




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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LAND, EXPLOSIVES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.36 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I will be speaking specifically to the aspects of the legislation that meet the recommendations of the *Not now, not ever* report. The Explosives Act regulates the safe handling of explosives in Queensland and this includes possessing, manufacturing, selling, storing, transporting and of course using explosives. The definition of 'explosives' includes blasting explosives, fireworks, ammunition and marine safety flares. As it stands, the Explosives Act does not contain adequate protection for security related matters and the legislation seeks to remedy that. Unsecured explosives and inadequate security practices have the potential to impact community and workplace safety. In Queensland, duties and obligations relating to the security of explosives are applied through conditions of licences and policies. This is not sufficient to ensure enforcement, compliance and safety or to deter misuse.

I have been advised that Queensland is participating in a process to develop nationally consistent explosives legislation which will include a significant focus on security of explosives. This bill amends the Explosives Act 1999 and the Explosives Regulation 2017 to align with the national harmonisation process and place Queensland at the front of the pack to lead the process going forward. It is essential that Queensland's explosives legislation is kept up to date with contemporary safety and security standards and meets both community and industry expectations. We know that community expectations are changing, so the amendments proposed in this bill achieve that. The bill improves community safety by strengthening safety and security provisions for explosives, including by requiring a security sensitive explosives plan to identify security risks and adopt processes to manage these risks.

It also improves community safety by requiring all people who have access to certain types of security-sensitive explosives to hold a security clearance. This ensures that access to high-risk explosives is further restricted in line with community and industry expectations. In addition, the bill includes amendments to prohibit a person who is the subject of a domestic violence order from holding a security clearance, or explosives authority, or licence. This change contributes to the Queensland government's strategy to end domestic violence and family violence in Queensland through its *Not now, not ever* report. I note the bipartisan support for that wonderful report.

Applications for a security clearance are proposed to be made to the chief inspector, who decides if the clearance will be granted or refused. Previously, applications were undertaken by employers and each time a person moved between employers, a new security check was undertaken. As members can see, there was a lot of room for error in that space if people could simply move between employers and every time the licence would need to be rechecked. Of course, this amendment will mean that one body will check them and it will be easy to determine if the person making the application has that relevant licence.

An explosives security access card—an ESAC—will be introduced to ensure that only people who are security cleared have unsupervised access to explosives. The chief inspector will consider criminal history, including domestic violence orders, other police protection notices, or release conditions. If there is a current domestic violence order, or a current police protection notice, or a release condition—if they are in effect—the security clearance will be refused.

The amendments clarify current practice and align with explosives legislation in other states and territories and Queensland legislation, such as the Weapons Act 1990 and the Security Providers Act 1993. A person who is subject to a domestic violence order will not be granted an explosives licence. A current licence holder will have the licence immediately suspended for the term of the order. This is really important. It is absolutely vital that we close this loophole. We simply cannot have members of the community with these kinds of charges on their record having access to explosives.

The term of any order is determined by a court. The government will rely on the court and the information that it has presented to it to determine the duration of any order. It is really important to note the importance of having the chief inspector overseeing the entire process when it is a procedure that is undertaken by an independent third party. It is not being undertaken by an employer; it is being undertaken by that third party. That means that we have oversight, some independence and some real rigour around the process. We know that, as a government, victims of domestic violence need every protection that we can afford them. I am sure all members of the House would agree with me on that.

The amendments in this bill are absolutely crucial to ensuring safer workplaces and communities. I know that all of us in this chamber are here to achieve that. I also want to note that each and every one of us has a responsibility to call out family and the domestic violence as we see it, or as we suspect it.

In joining a committee that deals with agriculture, space, mining, energy, development, natural resources—just to name a few things—I never thought that I would have the opportunity to implement a recommendation—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Ms PUGH: Just to name a few things, member for Buderim—of the *Not now, not ever* report. The committee that I am a member of has such wideranging responsibilities and interests, including the wonderful opportunity to play its part in stamping out domestic violence.

While I am touching on the *Not now, not ever* report, I would like to commend the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence on the complementary campaign that the government has run this year—the ‘Do something about domestic and family violence’ Bystander campaign—that is centred on people intervening when they see domestic violence. In my humble opinion, this campaign was an absolute game changer in terms of government campaigns to stamp out domestic violence. It brought domestic violence out of the shadows and into the glaring ugly light of day where it belongs so that it can be stamped out once and for all.

I would also like to take the time remaining to me to say some thank-yous. As I said earlier, this year the committee has looked into a wideranging set of issues. I have had the pleasure of being the only female—and I know the member for Buderim hates it when I point that out—on this committee. I have had some very interesting road trips this year with—

Mr Mickelberg: We looked after you.

Ms PUGH: Yes, member for Buderim, you did indeed look after me. There were some very interesting late-night flights. I thank the member for Bundaberg for lending me a phone charger when I have needed it. As a committee, this year we have done a lot of travel for some really important issues. I have had a very enjoyable time travelling as part of the committee and I have learned a lot of things.

Mr Mickelberg: Chickens.

Ms PUGH: Yes, the chickens were certainly a highlight for me. I have learned a lot this year. I have learned from each and every member of the committee. I have certainly learned from the ministers. I have also relished the opportunity to be able to learn from so many wonderful witnesses as well. This year, the committee has heard from hundreds of witnesses on issues such as fisheries and land clearing. Our nation’s First People have come to speak with us. I think the member for Buderim would agree that we have also heard from some great environmental groups. In our year as a committee, we have seen the full spectrum of Queensland. We really are lucky to have been able to speak to those people.

I want to thank our super fantastic secretariat. I simply do not know how they kept up with the workload this year. Jacqui and her team did a wonderful job. Finally, I would like to thank the people of Mount Ommaney for giving me the opportunity to do all of this fantastic work.