




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 8 September 2020

**PROTECTING QUEENSLANDERS FROM VIOLENT AND CHILD SEX
OFFENDERS AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.38 pm): The LNP cannot keep making the same mistakes and expect a different outcome. In this respect, those opposite are serial offenders. With this bill they are at it again, recklessly and dangerously risking the nation's laws that protect the community from dangerous sex offenders. They are like a broken record: they keep recycling failed policies that everyone except them knows will not work.

Worse than not being workable, the LNP's proposed laws risk seeing dangerous prisoners across the nation being set free. However, let us look at what those opposite do and not what they say. Disgracefully, the former Newman LNP government became the only government in Queensland history to weaken—weaken—supervision periods for child sex offenders when it was in government. It reduced the reporting period for these child sex offenders listed on the child protection offender register from 15 years to five years and from eight years to five years. This 2014 weakening of the law under the LNP meant that 1,723—that is, 1,723—child sex offenders who were being monitored were then not monitored. Let us have a look at what then police minister Jack Dempsey—he is a mate of mine—said in response to question on notice No. 800 on 28 October 2014. He said—

As at 31 August 2014—

so that is still under the Newman government, under the LNP government; let us look at what those opposite do, not what they say—

prior to the enactment of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

still under the LNP—

4,793 offenders were recorded on Queensland's Register. As at 31 October 2014, 3,070 offenders were recorded on the Queensland's Register.

When those opposite were in government—let us look at what they do, not what they say—there was a reduction of 1,723 child sex offenders who were being monitored who then were not monitored as a result of their changes. Let us see who reported that. The ABC reported that.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr RYAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Burnett has been warned under the standing orders and he is interjecting.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! The member is right. Member for Burnett, you have been warned and a couple of times in the last few minutes you have come close to being ejected for one hour. I warn you on that. You have already been warned, so temper your interjections.

Mr RYAN: Let us have a look at what the ABC—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Buderim is warned under the standing orders.

Mr RYAN: They do not like being called out on their record. Who is weak on child sex offenders?

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Buderim can leave the chamber for one hour.

Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 6.42 pm.

Mr RYAN: Who is weak on child sex offenders? Who is soft on child sex offenders? Those opposite were the only government in Queensland history that reduced reporting periods for child sex offenders. Some 1,700 child sex offenders went from being monitored to not being monitored. What did the ABC say? Under the headline '1,700 released child sex offenders no longer being monitored by Queensland police', Josh Bavas on 10 December 2014—that is still under their government; they were still in power—said—

About 1,700 child sex offenders who have completed their prison sentences are no longer being monitored by the Queensland Police Service, following changes to offender reporting requirements.

The article went on to say that under the changes under their government that took effect in September 2014—under them, their law changes, they changed the law—

... the bulk of Queensland sex offenders are required to report to police for a reduced period of five years.

But get this, and this is the most heinous and disgraceful thing about what they did because they talk about those child sex offenders—those disgusting people—who commit offences on multiple occasions. What did they do to them? How did they treat them? The article continues—

Those found guilty of two offences, including child rape, will be monitored for ... five years, instead of 15.

They took 10 years—10 years—off the monitoring period for those disgusting child rapists. What a disgraceful thing for that government to do! They are the ones who are weak on child sex offenders. They are the ones who are soft on child sex offenders. Look at what they do, not what they say. When they are in government, what do they do? They let those child sex offenders roam without monitoring from the Queensland Police Service. Those disgusting people who commit two offences, including child rape, had a reduced period from 15 years to five years. Those opposite are disgraceful and they cannot come in here claiming the moral high ground when that is what they do in government. That is what they do. That is their legacy. No wonder the people of Queensland rarely trust them to sit on the treasury benches because when they do they do things like that. They turn a blind eye to child sex offenders. It is disgusting conduct and it is their legacy. It is their laws. Who was there? The member for Burdekin was there, Mudgeeraba was there, Burnett was there. You voted for it. You reduced the reporting period.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair please, Minister.

Mr RYAN: They reduced the reporting period of those offenders. That is their legacy. Look at what they do, not what they say.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Currumbin and the Attorney-General will put their comments through the chair.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members—both members—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! I have called for order! The Attorney-General and the member for Currumbin are both warned under the standing orders.

Mr RYAN: Let us look at our record. We introduced the DPSO legislation—the strongest legislation in the nation. We introduced the CPOR legislation—the strongest legislation in the nation. Last year we strengthened the CPOR legislation to make it more robust, to have greater monitoring and greater supervision and to give the police more powers to impose greater conditions. Do members know how the nation responds to every improvement that we make in respect of child sex offenders and monitoring and supervision of those offenders? They copy what we do. When we brought in the DPSO legislation, other jurisdictions around the nation copied what we did. When we brought in the CPOR they did the same thing; they copied what we did.

It is this government which at every opportunity has gone to strengthen that legislation. Let us compare that to those opposite. When they were in government, they weakened the legislation. They were the only government in Queensland history to weaken supervision of child sex offenders. We do not just strengthen the law; we also give the police more resources to do their job. Last year we gave them a \$27 million boost to increase monitoring and supervision of those offenders who are listed on the child protection offender register.

Mr LISTER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. I do not think this has anything to do with the bill before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Southern Downs. Your point of order is not taken. There has been a broad bush painted in this debate, but that is still under the explanatory notes. I note that the minister had not even finished that sentence, so I invite the minister to continue but please stick to the long title of the bill.

Mr RYAN: In protecting the community from child sex offenders, this government not only has strong laws but also backs our police with additional resources. With regard to those additional resources, I will list what those additional resources have done in just 12 months. As a result of those extra resources—this is a direct consequence of the government giving the police an extra \$27 million—what have we done? We have caught 115 child sex offenders, we have charged them with over 350 offences but most importantly—and this is a direct consequence of this funding—16 children have been rescued from harm. Sixteen children have been saved from child sex offenders as a result of our funding and this government's strong laws.

This government has also taken the additional step of embedding additional permanent resources at the Queensland Police Service. We all know Task Force Argos. It is fantastic. It is internationally renowned for what it does, but there is another component of that team at the Queensland Police Service which is also internationally renowned, and that is Taskforce Orion. We made it permanent. We gave it more resources. Do members know what Taskforce Orion does? It finds kids who are in child exploitation material around the world and it saves them. It identifies where those kids are and it works with international policing agencies to get those kids away from harm.

That is the contribution of the Queensland Police Service to child safety internationally, and this government is very proud to support them. This government has a proud record when it comes to strengthening laws. In fact, we have the strongest laws in the nation when it comes to child sex offenders—so strong that other jurisdictions around the nation copy what we do. One simply cannot trust those opposite. I will come back to the point I made at the beginning: one always has to look at what they do, not what they say. When those opposite had the chance to do something they opened the door to child sex offenders. They weakened the law. They reduced supervision and almost 2,000—

(Time expired)