



Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.46 pm): I rise to speak in support of this bill. I note and welcome the broad support from across the chamber. It is probably fairly rare that I agree with the member for Glass House, but there were many things in his speech that I think are commendable. I certainly take a unity position with the member in relation to people who approach my electorate office seeking relief from speeding or drink-driving fines. It is certainly not something that will get much of a sympathetic ear from me.

I pick up on some of the commentary from the member for Thuringowa, particularly the concerns he raised about the impacts on our emergency services personnel. That is certainly the perspective I bring to these bills. Based on my nursing experience, I have witnessed the impact of motor vehicle accidents—probably picking up at the point the member for Thuringowa left off, at the hospital door. I have seen what motor vehicle accidents do to people. I have seen the journey people go on: through the emergency department, through operating theatres, through ICU and then care in orthopaedic units, burns units or the head injuries clinic.

What brought it all home to me in terms of what motor vehicle accidents mean for people was my time spent in the rehabilitation areas of the hospital. When someone with an MVA comes in to emergency or through theatre they are there for not a particularly long period of time. Similarly in those other areas, you are generally not in those wards for a very long period of time. People recovering from a motor vehicle accident are often in a rehabilitation unit for a period of months and sometimes up to 12 months. I have certainly looked after people in those situations. That is where you really see the impacts on the individual. Bear in mind that we are dealing with people who survive; we do not get to see those other impacts.

The impacts are absolutely devastating. They end people's dreams, they end their careers and they can have massive impacts on people's families. They can destroy family life. If you have been in an accident where you have been drink-driving and you have injured other members of your family, it can have absolutely shocking impacts. Those impacts on families where people have loss of career and loss of income are often multigenerational. They put stresses on families that take several generations to recover from.

I want to touch on some of the issues that the member for Traeger raised in his contribution. I can appreciate what he is attempting to say, but I look at this from the perspective of a nurse when I nursed people who had been involved in motor vehicle accidents. Being based at the royal Brisbane hospital rehabilitation unit, we were picking up people from right around the state, so it did not matter whether it was from an accident in Coorparoo or Cloncurry because the impacts were the same.

The things that I picked up listening to the member for Traeger's contribution was that if someone is on a country road and they are speeding and they are tired they are already ticking two of the Fatal Five boxes and that needs to be something that they should be very concerned about. I understand the

difficulties of the distances, but still the advice is there. That is not a wise situation for someone to put themselves in. The people in my electorate are very supportive of road safety. It is one of the more common issues that is raised with my electorate office. A lot of it concerns local roads and issues around our local area, but we get people returning from longer journeys contacting the office with concerns about various roads and I am always happy to pass those on to the minister.

We in this chamber should all be extremely proud of what we have achieved in relation to road safety. I can remember that when we first introduced alcohol blood tests I was a young person in a particular town and I guess the kindest way I could put it was that the attitude towards drink-driving was somewhat cavalier. We have significantly changed the attitudes and the behaviour of the majority of people in this state for the better. That has taken a long time to do, but this bill is a continuation of that important public health initiative.

Road accidents really are a public health issue and we have to tackle them in a public health manner. That is what I particularly like about this bill. If we look at some of the provisions of this bill, the issues around driver education are really important. We know that if we are going to change people's behaviour around any public health matter we have to start with education, and this bill takes a graduated approach to that in that it recognises that for first-time offenders a shorter, sharper course will deliver a good outcome. In fact, the World Health Organization has recognised that as the most effective tool from a clinical perspective but also the most cost-effective evidence based approach that can be taken in this instance. If the World Health Organization is pushing this as an evidence based approach, then there is a lot of merit to it. I note the RACQ's support as well.

The changed approaches in relation to the interlock device will ultimately get more people participating in the interlock program and ultimately that will mean fewer people drinking and driving on our roads, particularly those people who have a serious problem with drinking and driving. The more of those people we can help and the more of those people we can take off the roads or put them on the roads in a sensible and safe manner, the fewer motor accidents we will have. Those provisions are well worth supporting. As I said, the people in my electorate are fully supportive of road safety initiatives and I certainly support them from the perspective of representing those people and from my own experiences as a nurse.

I also want to thank the minister for not just the work on this bill. This week the local south side command decided that for road safety it would launch Operation Wake Up, which is a campaign aimed at the Fatal Five and educating the public about the Fatal Five. Senior Sergeant Dave Stafford from the Coorparoo police asked me to come down fairly early one morning to help with that process at the Woolworths and Merlo in Coorparoo and I asked the minister the night before if he would be available to come down. I am sure that he probably had other plans like sleeping in after a week in parliament, but he pulled himself out of bed and came down and helped to spread that word around the Fatal Five. I thank the minister for that and I thank the officers from the Queensland police for the work that they are doing in relation to Operation Wake Up. With those few words, I commend this bill to the House.