




Speech By  
**Scott Stewart**

**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2020

### **COMMUNITY BASED SENTENCES (INTERSTATE TRANSFER) BILL**

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (4.29 pm): In Queensland, community based sentencing includes probation, community service orders, graffiti removal orders, intensive correction orders, and drug and alcohol treatment orders. For the majority of those orders, depending on specific conditions imposed, there are comparable community based sentences in other jurisdictions around Australia. We have all heard that.

How did we get to this point? In 2003 at the Corrective Services Ministers' Conference, agreement was made to implement a nationally consistent legislative scheme to facilitate the transfer of community based sentences between jurisdictions. We have all heard that. In his speech the member for Toowoomba North stated that Corrective Services people and police will have their time taken up supervising those prisoners, rather than keeping our community safe, and that Queensland will become a dumping ground for those criminals. That is absolute hysteria generated by those opposite. The member for Lockyer talked about cost blowouts for the police, but the police are not involved in this. It is not their gig.

The Queensland Corrective Services advised the committee that under the proposed legislation there will not be any expected significant increase of offenders seeking a transfer either into Queensland or—believe it not, member for Toowoomba North—out of Queensland. I know that we all find it hard to believe that people would leave Queensland, but they may want to. The QCS also advised that, if passed, the bill will allow local authorities in all cases to reserve the right to refuse a transfer into Queensland, even if a person may otherwise be eligible on all criteria.

The QCS has established a database, the Integrated Offender Management System or IOMS, for registering and managing people on community based orders. The management system manages the current informal transfer arrangements with other jurisdictions—it is already happening. During the hearing, the QCS also advised the committee that there was no need to establish a new database for the implementation of a national scheme as proposed by the bill.

I agree with the member for Toowoomba North when he says that people want to come to Queensland, and why wouldn't they? We see more and more people moving north because of our climate, our great people, the beautiful beaches and, of course, plenty of job opportunities. However, having listened to the member for Toowoomba North, it seems that he would have us build a wall to prevent those prisoners from coming to Queensland.

I will be clear about this bill. This is not about prisoners. It is not a program under which the New South Wales-Queensland border will become the Korean 'Bridge of No Return' which is used by North Korea and South Korea to exchange political prisoners at midnight, amongst swirling fog and surrounded by machine gun wielding guards. That is not what this is about. The member for Toowoomba North has been watching too many James Bond action movies. This is purely agreeing to a nationwide approach to community based sentencing. We should not allow the member for Toowoomba North and those opposite to create further fear and hysteria in our community. I support the bill.