




Speech By  
**Lance McCallum**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2022

### **STATE PENALTIES ENFORCEMENT (MODERNISATION) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the State Penalties Enforcement (Modernisation) Amendment Bill. This bill gives legal effect to the integration of particular administrative functions that are undertaken by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Queensland Police Service into the Queensland Revenue Office. Those particular functions relate to camera detected offences such as not stopping at red lights, speeding and some tolling offences. I would like to take a moment to talk about speeding and red light offences within the broader context of road safety. Earlier this month we lost nine lives on our roads over three days. So far this year we have seen over 100 people lose their lives. My thoughts go out to every person who has been impacted by those tragedies. Sadly, most of these are entirely preventable, and I would urge all Queenslanders to think about road safety every time they get behind the wheel.

Turning to the matters contained in the bill, it makes a number of amendments that modernise the operation of the State Penalties Enforcement Act and ensures the continued effective operation of the State Penalties Enforcement Registry, or SPER. These amendments will: allow for the earlier registration of default certificates for defaulted infringement notices with SPER; and provide that the registrar of SPER is the person who is the Commissioner of State Revenue under the Taxation Administration Act.

Importantly, it also includes provisions to authorise the use of body worn cameras by SPER enforcement officers who are exercising their functions under the act. I think that all in this House would recognise that in the dispatching of their duties they would be subjected to, or placed in, situations that could become quite heated. We have already heard previous contributors to this bill speak about some of the benefits of having body worn cameras for our SPER enforcement officers. The bill also amends the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act to provide a reliable, safe and stable funding model for the RTA.

I would like to turn to some of the claims that have been made by those opposite during this debate that these bonds are being used to reduce debt. It has been made extremely clear by the Treasurer that this will have no effect on the balance sheet of the state. That was expressly mentioned in the Treasurer's second reading speech. During the committee process when the Economics and Governance Committee examined this bill Treasury itself advised that the RTA is already part of the general government sector, which means that the assets and liabilities held by the RTA are already reported as part of the general government sector balance sheet and that this reporting framework will remain unchanged. The RTA will continue to show the value of bonds as an asset which will now be held as cash in a bank account rather than investments, and the value of the bond liability will remain on its balance sheet.

I will now turn to the parts of the bill that relate to the integration of particular administrative functions. One of the most significant amendments in this bill will give effect to the integration of particular functions into the Queensland Revenue Office. As I have said, fine functions relating to camera-detected offences such as not stopping at a red light, speeding and tolling offences have

already been integrated into the Queensland Revenue Office administratively from 1 February this year. Functions relating to mobile phones and seatbelt camera-detected offences will be integrated into the QRO from 30 November 2022. That follows a successful trial of the new technology that the Palaszczuk government rolled out in relation to road safety. I believe there was a 12-month trial of mobile phone and seatbelt cameras. I have certainly seen that technology rolled out in my local community and it is helping improve road safety, so the streamlining of administration functions behind that new technology should absolutely be supported. The amendments will generally commence 1 July this year to ensure an orderly transition from the current arrangements, with amendments relating to mobile phone and seatbelt camera-detected offences to commence a little bit later in November.

I will now turn to some of the claims that have been mentioned during this debate by LNP speakers about write-offs being used to artificially bring down debt from SPER. As part of this debate it does warrant mention there were write-offs every year over the three years of the LNP government, including \$102 million in the 2012-13 year. SPER debt recovery under this government is projected to reach an all-time high of \$300.4 million in the 2021-22 financial year. While we are talking about LNP debt it also bears mentioning that the debt of the federal LNP government—which we are now thankfully relieved of thanks to the voices of the Australian people—exceeded \$1 trillion. Is it any wonder that Australians turned out over the weekend in droves to vote for change and a new Labor government with a Labor Treasurer who will get us our fair share and ensure a brighter and much better future for Queensland and our country.

The Treasurer who introduced this bill has his office right next to the office of the brand new Labor Treasurer for Australia. I think it is an absolute perfect synergy that we are bringing forward this kind of sensible and sustainable reform that is going to improve the efficiencies for SPER recovery here in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.