




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR LOGAN

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**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.27 pm): I rise to support the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. I rise with some disappointment noting some of the speeches of the opposition and the very disappointing statement of reservation that utterly dismisses all of the good work of this bill by simply calling it window-dressing. In contradiction, we have heard so many speeches from those opposite who have either said that they were good measures first put forward by the LNP or that these measures are so important that they should be named after a victim. This is a complete contradiction and really disappointing considering the complex issues and the complex powers we are dealing with.

In my area I am very moved about the no-body no-parole measures and the enhancement of them from a young victim who is before the courts at the moment, so I will not speak about it. When we look at the difficult circumstances in our electorates and the pain that the family goes through not knowing where their sister or daughter is, that is something that this bill hopes to rectify in the difficult world of criminal prosecutions. This is a case that is still before the courts so I will not speak any more about it, but I feel very emotional about the good work that this bill does to try to give some closure to those families.

This bill proposes several important amendments that are squarely focused on keeping the community safe and deterring crime. It strengthens offences relating to cruel acts against police dogs, horses and corrective services dogs and introduces tougher parole laws for prisoners serving life sentences for some of our most heinous crimes. The bill is an example of the Palaszczuk government's proactive approach to legislative reform to keep the community safe.

Too often a young person, and this happens within the area of Browns Plains and Boronia Heights, makes the mistake of going armed with a knife. They do that without thinking through the consequences that can ruin both their life and, of course, the life of their victim. It not only ruins their life, it impacts their family members who go through the pain of seeing them prosecuted and the family of the victim who suffer the loss of their loved one. That is why police, especially in Logan, are working to increase safety. I draw the attention of the House to the fantastic 'I live my life ... without a knife' campaign to make young people aware of the enormous consequences. This campaign won a medal in 2021 at the Australian Crime Prevention and Violence Awards. The message that we should all spread to young people is that living your life with a knife does not keep you safer and can ruin two lives and two families.

One of the most important amendments in the bill concerns expanding the existing police banning notice regime in the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000. It applies to a person who unlawfully possesses a knife in a relevant public place contrary to the Weapons Act 1990. Police banning notices give the police the option to ban a person from a relevant public place if they are satisfied the person is acting in a disorderly, offensive, threatening or violent way and their ongoing presence poses an unacceptable risk to the public's enjoyment of that space. In this case relevant public places include

licensed premises, safe night precincts and a public event where alcohol is sold. It is aimed squarely at reducing the opportunity for people to make poor choices with knives. It is aimed at keeping the community safe.

I cannot emphasise enough to the young people in the Logan area that the Queensland Police Service's 'I live my life ... without a knife' campaign is incredibly important. A knife is not going to keep you safe. It can be turned on you and hurt you, but it is more likely to ruin both yours and another's life. This trial program in Logan saw a 23 per cent decrease in knife related offences occurring in public places from October through to early 2020 and a sustained reduction going into 2021. I emphasise to the young men in Logan to tell your mates, 'I live my life ... without a knife' and you can too. It is not going to keep you or us safe.' It also builds on the work of police involved in the trials of metal detecting wands on the Gold Coast to disrupt knife crimes in that region. There is no doubt the results of the wandering are keeping Queenslanders safe at our safe night precincts on the Gold Coast. Weapons are being detected and they are being seized.

This government is committed to improving community safety and responding to emerging crime trends that place the community at risk. We need to take steps that not only send the message to adults but also demonstrate to young people that you can live your life without a knife. The Queensland Police Service is dedicated to creating a safer community and working tirelessly to detect and disrupt the carriage and use of knives within the community. We need to give the police the legislative framework to support these efforts. Too often the police see the devastating consequences of knife related crime, in particular the detrimental impacts on young people. Amendments like this, along with the 'I live my life ... without a knife' campaign, are focused on crime prevention and crime disruption. They aim to influence Queenslanders to make the right choices for themselves and their community. This government expects these amendments to enhance public safety by reducing knife crime in and around public places and improving public confidence in these public spaces. We want people to feel confident when they are out and about in the community, particularly as we venture out more as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

I want to recognise the local police in my area, especially at the new police station which the police minister supported. I recognise Senior Sergeant Nathan Booth who leads a passionate team that is committed to reducing crime in Yarrabilba and Logan Village; Senior Sergeant Peter Waugh of Jimboomba—where the police minister has been several times to meet with officers—who does a fantastic job, especially in the growing area of Flagstone which I share with the member for Jordan; and, of course, Mick Leafe who has recently returned to take over as the officer in charge of Browns Plains Police Station after doing some other operational duties. They are extraordinarily passionate about getting the 'I live my life ... without a knife' message out to young people and the message that if you get involved in a tragic fight or confrontation having a knife does not make you any safer, it means that there can often be tragic consequences. Those consequences can see you face serious jail time, which hurts both you and is extraordinarily damaging to your family who are going to miss you, but also could have, even worse, the tragic consequence of taking the life of someone else in our area of Browns Plains, Boronia Heights, Jimboomba or Yarrabilba. No-one wants to see that moment of madness with a knife.

As I said, I was deeply disappointed that the statement of reservation called these important measures, especially those in relation to knife crime, simply window-dressing. That is not the way we should address this issue. We should not play politics with these positive, worthwhile amendments. The amendments align with community safety. It is simply common sense. I encourage all members to support the bill. I commend this bill to the House and urge those opposite to not make silly comments such as those contained in the statement of reservation that this is simply window-dressing.