




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.31 pm): I also rise to address the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. At the outset I send my thoughts and prayers to the family of a Wamuran woman who was tragically killed yesterday morning in a serious head-on crash on the D'Aguilar Highway at Moodlu. I also send my prayers to her eight-year-old daughter who is still in hospital. She suffered serious head, pelvis and leg injuries and I pray for a speedy recovery. The other driver, the driver of a Toyota utility who appears to have been on the wrong side of the road, has also been injured but is in a stable condition. I will not comment further on what caused this. Suffice to say that if it is the road, we will leave no stone unturned in ensuring that upgrades continue to happen in this part of the world.

The D'Aguilar Highway has been a particular focus of the member for Nanango and myself. In the absence of state money we have sought and gained considerable federal investment from the former member for Longman Wyatt Roy and the current member for Longman, Terry Young. We have significant works underway as we speak between Caboolture and Wamuran and on the entrance into Kilcoy from Woodford. All of that has made the road far safer, but there is always more we can do.

On that note I want to start my comments on the bill itself by talking about the proposed changes to the use of penalties from camera detected offences being spent on road safety. As many members in this chamber on both sides have already stated, it has been a longstanding initiative since Vaughan Johnson, the then minister, first introduced camera detected offences and the money raised from those offences being put back towards road safety education, road accident rehabilitation and safety improvements on state controlled roads where accidents most frequently occur. That has certainly had some benefit although, as others have also mentioned, tragically we continue to see the number of deaths on our roads increase year on year. What this bill does propose to do is broaden where that revenue can be allocated: things like collaborating with organisations and local communities to develop and implement safer practices, enabling vulnerable road users to participate in programs to improve safety on the roads and proactively researching innovative solutions to existing or emerging problems. Perhaps the change I am most interested in is the one that will allow the funding to be used for infrastructure safety improvements.

Currently, the legislation limits the allocation of funding to where accidents most frequently occur. Often when I write to the minister or the department requesting some consideration be given to safety improvements on the roads around Glass House I am told that not enough deaths or no deaths have occurred at the various sites. My response is always, 'How many deaths are going to be necessary before a road is fixed?' I am hoping I am reading that, in broadening where the funding can be spent, the bill will result in those funds being spent to maximise the reduction in frequency and severity of road crashes. On that note potentially we will see an improvement in the way these funds are allocated for road improvements before we lose another life, let alone any life.

On the D'Aguilar Highway there are a couple of sites in particular. These are ones where we have already put in a number of petitions around the intersection with King Street or the intersection with Campbells Pocket Road in Wamuran. There will shortly be a petition being launched about the intersection of the D'Aguilar Highway and Mount Mee Road at D'Aguilar. Then there is Mount Mee Road itself, in particular between Ocean View and Dayboro, one of the worst sections of road remaining in the Moreton Bay hinterland that desperately needs attention before there is a tragedy.

There is also the intersection of Landsborough Maleny Road and Maleny-Montville Road. There was a driver caused fatality at that intersection, but there have also been a number of serious incidents. Constituents of the likes of Dr Bassett have been writing to me, and I have been forwarding his comments to the minister and the department for many years now in the hope that something will be done. Perhaps with this change in legislation in how the funding from camera detected offences can be used on road safety improvements, we will be able to see an improvement at that intersection sooner rather than later. Of course, I cannot neglect Maleny Kenilworth Road at both Witta and Cambroon, another area that desperately needs investment in improving road safety for not only my locals but tourists alike.

As other members have commented, I do also want to address the changes that seek to increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices. This was something that I again wrote to the department about on behalf of a constituent, Irene Keaton of Maleny. Irene was keen to get her hands on what I understand is called a luxury enclosed mobility scooter, or a LEM. They are not allowed because they go too fast. When we wrote to the department we had confirmation that yes, under the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2021, a motorised wheelchair is defined as a motor vehicle that—

- (a) is designed and built for use by a seated person with mobility difficulties; and
- (b) is not capable of going faster than 10km/h; and
- (c) has a tare of not more than 150kg; and
- (d) is not propelled by an internal-combustion engine.

Indeed, these luxury enclosed mobility scooters, or LEMs, fall outside that definition. The good news is the changes that we are debating today will see those regulations changed to increase the maximum unladen mass for a mobility scooter from 150 kilograms to 170 kilograms. That will also see the maximum speed capacity go from 10 to 15 kilometres an hour. Whether that will specifically address the concern of Ms Keaton from Maleny, I am not sure yet. I am not sure how fast her luxury enclosed mobility scooter can actually go. I suspect if it goes more than 15 kilometres an hour, potentially it should not be allowed on our footpaths. It will be interesting to see if this change we will potentially see pass through the House this afternoon or tomorrow actually addresses her concern. If so, it is a good outcome in the sense that when we bring these matters forward around road safety on behalf of our constituents it is good to see closure and change that reflects what they seek.

As other members have mentioned, clearly we need to be doing more. Clearly our road users are still not being mindful of what causes accidents. We are seeing an incredible increase in the number of fatalities each year. Then we are also seeing a large increase in the number of accidents themselves, many of which cause injury and property damage. We need to be doing more. It is beholden on each of us as individuals to take responsibility, to put the phone away, to turn it off or throw it in the boot—whatever is necessary—to watch our speed, to be mindful and alert about what is going on around us, particularly about vehicles travelling in the other direction. If people are not certain around an intersection, they need to approach it at a safe speed and just take care, to generally take care whenever we are on the roads in whatever conditions we may find.

I hope the changes we make today will produce better outcomes for road users, safer outcomes for road users and that in particular, as I mentioned, we see an improvement in the allocation of funding and upgrades on the roads around the electorate of Glass House.