




Speech By
James Martin

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

Record of Proceedings, 30 August 2022

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (3.42 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. Road safety is an issue that affects all Queenslanders. So far this year we have lost almost 200 people on Queensland roads. These are not just numbers; they are mums, dads, children, husbands, wives and grandparents. These deaths have far-reaching and profound impacts on families and loved ones, with direct and indirect impacts including loss of life, loss of quality of life after a serious injury, economic loss for families who have lost breadwinners or carers, medical costs, legal costs, property damage and more. The non-monetary ripple effects of road crashes must also be considered such as the psychological effects on communities when, for instance, a young person or a number of young people die or are seriously injured. As we know, these tragedies affect whole communities.

This bill puts forward amendments that will improve road safety. I support these amendments and my community does too. In particular, it will increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices, make improvements to court and other processes, bring equity and consistency to landowners and occupiers whose land is affected by transport project works and make minor enhancements to transport and housing legislation.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government which is committed to reducing the number of deaths on Queensland roads, with the ultimate goal of zero deaths, as we heard from the minister earlier. The major causes of people dying on our roads are well known. Our first responders and the emergency services—police, ambulance and the fire department—know these well. I take this opportunity to thank the hardworking frontline emergency service workers in my community for the work they do keeping us safe on our roads. They see firsthand the impacts of speeding, driving fatigued, drink and drug driving, driving distracted and driving without a seatbelt. These are known as the fatal five and are the major contributing causes to deaths on our roads.

Seatbelt and mobile phone detection cameras are a key way of targeting individuals driving distracted or driving without a seatbelt. We know that driving distracted is dangerous and that driving whilst trying to text message or, even worse, check social media is equivalent to being over the legal limit. This important technological advancement is an Australian first and will drive change in behaviour, reducing dangerous driving and making roads safer for all Queenslanders.

Ultimately, the aim of all road safety legislation is clear. Dangerous behaviour must stop! With this in mind, the Camera Detected Offence Program enables the use of new technology to reduce road trauma by deterring unsafe and illegal behaviour. Importantly, as we heard, penalties raised by these cameras in excess of administering the program go back into dedicated road safety, education and awareness programs, road accident and injury rehabilitation and improving the safety of state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen.

Queensland became the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate this—directing the investment of revenue from camera detected penalties into key road safety priorities. This has served the people of Queensland well by providing dedicated funding to road safety initiatives, including: the Targeted Road Safety Program; the community road safety grants program; the flashing school zone signs, which I am sure members in this place know very well; StreetSmarts road safety campaign; and blood products for road crash injuries.

This clear policy intent has not changed but has been expanded under this bill to include safety initiatives that use new approaches, innovation, proactive measures and support research and development, trials and the delivery of new solutions where the trials are successful. This includes the department working with community groups and employers to influence and encourage safe behaviour on our roads. I think this particular part of the bill is very important. It expands legislation so that the department can work with community groups that already have great ideas and are very close to their communities and also employers, especially with large workforces. I commend the minister for this forward thinking.

This will also include new and emerging targeted programs of work designed to reduce road trauma, including the use and application of anti-hooning technology—something that I am also looking forward to. This supports the principle that when it comes to road safety we all need to be guided by data and tailor road safety initiatives to the needs of different regions and types of road users throughout the state.

This bill also includes positive changes for people who rely on motorised wheelchair and mobility scooters. Currently, the rules around the use of mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs apply mass and speed capability limits. When these rules were first applied they reflected the range of devices available for purchase at that time and aimed to stop inappropriate devices being used. Technology has changed and things have moved on some way. This legislation will implement changes to reflect and allow wheelchairs of any weight and mobility scooters of up to 170 kilograms, aligning with new Australian standards. These changes will assist people who require heavier and more powerful devices such as when a user requires special equipment to attach to the device to choose the device that best fits their needs.

As all members in this place know, road safety is everyone's responsibility. It is on all of us, along with community leaders and business leaders—everyone—from all parts of Queensland, to do their bit to promote road safety. As a community, all Queenslanders need to work together to make our roads safer. It is for everyone because the truth is that no matter how good we think we are at using the roads we can always get better at it. This includes all drivers, cyclists, pedestrians, motorcyclists, young drivers and their parents.

Education programs like StreetSmarts are an important part of this road safety plan. Tools we can use to help ourselves or others drive smarter are helpful—for instance, by removing distractions; by enabling 'do not disturb' functions on mobile phones; by encouraging people to look for safer cars when they are out shopping for new or used cars; by being a lift legend when you or your friends are going to out to celebrate, making sure there is someone there who has not had a drink who can drive home; by taking care of walking when you are near a road; by avoiding tailgating and giving others enough room on the road; and, very importantly, by wearing a seatbelt and ensuring that other people in your vehicle are wearing a seatbelt when you are the driver.

It is a message that we need to keep pushing. We can always do more. I look forward to the day when we have zero deaths on our roads. I know that is an ambitious goal, but it is our stated goal—and it is something that this government is working towards. I hope that advancements in technology—and good public policy like this—can get us closer to that goal of zero deaths, zero lives lost and zero families devastated. I commend the bill to the House.