




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (11.14 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. The LNP has and always will advocate for measures to make Queensland roads safer. Therefore, the LNP will not be opposing the bill. However, there are questions surrounding point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits and whether these will be clearly signed for road safety purposes, which is the LNP policy position.

The bill proposes amendments to various transport acts and other acts in order to achieve its stated objectives, which include expanding the existing interlock program to include mid-range drinkers; introducing the requirement for first-time drink-driving offenders, as well as repeat offenders, to complete a brief education program; allowing the operation of point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits; and applying a drug-testing regime to people interfering with the operation of a vehicle.

Every year, death and serious injury on Queensland roads costs \$5 billion. These accidents place an enormous expense on the community through hospital and healthcare costs, lost productivity and the use of emergency services. Most importantly, they create devastating losses for individuals and families. Improving safety on our roads must be of priority, and the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 proposes road safety amendments with the intention of reducing these accidents, thereby helping meet road safety objectives, saving lives and the costs associated with these accidents.

It is no secret that speeding continues to be a significant factor in crashes. It is recognised that speed cameras play a genuine role in the implementation of speed limits. Road safety studies have indicated that point-to-point cameras, which are part of the Camera Detected Offence Program, have been found to be more effective at reducing speeding over longer stretches of road than fixed or mobile cameras. Currently, these point-to-point camera systems can only be used on lengths of road where there is a single speed limit. Amendments have therefore been included in the bill to allow the operation of point-to-point speed cameras on stretches of road with multiple speed limits.

In rural and regional communities there is almost continual roadworks of some description occurring, often over an extended period. Sometimes this work can take over 12 months to complete, meaning that speed limits are reduced for a long time and over a significant length of roadway. Mostly, the speed limit is reduced to 60 kilometres an hour, which is completely acceptable when works are taking place; however, there are many occasions when work is not being done—on public holidays and weekends—and the speed limit remains at 60 kilometres an hour. There are no workers onsite and the road conditions are more often capable of having vehicles travel at 80 kilometres an hour, yet the reduced speed limit remains. This is often where speed cameras are placed, purely as revenue earners.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr WEIR: I take that interjection. I do get complaints about this issue. One instance involved parents taking their son to play Rugby on a Sunday morning. They came across a section of roadworks where the works had not yet commenced—there were no activities underway—yet the speed limit was reduced to 60 kilometres an hour. They rolled on through, but there was a speed trap there and the father lost his licence. He had to immediately vacate the driver's seat and sit in the passenger seat. Luckily his wife was with him so she could drive. That raises the issue of why those reduced speed limits are still enforced over the weekend when there is no activity. When there is activity, I understand it. An uncle of mine was a road worker. He was clipped by a car and had his hip broken. Obviously, safety is paramount when works are happening, but in the case where works have not yet commenced or they do not hinder the road, the question needs to be asked whether the speed limit could be increased. I have dealt with that issue in my office more than once.

An important objective of this bill is to strengthen the attitude to drink-driving, which is a significant factor in many road accidents. Although it is well recognised by the general community, there is complacency at times to having a drink and then hopping behind the wheel. Unfortunately, in conjunction alcohol and speed are a deadly cocktail. Despite the introduction of the alcohol ignition interlock program for high-risk driving offenders, along with many other road safety messages including random breath tests, fines and licence disqualifications, drinking drivers are still involved on average in one in five fatalities on Queensland roads. The bill proposes to enhance the interlock program to encourage and increase participation, align the interlock program with best practice programs to motivate drink-drivers to separate their drinking from driving and to introduce education programs for drink-drivers.

Regarding the interlock program, TMR advised that the program aims for long-term behaviour change and a survey showed that Queenslanders found the interlock system to be a key deterrent in drinking and driving. The bill makes amendments to introduce a performance based interlock program. This means that a person will not be able to have their interlock condition removed until they can show that they can separate their drinking from driving. If a person fails to comply with the performance criteria, which includes having a positive breath test during the last four months of their prescribed period, they will be subject to an automatic extension of four months and that will continue until the person can successfully separate their drinking from driving.

During debate on this bill we have heard numerous cases of members who have friends or associates who have been involved in accidents through drinking. I will admit that coming from a country area I grew up in a culture where it was basically the accepted norm back in those days. Thankfully it has come a long way. After speaking to local police officers, they say that it is not as common now as it used to be, particularly the range. Unfortunately, one thing that we are seeing increasing is drug driving. That seems to be a continuing scourge on our roads at the moment and anything that can be done to alleviate that is very much appreciated and encouraged. We support the bill, but I do have concerns about the issue relating to roadworks.