




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

Record of Proceedings, 20 February 2020

COMMUNITY BASED SENTENCES (INTERSTATE TRANSFER) BILL

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (12.54 pm): I rise as a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to speak to the Community Based Sentences (Interstate Transfer) Bill. I note that the purpose of this bill is a belated effort to align Queensland with community based sentencing in other states and to streamline the process with nationally consistent legislation. The QSAC review into community based sentencing orders, imprisonment and parole options recognised the need to improve current criminal justice system responses to offending.

A key feature of community based sentences is that they are non-custodial orders that provide an alternative to imprisonment and avoid the burden of building more \$1 million cells and spending \$140,000 a year to keep each prisoner locked up. Indeed, providing a mechanism of interstate transfers provides a sensible amount of flexibility to allow adult offenders who are subject to community based sentences to cross state borders for the purpose of reuniting with families and communities to provide support and rehabilitate. For many coming back home to Queensland, getting a local job is often the best way to escape a life of crime and social dysfunction. Sadly, many others do not have safe homes, and the need to go interstate is also common.

Given the tenuous nature of securing and keeping work, someone with a rap sheet usually finds it especially tough to secure a suitable job. That may well mean taking an interstate construction, agricultural or mining job. Furthermore, for those people who live in communities near state borders this bill will enable them to travel to and from a job a few miles up the road. Clearly, it makes no sense in this day and age of increased mobility to put roadblocks in front of minor offenders whom the broader society would rather see fully rehabilitated and reintegrated in the least intrusive, most culturally appropriate and effective manner possible. That being the case, I trust that suitable resources will be afforded to administer and efficiently manage these reciprocal interstate transfer measures. I will be commending the bill to the House.