




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.02 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I start with the statement of reservation from the members of the LNP on the committee. Before I do that, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the minister. I would like to thank all of the submitters. I would like to thank all of the committee members who participated in this inquiry and thank the secretariat staff.

For the statement of reservation to describe this bill as window-dressing is completely and utterly insulting to all of the people involved in that process. It is further insulting when we consider that the sum total of the contribution from the people levelling this allegation of window-dressing in the areas of police and corrections was to sack 300 people during their time in office and dress some offenders in pink jumpsuits. That was their idea of major reform in this area. Normally the LNP like to wear blue, but in this case they opted for pink. I do not know why they chose the pink jumpsuits, but if that was their idea of good, solid, sound reform in corrections, I would like to suggest that they go back to the drawing board and start again.

The reality is that this bill is a series of measures that support community safety and put victims first. It was the subject of significant consultation before being brought to this parliament. Then, as happens all of the time during a committee process, there was significant consultation after the bill was brought to this place. To suggest that it is window-dressing is insulting to all of those people who have taken the time to engage in that consultation process.

Our police budget has seen the biggest boost to police in three decades—2,025 police over five years, including 1,450 frontline officers. Contrast that to the 110 senior police officers and, all up, more than 300 police personnel who were let go during the Newman government. It is truly laughable that those opposite would come in here and accuse us of window-dressing. Their plans to water down security measures to stop contraband getting into prisons, their plans for privatising prisons—

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr KELLY: I take that interjection. I do not really want to discuss that, but I will take that interjection. All of those things go into the mix. If you want to talk about window-dressing, there it is right in front of you. It is really shocking and disgraceful that the members of the committee would be so disrespectful to this process that they would use those sorts of words in a statement of reservation, but that is something they are very good at.

They claim that they are the only people who have a moral lock on standing up for community safety. I am proud to be part of a government that has taken a whole range of measures in relation to community safety. Crime is important. Domestic violence is important. Keeping kids safe is important. Keeping kids from swallowing button batteries is important. It is important to make sure that people do not become victims of natural disasters and, if they do, that we safely get them to places where they can rebuild their lives. All of those things are part of community safety. This is a government that looks

at all of those aspects of community safety. When I hear those opposite talking, it sounds like they are actually in government. They come in here and talk as though they have come up with all of these great ideas.

Ms Grace: Yes, that's right. We wouldn't have thought about it without them!

Ms Pease: And then they do a statement of reservation.

Mr KELLY: I take those interjections from the members for McConnel and Lytton: 'We support the bill, but we're going to pop up a statement of reservation. The bill does nothing, but we're going to call it Sian's bill.' That statement is so ridiculous—with absolutely no disrespect to the Kingi family. There is no logic in those opposite coming in here and saying, 'The bill does nothing, but we're going to try and take credit for it.'

I turn to some of the specific aspects of the bill that I think are important. I would like to start with the no-body no-parole framework that is contained in the bill. I thank the minister for the work that has been done in relation to this matter. I, fortunately, do not know anybody whose loved ones have been victims of homicide, and I hope that remains the case throughout my life; however, I have had personal experience of people who have had a family member go missing, and it is devastating for those people. It is really, truly devastating for people. It is the not knowing. It is the inability to get closure that is devastating for people.

In these situations, we have to remember that a court of law has proven beyond reasonable doubt that a person has murdered another person and has jailed them for that heinous crime yet we are unable to locate the body. You have to consider the level of evidence that must have been proffered to find a person guilty beyond reasonable doubt, to make that finding of murder in the absence of a body. For that person to go to prison and refuse to assist in locating the body is a crime upon a crime. It is, in my view, reprehensible that people would not allow families to have that closure—that they would not allow families to find the remains of their loved ones, to bury them and to have an understanding of their last moments. I know from the reading I have done in relation to the process of grieving and healing that, no matter how traumatic and painful your loved one's last moments were, for many people to know and truly understand and be able to see the place gives them great succour, comfort and the capacity to heal and move on. I fully support the no-body no-parole framework.

I also want to touch on expanding the scope of police banning notices to include people who unlawfully possess a knife. In common with a lot of parents, my kids are hitting that age where we have moved on from the point where they laughed at my jokes and thought I was funny all the time, we would spend a lot of time together and I would know exactly where they were most of the time. As they hit the mid to late teenage years they want their freedom and we want to give it to them. However, there is nothing scarier than sitting at home on a Sunday night wondering where our kids are when it first starts to happen. Everyone who has had that experience will know what it is like. When we add in the fear of knife crime, which is becoming more and more prevalent, it becomes even more scary. So it is good to see these provisions that are going to allow the police to seek banning notices regarding people who think it is appropriate to either carry or use a knife in any circumstances for any purpose. It is good that those people are to be banned from going to places where young people might gather.

I would like to commend the Jack Beasley Foundation for the work they have done in this area. I would also like to commend the Queensland Police Service. I was pleased that they came out and conducted a number of mobile Police Beats in the electorate of Greenslopes. One of the issues they were focusing on, particularly when talking to younger people, was their initiatives around educating people about knife crime. To me it is similar to where we have gone in terms of the one punch issues. Yes, it is important to penalise those people who do the wrong thing; it is important to take all measures we possibly can to make people safe. The best thing we can do with young people is actually go out there and try to educate them and make them understand before they make a bad decision to pick up a knife and take it on a night out either to protect themselves or, in some deluded sense, think it makes them more important or more capable of having a good night out. We need to make those young people understand the serious consequences that could arise as a result of those decisions. I commend the police and the Jack Beasley Foundation for that.

There are many other parts of this legislation that I would have liked to talk to if I had more time. It is not window-dressing. It is serious reform. In relation to those who describe it as window-dressing, that says volumes about their lack of credibility in this area. I think this bill is going to go a long way towards addressing a whole range of issues, particularly in the area of no-body no-parole, and giving a lot of parents in the community a lot of comfort around knife crime. I commend the bill to the House.