




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.54 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and also to make some points in relation to the amendments moved in this House by the government—

Mr Ryan: They haven't been moved yet. They have been circulated.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON:—that have been circulated in this House. I take note of the comments made by my colleague the member for Chatsworth in relation to the arrogance of those on the other side of this chamber. Why are we constantly surprised?

I note that the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill went through committee, unlike the amendments, which did not even go to committee for five minutes. We have some serious crime issues across this great state of ours. I want to put on record the LNP's thanks to our hardworking police officers who do so much in the line of duty on behalf of all of our communities. I do not think there would be any harder working police men and women than the ones who are struggling with the increase in crime in the great South Burnett. All across the South Burnett we have had a real scourge of crime. We need to give our police more powers, we need to give our police more support and we certainly need to listen to communities when they are screaming out for a bit of assistance. Let me put some facts on record.

Some serious crime issues started in the South Burnett in late 2017. Crime escalated right through until July 2018. During that time I wrote to the minister not once, not twice, but three times. No-one likes to have to promote an issue like crime in their local area on their local TV stations or in their local media; however, that is the only way to get this government to listen. The community knew that we had written to the minister three times and had received little to no response. Meetings were held in Murgon about the issue. A crime petition was started. I think we had around 800 signatures from people in the South Burnett on a parliamentary petition seeking policing resources and intervention, and I was more than happy to sponsor that petition.

In July the minister finally went to the media. He turned up at Cherbourg and said, 'I'm going to solve the problem of crime here.' Guess what the minister announced? What an absolute laughing-stock in the media he was that day! It was beyond embarrassing. He announced that he was going to give four new police officers to the region. It sounds good when we see the grab on TV, but locals know that there were four vacancies. What was the minister going to do? He was going to fill the vacancies. Guess what? I say to the minister seriously to check the vacancies, fill the vacancies and actually put some police officers on the ground—and not traffic cops. We respect the traffic police. If people in our community are doing the wrong thing, then they should be pulled up and they should be arrested. If they are not wearing a seatbelt, fair enough.

Mr Nicholls: Fine them, not arrest them.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Fine them, possibly not arrest them. I take that interjection. If they are speeding, they should be fined and have points taken from them. The minister needs to look at our community and its priorities. If the priority of this minister is to send not one, not two, but many, many police cars, who are the traffic police, to try to solve the problem of juveniles flogging cars, breaking into elderly people's houses and stoning the nurses as they drive to work each and every evening, I say traffic police will not fix those problems.

We call on this minister to provide police who are empowered to work on behalf of the community to bring down crime and give our community some sense that the government even knows they are there. Do not fly in and bring a whole hoard of uniformed officers with you for protection—and possibly a couple of other ministers to justify the use of the government jet—to sneak in and out of the community. The community wants to hear from the minister. Front up! Give our local police officers support. Fill the vacancies and then give us a few more police officers on top of that. We certainly do not want any more traffic cops because, trust me, my community—including our local hardworking police officers—have said to me, 'Deb, tell the minister no more traffic police,' because I think even some of our local police officers are getting pulled up.

Mrs D'Ath: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition has been speaking for six minutes now and she has not gone to the substance of the bill. I ask that the member be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): The member has been using local examples to talk about police resourcing and police powers. With the remaining time on the clock the member now has an opportunity to focus more directly on the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. I know it has been a tough day for the Attorney-General. She has been pulled up a couple of times today.

Mr Minnikin: Not a good strike rate!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Not a good strike rate; I will take that interjection. There is a point in this bill in relation to evade police in an attempt to try to bring down car thefts. Not speeding and not using your seatbelt are not the issues my community want fixed. They want car thefts fixed. Attorney-General, that is what the community of the South Burnett wants fixed. That is what the police officers in our community who work so hard each and every day want fixed. In actual fact, it is not just the good community of the South Burnett. I am extraordinarily pleased to have the opportunity to go to so many communities around this wonderful state of ours. There are many communities screaming out for more support from this government in relation to not only policing but crime.

I turn to the amendments that the Attorney-General has bumbled her way through and circulated in this House. I thank the Minister for Police for his notes in relation to that. When you look at the piece of paper that has been passed around this place, it is obvious it has been rushed. It is obvious that the Attorney-General is simply not over the brief. That has been quite obvious a couple of times today.

The difference, as some of my colleagues on this side of the House have pointed out, is in relation to 'could' and 'would'. It is pretty simple. Under Labor's bill, a repeat sexual offender could maybe have GPS tracking. We are not sure. It depends on who you ask on that side of the House. They 'could' or they 'may' have tracking. Instead, the LNP have proposed tough criminal laws because we know that we need to keep serial sexual offenders behind the fence. We do not want them out in the community. We have also seen those opposite deflect to the Police Commissioner and say that they will be in the neighbourhood, but I want to know in whose neighbourhood? Is it the neighbourhood of the Attorney-General? Is it the neighbourhood of the Minister for Police? Is it the Premier's neighbourhood? Is it going to be the neighbourhood of the great South Burnett? Certainly not in my time.

We know that only the LNP will give victims a voice in Queensland because only the LNP will be tough on crime. It is only the Labor Party who will be soft on crime and put criminals before victims. That is certainly not the LNP's plan. We will continue to put victims before criminals.