamber today the police minister say that under the Labor bill it could have a GPS tracker. Under the LNP's bill it would have a GPS tracker. That is the difference. While Labor may think that introducing this bill is a step in the right direction, it simply does not go far enough. If Labor's bill is enacted it will still allow Fardon to be freed from the strict supervision he is now subject to. The LNP's much stronger bill has rattled the Palaszczuk government but they protest too much. They are so sensitive because they know that they have dropped the ball on protecting the public.

If those opposite were honest with Queenslanders it would not have been down to the opposition to have to initiate this legislation. Labor should have been faster. What have those opposite been doing? They should have been first out of the blocks. This is a government that rests on its record and that record is being soft on crime. The government is so out of touch with community sentiment, so out of touch with community, it is soft on crime.

The evidence is overwhelming. Under this Palaszczuk government assaults have increased by 31 per cent. Under this Palaszczuk government robberies have increased by 63 per cent. Under this Palaszczuk government armed robbery is up by 47 per cent. That is what Labor has achieved in its four years. It is a shocking record of failure. Is it any wonder that the bikies are back under this Palaszczuk government? It was the LNP that ran the bikies out of town, but under Labor they are back and they are doing doughnuts in front of our police stations.

**Mr Mander:** Open defiance.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection. Those people, those thugs, those criminals, are laughing in the face of these incompetent Labor members. Again we saw the dithering of Labor when the brute who fatally bashed toddler Mason Jet Lee was jailed for a non-parole period of just six years.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is a matter of sub judice. It is before the courts on appeal.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Members, order! I am taking advice from the Clerk. Members, thank you for your patience. We want to make sure that we get these decisions right before we make a ruling. Under the advice I have received from both the Clerk and the Attorney-General, I suggest we do not make reference to that case.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 233 with respect to sub judice. My understanding is that in the case mentioned judgement has been given. The Attorney may well have appealed it, but the Court of Criminal Appeal has not referred it back to the trial division for a new trial. I fail to understand how it is sub judice when it clearly refers to if a judgement has been made—which it has—and standing order 233(2) states—

This Standing Order shall cease to have effect when the verdict and sentence have been announced or judgement given—  
which was the case in the original sentence—

but shall again have effect should a Court of Criminal Appeal order a new trial.

That has not happened.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Attorney, can you please advise at what point we are at with that particular decision?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I am still seeking advice, to which you will listen as well.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am aware that the appeal has been lodged. I am not aware that the matter has been listed, at this stage.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I have made very clear my expectation. I was taking advice and I needed you to listen in silence. That will continue. Attorney, do you need to add anything?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I was also going to draw attention to standing order 233(1), which talks about members exercising care 'to avoid saying inside the House that which would be regarded as contempt of court outside the House and could jeopardise court proceedings'. The Leader of the Opposition, as a former lawyer, should know better than to be talking about these matters.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, you will not debate across the chamber when I am taking advice. I was still taking advice from the Attorney. That was continuing. You do not need to discuss that. Members, thank you for your consideration. I have taken extensive advice, as you have seen. The Clerk has advised me that the sub judice rule will not apply in this situation.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, once I have made a decision I do not need you to affirm that decision. I make it very clear in my rulings. I will make sure that we conduct this debate with the respect that it needs. The decision has been made. My apologies, Leader of the Opposition. A decision has been made. There is no further discussion around that.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Unlike those on the other side, the law school I went to was at the university for the real world. It was a university that actually gets out and listens to the people in our communities. Whose side are they on?

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I see the minister laughing at the Attorney-General behind her. She is going, 'You should've gone to the university that I went to.' The community has spoken. The community demanded action. The community and the LNP demanded action. It took the dithering Palaszczyk government way too long to step up and do something. It is no wonder they are laughing on the other side. It is no wonder they are embarrassed. They should be embarrassed, because this government is soft on crime and does not understand community sentiment.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I am having difficulty hearing the Leader of the Opposition. I am specifically speaking to those members on the non-government side.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Not only is the Palaszczyk government embarrassed about how soft on crime they are and the effect on our community; they are so arrogant that they will not even allow the LNP's alternative legislation to be discussed here in this parliament. That brings shame on this government. It is a shame they are so soft on crime.