




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BONNEY

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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 O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (4.23 pm): I will start with a contribution on the Transport and Other Legislation (Road Safety, Technology and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. Of particular interest in this bill is the support for a digital driver's licence app. This makes sense. We are at the point where most people have phones with the capacity and security protections to function as an all-in-one device. I already have my debit card as well as most of my concert and movie tickets within my wallet app. Pretty much every other aspect of my life is on that phone as well. I am sure other members have been like me, particularly during COVID, and been on their phones a lot longer than normal—I am sure everyone has dreaded seeing their screen time when it comes up on their phone on a Sunday and tells them how many hours a day they have been on their phone. It is a massive part of our lives. It makes sense to add this form of identification to our phones. We have seen this rolled out in other states—South Australia and New South Wales—so Queenslanders should have the option as well.

This move to digital licences is a commonsense step forward in a direction we are already going. Young people will be some of the most keen to take up this option and they probably use their licences more than most other people. In particular, one group of young people will benefit from this change. That is everyone who is constantly misplacing their licence or wallet. At this point, I will give a shout-out to my mate Rhys. He is forever losing his licence, meaning that half the time we go out he carries his passport around and half the time he is getting turned away from venues. This move forward will make a real difference in the lives of people like Rhys.

There are a few things that are pivotal to the success of this rollout which were highlighted in the committee's report. Firstly, there is privacy. We have seen recently with the introduction of apps like the COVIDSafe app that many people have real concerns about what is happening with their data when they sign up to apps, particularly government apps. That might not make a lot of sense because, as we know, most people give far more information to whatever social media platforms they have. People do have real concerns.

The questions always come as to whether their location will be constantly tracked in the background, what happens to their data and what access will the app have to the rest of their phone. The positive of this technology in relation to privacy is that, on many occasions, less information will need to be shared with businesses as consumers can choose what information they share. For example, instead of the bartender finding out a person's birth date and address, they will just need to see proof that they are over 18 and not ask for a specific age. This kind of benefit is one thing that should be communicated well.

It still offers more privacy than a physical licence. If a person loses their wallet, someone can pull out their physical licence and see all those details. If a person loses their phone, most smartphones cannot be unlocked and even if the phone is unlocked this licence app will have a PIN. It would be disappointing if there is investment in this technology without that education or promotion to Queenslanders, leading to a slower uptake.

Secondly, there was a recommendation to legislate a prohibition on law enforcement and other authorities requiring an individual to hand over their device. I think this is an important recommendation to ensure the privacy and protection of the civil liberties of those who choose to install the app. Continuing to make physical licences optional will be important, particularly for the elderly in our community who are less likely to use smartphones. Continuing to communicate this will be important to reduce the stress on people within this demographic.

While I am excited to see this program expanded further within Queensland, I think the committee's recommendation to do a thorough review of the trial is important. Tracking bugs in the system, take-up rates and particularly the way in which businesses are able to use the technology is important. There was some pushback in South Australia where many retailers would not accept the digital licence. The government will need to work hard to ensure there is a high take-up from those checking licences otherwise the benefit will be greatly reduced. That will involve a lot of coordination with OLGR.

The other major feature of the bill is the introduction of camera detection for mobile phone and seatbelt offences. As other members have said during this debate, I find it staggering in 2020 that we still have people getting into cars and not wearing seatbelts. The figures of 31 people killed and 166 seriously injured a year in Queensland as a result of a road crash and not wearing a seatbelt is something we would think we still would not have to deal with. Equally so, is the large number of Queenslanders who admit to using their mobile phone while driving. We know the distraction this provides and yet the fact that it still happens at an alarming rate is concerning. I am sure other members have seen every time they pull up at the lights someone to the left or right of them on their phone looking at something.

I agree that this camera technology could help reduce the number of offences committed, but there are some big questions around privacy when every vehicle will be photographed going past the camera. To use cameras to detect offences is a new technology to move into and there will need to be stringent safeguards to ensure detection of offences is accurate and that photographs taken with no offence found are permanently deleted.

On this side of the House we have always said we do not agree with covert cameras as opposed to raising compliance levels or changing behaviour because the public think the government is just doing it to raise revenue. Camera location will also be difficult to manage, as was highlighted in the report, as often distraction happens on smaller roads far away from the larger roads where we would traditionally have cameras. Overall, I believe the technologies discussed in this bill are positive moves forward for our state. I think the onus lies with the government to communicate with and educate the public on these matters, as well as to treat the data that is collected with a high level of sensitivity.

Finally, on the Transport Legislation (Disability Parking and Other Matters) Amendment Bill, other members have touched on this in good detail with stories from their area of those that it will assist. I will congratulate again the member for Bundaberg for his advocacy. This is a good change and long overdue.