




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (8.09 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and the amendments to be moved later by the minister. I would like to take the opportunity to praise our police and proudly acknowledge my daughter and my niece, both of whom are members of the thin blue line. In fact, my daughter graduated only last week, so she is very newly minted.

However, this bill has been turned into Frankenstein's monster with the inclusion of Labor's shoddy amendments which represent their feeble attempt at a plan B. The priority of all governments should be to keep its citizens safe. This government has failed to do this. The Attorney-General has failed in her duty of care to the community. As it stands, Robert John Fardon will emerge from the prison grounds that have been his home for the last four years unencumbered by restrictions on his movements. This is a man who has a five-decade history of sordid sexual violence and has been living on prison grounds under strict conditions since 2014 after trying to access a school when he was last released. This man's crimes are unspeakable. He is a repeated sex offender including raping a 12-year-old girl at gun point. This is a man deemed by experts to be an incurable psychopath.

Up until yesterday the Premier had refused to consider any legislative solutions. The Palaszczuk government eventually reached the conclusion, only after the LNP announced that they would act, that doing nothing was no longer an option. The Attorney-General claims that Labor's amendments are not Fardon specific, yet they are being rushed through as part of this bill and have not even been to a parliamentary committee.

The laws they have proposed are soft, just as they are soft on crime in every other aspect. The amendments they have proposed are cobbled together, rushed and certainly do not go far enough. The scope of the government's amendments are too narrow and should include all sexual offenders. In particular, they do not cover all repeat violent sexual offenders. Serial rapists whose victims are women will be released and unsupervised in the community under Labor's laws.

Labor claims that offenders will be tracked for the rest of their lives, but there is absolutely no guarantee that Labor's amendments will ensure that at all. In fact, the explanatory notes to Labor's amendments state that a prohibition order remains in force for only five years, not for the rest of their lives. Labor's proposed laws do not protect all Queenslanders. The proposed laws do not protect adults from violent sexual offenders. Finally, Labor's laws do not impose supervision on child sex offenders automatically upon their release from custody or when their supervision order expires. It only applies when a released sex offender engages in concerning conduct.

It is clear that the Premier woke up on Sunday morning to the media reports of the LNP's tough plan and tried to cobble together something and overhype the sales pitch. The LNP have stepped up with a plan B after the Premier and Attorney-General have failed to act. The Protecting Queenslanders

from Violent and Child Sex Offenders Amendment Bill seeks to stop paedophiles and rapists like Robert John Fardon's unsupervised release into the community, drawing on a 2014 decision of the High Court which established that parliament can legislate for indefinite detention in certain circumstances.

The LNP's laws apply to all sex offenders—child sex offenders and violent sex offenders. Our laws grant the Attorney-General the power to determine when a supervision order ceases. It provides for the indeterminate supervision of repeat sexual offenders upon their release into the community and they strengthen the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003 to ensure that when making a decision under this act a person or body must give paramount consideration to the safety and protection of the community. This legislation would only apply to a handful of Queensland's worst sexual offenders—individuals who pose an unacceptable risk to the community.

We are not playing politics on this issue. We are simply stumping up a better solution to a very serious problem. Keeping the community safe should be the first priority of any government. The community and Fardon's victims are demanding action. I think I speak on behalf of everyone when I say that I am not willing to risk letting dangerous sexual offenders be released unsupervised ever.