




Speech By
Barry O'Rourke

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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SUMMARY OFFENCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.53 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. Labor is a party of the fair go and Labor will always support the rights of Queenslanders to peaceful assembly and lawful protest. Public expressions of an individual's views and concerns will always be safeguarded under Labor. Recently we have witnessed instances where dangerous lock-on devices have been used. The result of such action causes mass disruption to traffic through major Brisbane intersections and closes some of the important bridges and networks. There have also been instances in North Queensland. I definitely do not want to see it in Central Queensland.

The real risk is that one day an ambulance on an urgent task will be delayed and a person in desperate need of medical assistance will suffer serious harm as a result of the delays where dangerous lock-on devices have been used. Again I repeat that the government will always support the rights of Queenslanders to protest lawfully, peacefully and respectfully. This bill is aimed only at dangerous attachment devices that pose a danger to protesters and first responders.

Penalty infringement notices provide police with additional options in managing offending behaviour. This bill before the House makes two amendments to the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014. It allows infringement notices to be issued for the new offences of using a dangerous attachment device under the Summary Offences Act. The first amendment will allow police to issue a penalty infringement notice where a person uses a dangerous attachment device without reasonable excuse to disrupt the ordinary operation of transport infrastructure. The penalty associated with this infringement notice is five penalty units, which is \$667.25. This is a significant penalty that takes into account the seriousness of the offence which often sees protesters use dangerous attachment devices such as dragon's dens or tripods on roadways and rail lines to disrupt transport services.

The second amendment will allow police to issue a penalty infringement notice where a person uses a dangerous attachment device without a reasonable excuse to prevent a person entering or exiting a place of business or cause a halt to the ordinary operations of plant or equipment because of concerns about the safety of any person. The penalty for this infringement notice is two penalty units, which is \$266.90. Infringement notices do not impact on a person's antecedents which means they will not have a conviction recorded against them if the fine is paid. However, a person who is issued with a penalty infringement notice for using a dangerous attachment device may elect to contest the notice and have the matter heard before a court. A police officer also retains the option to prefer charges against a person where appropriate. This bill offers flexibility to allow police to tailor responses to prevent and disrupt offending behaviours. Labor will always support the rights of Queenslanders to protest peacefully and lawfully. This bill is needed to ensure dangerous devices do not put people at risk of harm. I commend the bill to the House.