




Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

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

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (11.22 am): For so many of us road safety is not an academic issue. It is not one of statistics or counts. We feel it very viscerally every time a community member is hurt or killed on our local roads. Not so long ago I was at my son's soccer training at the Park Ridge Panthers and I sat down next to another father who seemed particularly quiet, so I asked if he was okay. He quietly told me that the afternoon before he had been travelling down the Mount Lindesay Highway when he came upon a car that had lost control and crashed. He got out of his car and sat in the passenger seat of the crashed vehicle with the seriously injured driver, holding his head until our emergency services arrived. He was very shaken by the experience of the injury of a perfect stranger and the moment that he was forced to share. However, for someone the stranger was of course dearly loved as a father, a husband, a son.

Each statistic of injury or death on our roads has a story like this—a connected web of people deeply hurt, not just by injury but by a loved one's hurt or even that of a perfect stranger. I particularly want to note our first responders—our police, our firefighters, both rural and urban, and of course our paramedics. They serve us by being first on site of an accident and shouldering that emotional burden of these traumatic events. So often some—perhaps those on the other side or even those in public or the media—belittle our public servants. However, whenever we hear this sort of commentary it is worth remembering that if we are ever injured then it will be a public servant who is the person who will be at our side.

Mr Harper: Ambos are great.

Mr POWER: Paramedics indeed are fantastic people who have to stand up at these moments of trauma. I also want to remind those young people in the audience that one of the most dangerous times in their lives is when they make the transition from being a passenger, usually accompanied by an older adult, to being a driver or driving with other new and inexperienced drivers. It is really worthwhile remembering that this transition is extraordinarily dangerous and they need to take that responsibility very carefully.

This transport legislation proposes worthwhile changes to a variety of traffic and transport acts and will add to the good work the minister has done in funding our safer roads. In Logan Village and Yarrabilba road safety is vital and nothing is more important than investment in Waterford-Tamborine Road. As the minister knows very well, we have finished building the four lanes from Hotz Road near Yarrabilba through to Anzac Avenue, making it much safer. Currently, we are also building the four lanes through the North Street intersection, with the lights turned on, and already we are seeing a reduction in that traffic hotspot. Today I am pleased to announce that we will continue building those four lanes beyond the intersection to have four lanes through to Anzac Avenue, so that means families travelling home to Yarrabilba and beyond will have four lanes, starting north of Logan Village and continuing all the way through beyond Hotz Road. This will reduce the congestion that used to back up

as far as Stegemann Road by, we are told, 80 per cent, and that will make for a smoother and safer journey home. I thank the minister for visiting that site with me and his continual monitoring of that construction.

No doubt locals here in Townsville remember the LNP cuts to roads and investment, but I want to let them know that the LNP's cuts to road funding were not just in North Queensland but throughout our state. For example, in the 2011 QTRIP budget documents there was \$150 million of funding in the budget to be invested in the Mount Lindesay Highway, but that was cut. These cuts have made the Mount Lindesay Highway less safe. I have worked with the transport minister to restore some of the funding to the Mount Lindesay Highway because this government values investment in that highway. Unfortunately, the member for Nanango was making budget decisions in the Newman government and at that time they did not value the Mount Lindesay Highway.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 236 relating to relevance. There was a ruling yesterday in relation to my contribution with regard to an audit report and I fail to see the significance of this particular aspect of the contribution by the member. In terms of relevance, I seek your advice.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There has been a very broad licence throughout this debate on both sides in terms of the debate which has been set well and truly for all speakers.

Mr MINNIKIN: There is already a point of order before the Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Thank you, shadow minister. I have been allowing a degree of latitude, particularly where people are using emotive examples to illustrate points, but I would ask the member to come back to the substantive points of the bill.

Mr POWER: I do note that the bill delivers some crucial improvements in the sentencing and rehabilitation of drink-drivers—drivers who are on local roads. For locals in Logan, they need to think of these changes as being valuable and important in terms of the new roads that we are building on the Mount Lindesay Highway. I note that many members on the other side have spoken about some other projects, but they have obviously made the clear connection between this bill and the rehabilitation of drink-drivers and the important safety improvements or the need for safety improvements on local roads. I will continue to make that clear and vital link to this legislation and the safer roads that this government is working on.

We are currently making North MacLean safer by building the service lanes in Chambers Flat through the Greenbank Road intersection. Those intersections are going to be ones where drivers who are perhaps impaired by alcohol are going to have a safer way to get through. Those who are coming down the service lanes out to Stockleigh Road connecting Casuarina Road and Wharf Street will not be coming across Mount Lindesay Highway traffic because of the investments we are making. We are also doing the North MacLean safety project involving the Greenbank Road intersection which was identified as a safety issue and one of the 10 most dangerous. We know that it is impaired drivers who are not ready for difficult intersections who get into these accidents, and that is why this bill is so important and also why that investment is so important.

I was disappointed by the speech given by the member for Chatsworth. When looking back to the last contribution by the LNP, he had to go back to 1996 to find anything positive. That is an acknowledgement that, during the term of the Newman government, there were no safety measures implemented, especially on the Mount Lindesay Highway where we know the LNP cut \$150 million.

We have also put in place the Repeat Offender Education Program for repeat drink-drivers. Obviously, these are people who have a substance-abuse problem. They need strategies to cope and change their behaviour as a driver. We can deliver this program for those in rural areas face to face but also, if that is not convenient, via videoconferencing. I hope that drivers who are driving along the new four-lane investments on the Mount Lindesay Highway get that experience, because we want them to change their behaviour, especially when they are driving on the new four-lane section from Rosia Road through to and beyond the Stoney Camp Road interchange. This project should have been completed as part of the roadworks that were budgeted for in 2011 but, during the term of the LNP government, it was cut, leaving a gap where motorists have to merge just before the Granger Road exit instead of after it where there is less traffic. I note that, when the minister first saw the jumble of signs at that point of the merge, he said, 'Something has to be done.' He has pushed this vital safety improvement that will make that road much safer.

Work will also start on a section of road at Jimboomba, putting in four lanes from Camp Cable Road through to the intersection of Tamborine Street. This work will reduce incidents when drivers returning home are perhaps a little tired—and this safety bill is very much about that. Drivers will be

able to travel in the left-hand lane all the way from north of Camp Cable Road to Tamborine Street without any congestion or pinch point. It also means that the danger of flooding, which occasionally means that residents need to divert from the Mount Lindesay Highway to get home, will be much reduced as the road is going to be elevated.

When it comes to road safety in the Logan electorate, these are really important investments. There is a clear difference between the commitment of this government and this minister and the commitment of the former LNP government, which cut funding from the Mount Lindesay Highway and had no investment in new four-laning on Waterford-Tamborine Road. We have put together these projects of cutting congestion through four-laning to make these roads safer. The difference is clear: cuts and inaction from the LNP versus building and progress under this government.

When it comes to road safety in the Logan electorate, I have so much more to do. Although I appreciate the minister's commitments so far, I will continue to push him to do even more. The residents of the Logan electorate never want to go back to the cuts of the LNP, which made roads in the Logan electorate less safe. Logan residents value road safety. They value the initiatives in this bill and we will continue together to fight for road safety through this legislation and investment in our road network. I commend the bill to the House.