




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 30 August 2022

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

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.47 pm): Before I start talking about the bill before us, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the news late last night of the tragic loss of Tom and Noah Strachan and pilot Garry Liehm. I offer my sincere condolences to both the Strachan and Liehm families. Tom was a true character. He was a larger than life bushman who genuinely believed in the benefits and the future of rural and regional Queensland. Of course, Noah was that future. May Tom, Noah and Garry rest in peace.

I would like to contribute to the debate of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. Like everyone in this House who has spoken before me, I know that we need to do everything we can to improve road safety—and it starts with all of us. There are too many deaths on our roads. In fact, there are too many deaths everywhere. In 2021—just last year—RACQ statistics revealed my electorate of Nanango as the second highest in the region for road fatalities. That is completely heartbreaking.

There is a tragedy unfolding on our roads and families continue to be torn apart. As of Sunday, 29 August, 198 people have died on Queensland's roads. As we have heard, this is 15 more than at the same time last year. It is 35 higher than the five-year average. Of those 198 fatalities, 47 were in the southern police region, which covers my electorate. That region has the highest number of fatalities of all of Queensland's police regions. We have to remember that these statistics only count the people who have lost their lives. They do not count those who are injured or incapacitated in those accidents who will endure a lifetime of suffering. When I say that road safety starts with all of us, it certainly does.

We all like to mention people in this House. As I have been sitting here listening to everyone's speeches, I know that everyone wants not one single death on our roads. We have heard that from the police minister, from the roads minister, from the shadow police minister, from the shadow roads minister—from everyone. I want to mention a couple of names. About 33 years ago, when I was just out of school, tragically in my home region seven young men lost their lives. We often stand in this chamber and talk about people who have lost their lives, so today in their memory I mention Wayne Anderson, Stuart Moffatt and Richard Staines. Then there is my husband's friend and college mate and my friend Pecca Waugh. These guys were young and they died too early. I went and visited Wayne's grave in the Wandoan Cemetery when I was attending a funeral not long ago for my dad's great friend and my Uncle Graham and it reminded me of what we all do—that is, we are here to protect our communities.

We are here to protect the people who live in our communities, and for me that means that I represent a rural and regional area. It means that I represent an area that has, unfortunately, the second highest road deaths in the state, so we need to do more about it. I am happy to support this bill, because anything that goes towards improving road safety must be done. However, when there is a backlog in road maintenance of \$5.7 billion on our rural and regional roads—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker Martin, I rise to a point of order. The member, while making a worthy contribution on many fronts, is now straying well outside the bill. There is nothing in this bill about a maintenance backlog and I ask her to come back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Thank you, Minister. I am willing to provide some latitude, member for Nanango, but I do ask that you come back to the long title of the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I would love to take that interjection from the minister, because seriously to goodness me: if the minister does not think that maintenance on rural and regional roads is not to do with road safety, then God help us!

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I made no interjection. I find that personally offensive and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Nanango. I again ask that you do not continue quarrelling and if you could come back to the long title of the bill in your contribution.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I will come back to this bill, because I have the explanatory notes right here and they state—

The policy objectives of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022 ... are to improve road safety ...

Okay, so let us talk about that. We as members of the opposition are here to encourage the government to fix our roads, and if that means that we have a backlog of road maintenance—

Mr KELLY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Merely saying the words 'road safety' does not bring the debate back to relevance. The bill does not deal with the issues that the member on their feet is attempting to debate. It is very clear in the green what is contained in this bill and I raise a point of order with regard to relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Greenslopes. I was just conferring with the clerk at the table before you rose to make your point of order. The member for Greenslopes is correct: it is not enough simply to refer to road safety—it must be for a particular purpose—so I ask that you come back to the long title of the bill, member for Nanango.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I do take your guidance and I will come back to the long title of the bill and I will again refer to the explanatory notes, and I was really heartened to read this in the green. The third dot point down says—

road funding to improve the safety of the sections of state-controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen.

I noted with interest that other members in this House talked about roads. I note that when the member for Thuringowa, who just spoke, was talking about having to petition his own government to fix the roads in his electorate the minister for roads sat there, listened and praised. That is what I am doing standing here as a member of the opposition who represents rural and regional Queensland and rural and regional roads and I am talking about deaths on our roads, so I will go back to the green of this bill. I will stay relevant to this bill. I will stay relevant to the matter at hand, and the matter at hand is improving the road toll, the deaths on our roads, the idiots who are driving and killing people at roadworks, the idiots who are driving while on their mobile phones, the idiots who are drink-driving, the idiots who are driving at speed and killing our children, the idiots who are killing the people of my electorate and everyone else's in this House. Let us talk about it—198 people! It is now 200. There was a death yesterday on the D'Aguiar Highway just outside my electorate.

In the short period of time I have left I want to mention the Tanduringie State School bus that went over that bridge and nearly lost the lives of all of those children. Again, can we please get that bridge fixed? I want to talk about school zones because I note that other members of the parliament have spoken about school zones, so hopefully I will not get pulled up on this. On Saturday at the Kingaroy BaconFest I was pulled up by Errol who is a lollypop person at Taabinga State School and he talked to me about the conversations he has been having with the local police, and I want to give a massive shout-out to the local police and the emergency service workers who end up having to confront horrible images in what they do in their day-to-day lives. There are lights at the Taabinga State School, but people do not realise that they need to slow down through that school zone. Please, help out the local coppers. The local schoolkids are just trying to simply cross the road. It is a main thoroughfare. It is a state controlled road. We need to make sure that people slow down at Taabinga State School and I will be writing to the minister—

Mr Perrett: My old school.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The member for Gympie's old school. I will be writing to the minister to try to get some better lights and some better road signage around there.

I have mentioned mobile phones. In the last bit of time that I have I plead with every young person: slow down, put your mobile phone away—actually, put it in the boot—wear a seatbelt and seriously look out for schoolkids, look out for school zones and really drive to road conditions. We know that the roads are not always up to scratch, so drive to the conditions. We know that if it is raining and the road is flooded you should forget it. How about you think about your mum and dad and your family who will be left behind when either you are killed or one of your friends is killed or you accidentally kill someone else? That is what we need to do, so that is why I am supporting this bill because hopefully it will improve the government's record which is terrible when it comes to road safety.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Before you sit down, member for Nanango, there was some unparliamentary language in your speech. I would ask that you withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.