



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Ryan**


**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2019

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Protesters**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.51 am): It goes without saying that we live in a democracy based on respect for the law and respect for the rights of others. We live in a democracy based on the right to free speech. It is a democratic system that enshrines fairness and respect for the individual. It is these shared values that define us. These are not idle remarks. What I have spoken of are the bedrock beliefs—the very foundations—of our society. In Queensland we are now witnessing actions by extremists who, by their behaviours, clearly do not share these beliefs. We are witnessing flagrant abuses of the law and disregard for the rights of others. As the Premier has already mentioned, things are about to change.

This government will bring in measures to disrupt the actions of those who believe their rights can ride roughshod over the rights of others. A new offence will be created that is aimed at stopping certain devices being used by extremists to shut down public thoroughfares and infrastructure. This new offence will make it illegal to possess these devices, and police will have the power to search a person or vehicle suspected of carrying one of these devices. These changes will make it easier for police to prevent disruption to the daily lives of Queenslanders. As well, anyone who uses one of these devices during a protest will be subject to a new category of offence with penalties. No-one disputes the right of people to peacefully protest as long as they do so lawfully, but the actions we are now witnessing are not protests. What we are seeing now is a flagrant disregard for the law and the rights of others.

I conclude by saying that if anyone believes passionately in something they should argue their case on its merits. That is the democratic tradition. Should anyone decide to unlawfully impact the lives of farmers, sabotage vital infrastructure, block major transport routes, disrupt the legitimate activities of industry and business and put at risk the safety of members of our community, police and emergency responders, then there will be consequences. If people break the law then they will feel the full force of the law.