




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Parole Reform

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.44 am): This government will always do all in its power to support community safety. We have a proven track record of introducing the nation's strongest laws to protect the community and now we will do that again. The Palaszczuk government will introduce the toughest parole laws in the nation so that a person convicted of killing a child and serving a life sentence or a person convicted of multiple murders and serving a life sentence can be blocked from obtaining parole, keeping them behind bars for longer and sparing the families of victims from further trauma.

Under these proposed laws, the President of the Parole Board Queensland will be able to make a declaration that a person who is convicted of killing a child and serving a life sentence or convicted of multiple murders and serving a life sentence and who is eligible for parole will be blocked from obtaining parole for a period of up to 10 years. Further, there is no limit on the number of declarations that can be issued to those prisoners, which means that a further declaration could be issued for up to 10 years at the expiry of the previous declaration, and so on for decades. Also, the President of the Parole Board Queensland will be able to make that declaration irrespective of whether the prisoner has already made an application for parole.

Understandably, whenever a prisoner applies for parole it can re-traumatise the families, friends and the community. These new laws are aimed at shielding those who have lost loved ones from unnecessary pain and suffering. To be clear, the government is introducing these changes because it is committed to ensuring the safety of every member of the community and to protecting the families, friends and the community from unnecessary trauma.

In addition, even if a declaration is not made by the President of the Parole Board Queensland, a new presumption against parole will also be introduced for the prisoners who fall into this cohort. That means that those prisoners who, as the Premier said and I agree with her, are the worst of the worst will have to prove that they do not pose a threat to the community before they are even considered eligible for parole.

These proposed new laws will set a new benchmark for the nation. No other jurisdiction in Australia has the power to declare no parole consideration for a period of up to 10 years and with the potential of further periods of up to 10 years. No other jurisdiction targets both child killers serving a life sentence and multiple murderers serving a life sentence in this way. These proposed laws will be the strongest in the nation to support community safety.

I cannot emphasise enough the extent to which these proposed new laws are aimed at reducing the level of trauma experienced by the families of the victims of violent crimes. The tough new laws we are proposing are about protecting the victim's families and protecting the community.