




Speech By  
**Linus Power**

**MEMBER FOR LOGAN**

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## **AGRICULTURE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (12.16 pm): I rise to support the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I do this partly because I come from a family steeped in the farm and forestry traditions of our country. I recognise the great work that so many in our agricultural sector do. I spent much time as a child on my grandfather's sheep farm with my cousins and extended family. They were extremely passionate about their sheep dogs. My second cousin Paul O'Kane and many of the family were great aficionados of sheep dogs, training them to the standard where they won many regional shows, showing their skills and care of their dogs. Many people in Queensland, indeed my own family, share that connection with their dogs whether as pets, as working dogs or dogs involved in the racing industry. That connection with them is very deep and powerful and we very much care for them.

I brought up this issue because in 2016 Mandy Petrie, a constituent of mine, came forward and spoke to me about the heat that builds up inside cars. She was talking about children being left in cars, but she was equally concerned about people who mistreat their dogs. This is an issue that all members of the House could highlight. I bought a large-scale thermometer with a probe, put it inside my Crewman ute on a very hot day and parked where there was a lot of sun exposure. We went to the car park at Grand Plaza, which has a lot of exposed area. We then invited the local papers to film the temperature in the car going up. There was a resulting story in the *Jimboomba Times*. It was 32 degrees outside that day—a common enough temperature in Queensland—but in less than 15 minutes the gauge read 53.3 degrees. It was actually so hot that the LCD screen began to fail. The entire screen went black and we had to put it back in the air conditioning in order to cool the screen down enough to read it.

That highlighted the fact that any person or animal trapped inside a car parked in the sun is in extreme danger. This is something that we can take forward as local members of parliament to our constituents. I urge you to get out the temperature gauge, contact your local newspapers and TV and talk about the dangers that animals in cars face. Get local people who are concerned about these issues to back you up. We know this is a serious problem. Despite years of campaigns, including my own, and public calls for change, we are still seeing an unacceptable number of dogs left in hot cars in this state. RSPCA Queensland still receives over 1,000 calls reporting this kind of incident each year. It must be very distressing for the person disturbed enough to make a call to the RSPCA while standing beside a car with a dog in distress because of the extreme heat I just mentioned. That is about three cases every day. Often we say that dogs are our best friends, but these best friends are left at risk of serious heat stroke and in some cases even death. It is just not acceptable, and I think everyone in this House agrees with that.

This bill makes it as clear as we possibly can that the Queensland government will not stand for it; furthermore, we can take this forward. We can do as I did and get out the temperature gauge on a hot day to advertise the fact that the laws have changed and we need to take this responsibility seriously. Dogs need shade, they need cool drinking water and they especially need air movement. Within minutes a dog left in a car can be seriously ill or even dead.

The bill's amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act clarify that the offence of breach of duty of care to an animal and animal cruelty may apply in situations where animals are confined in vehicles. We are making it explicitly clear that this is unacceptable. If you leave your dog in a situation where they are going to overheat and be in danger, then the Animal Care and Protection Act will apply and they have breached their duty of care. This applies when we know that the animal is going to be in stress rather than when we see the unfortunate side-effects of an animal that has been distressed or has died. Under these reforms, if you are in charge of an animal—and that is a great responsibility—and you inappropriately confine or transport it, you can be found guilty of breaching your duty of care to the animal. This is an important measure to keep our four-legged friends safe in this state. I urge all Queenslanders to be mindful of our animals and keep them safe. I certainly will get out my temperature gauge and my little puppy Malley to highlight to the local community that it is totally unacceptable that dogs are treated in this way.

I also wish to speak briefly on biosecurity. Queensland is a state that faces double the number of biosecurity threats than any other Australian state. This is a product of the geography of Queensland and it is not going to change anytime soon. To combat this we have great awareness, and we have built a robust and well-supported biosecurity defence system to prevent these threats whenever possible and tackle them when they do reach our state. Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility. Everyone coming into our state, crossing between zones, entering a farm or a national park needs to be aware that every Queenslander can play a role in protecting our agricultural sector and our natural environment from introduced plants and animal pests. The federal government has a role to play in stopping threats imported from overseas at our nation's borders, ports and airports. Biosecurity Queensland staff work closely with them to ensure threats are stopped wherever possible. When pests are discovered in Queensland we need our protective systems to be nimble to give them the flexibility they need to rise to the occasion and meet the threat.

That is why this bill empowers the chief executive to amend the biozone security map and, just as importantly, ensure the notification of people likely to be directly affected when a biosecurity threat arises. This will eliminate potential delays for taking important containment action in the face of emerging threats. This is about ensuring the long-term safety and security of those who are affected by biosecurity threats. This government is about ensuring that people have safety and security when they invest in a workplace, and we will continue to do that.

Provisions allowing the keeping of electronic records of stock movements rather than full paper records will help move this important process into the 21st century, while amendments to the Biosecurity Act to enable the use of body worn cameras by inspectors and authorised officers will help in the gathering of evidence, providing records of verbal directions and orders, and assist with the investigation of complaints. Queensland is rightly recognised as the front line of Australia's fight against biosecurity threats, and the increase in trade and international travel—both of which are positives for Queensland—also bring with them threats over the coming years, and that is not going to change anytime soon.

In 2019 we saw a new threat to biosecurity on Queensland farms and animal processing and management businesses, and that was the threat of extremist animal activists. Some of those situations were really ugly, and I can only imagine what it would be like for my grandfather on his sheep farm to have to face that type of intimidating behaviour. We all recognise that it should not be lawful in Queensland to personally intimidate someone at their place of work, especially when that place of work so often includes their home. We have acted quickly to bring new on-the-spot penalties. I do not have the time to go through them all, but I endorse the bill to the House because it secures the future of Queensland's agricultural industry.

*(Time expired)*