




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

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TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY, TECHNOLOGY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (DISABILITY PARKING AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (4.02 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the cognate debate. I will focus my contribution exclusively on the Transport and Other Legislation (Road Safety, Technology and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2020. Like those who have gone before me, I acknowledge the work of the committee. As backbenchers we are all on committees and we know what happens. It is a great feature of our parliamentary democracy. I would like to make two points regarding the bill. Firstly, I will speak briefly about the technology to enable better enforcement of offences related to the use of seatbelts and mobile phones. I will also talk about some of my experiences in my electorate of Southern Downs relating to road safety and those matters.

I want to be on the record as saying that the use of any technology such as this naturally arouses concerns. I am sensitive to community concerns about the potential misuse of new technology associated with identification and law enforcement. I have no doubt that that will not be the case here. I think that on balance the app is a wonderful innovation that will work in the public interest. A member who spoke before me mentioned that anyone aged between 11 and 35 years will immediately take to it. I agree with that, but even an old hand like me would be able to make use of the app, so I think it is a good thing. The member for Chatsworth made that observation. Through you, Mr Speaker, I say well done, member.

We all acknowledge that the use of mobile phones and the failure to wear seatbelts are major hazards to road safety. I heard mentioned in the House earlier that one in four people who die in a road accident is not wearing a seatbelt. When we consider how little is involved in plugging in a seatbelt, that is a really tragic statistic. Likewise, the use of mobile phones and handheld devices while driving is a scourge. I suspect it has become today's equivalent of drink driving. Forty years ago people would drink and drive. We do not do that so much these days because of campaigns, community understanding and good law enforcement.

Mr Costigan: Thank goodness.

Mr LISTER: I take the interjection from my friend, the honourable member for Whitsunday; thank goodness, yes.

In my electorate of Southern Downs I have noticed that the use of mobile phones covers the spectrum of age. However, I have also lived in cities—for example, Canberra—on military postings. One thing in particular that disturbed me related not so much to interstate truck drivers but to those driving medium sized trucks in city traffic who were clearly using handheld devices. Perhaps I noticed so many of them as they are more conspicuous because of their seat position. That is lunacy when you

consider the mass of a vehicle of that nature, its stopping distance and its potential for carnage. That is a real worry. Therefore, any technology that assists police in enforcing the law and providing evidence that can nail people who are doing the wrong thing is a good thing.

To all of my constituents I say this: please do not use your mobile phones when driving. It takes only a split second of inattention to cause a tragedy that can never be rewound. I am sure that any good person who has been involved in a fatality caused by a mobile phone would urge everyone not to do that. I commend the bills to the House.