




Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**

**MEMBER FOR NUDGEES**

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Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2022

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

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (2.01 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. This bill aims to improve road safety, increase the range of allowable motorised mobility devices, make improvements to court and other processes, and make minor enhancements to transport and other legislation. Last year 277 people died on Queensland roads and, sadly, 198 people have already lost their lives this year. The causes of the vast majority of these fatalities remain the so-called ‘top 5’—speeding, driving fatigued, driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs, driving distracted, and driving without a seatbelt.

The introduction of mandatory seatbelt laws in Queensland in 1972 has seen the road death toll drop significantly but, unfortunately, around one in four people killed on Queensland’s roads were not wearing a seatbelt. According to data from the Department of Transport and Main Roads, five per cent of all motorists still are not wearing a seatbelt when they drive. Fatal and non-fatal road crashes cause not only immense harm to the people involved, their friends, family and communities but also economic implications, costing Queenslanders approximately \$6 billion in 2020.

While we have seen an increase in road fatalities over the last two years, our government is committed to decreasing the toll, with the launch this year of the Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022-31. The strategy takes a new approach to road safety by taking on the complex social factors that play out on Queensland roads. It acknowledges that road safety is a preventative public health issue that needs urgent attention and aims to expand our thinking beyond the traditional transport sector. These unique issues will be tackled at the local level through the building of partnerships with new stakeholders across government and in communities. Importantly, the strategy sets an ambitious target of reducing road fatalities by 50 per cent and serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2031—which aligns with the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-30.

Currently, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 allows for all money collected from penalties imposed from camera detected offences, in excess of the relevant administration costs, to be used for road safety education and awareness programs, road accident injury rehabilitation programs and road funding to improve the safety of the sections of state controlled roads where accidents most frequently happen. Road safety initiatives funded by camera detected offence penalties since its commencement in 1997 include the Safer Roads Sooner capital works program, community road safety grants, various road safety awareness campaigns and blood products for road crash injuries.

One of the funded initiative closest to my heart—and I am sure all members in this House would agree with me—is the flashing school zone signs program. Road safety around primary and secondary schools is so incredibly important because, as we all know, every ‘k’ over is a killer, and the 40-kilometre school zones, backed up by the flashing signs, are saving the lives of our most precious—children and young people.

Since my election as the member for Nudgee in 2015, I have worked closely with all of my school communities, P&Cs and principals to ensure that the roads around my local schools are as safe as possible. As a result of this collaboration with school communities, and support from our state government ministers and agencies, Boondall State School and Northgate State School recently had upgrades to their Stop Drop & Go facilities, and schools across the electorate now have flashing signs. Our government recognises that school students are, of course, among our most vulnerable road users which is why we have installed over 889 flashing school zone signs across Queensland since 2015.

I would also like to acknowledge that Minister Grace was able to secure a further \$40 million in this year's budget to improve the wider infrastructure around Queensland schools through the School Transport Infrastructure Program, where school communities can submit applications with ideas on how to make their school zone safer. Elsewhere in my electorate, I have worked with locals in Northgate to advocate for the installation of additional improvements including 'Unsuitable for large vehicles' signage for Northgate Road—a major thoroughfare between Toombul and Sandgate roads but a predominately residential area. I thank the Minister for Transport for listening to the concerns of my community in this regard.

In addition, I have been working closely with the minister and the Department of Transport and Main Roads around a number of upgrades to intersections on Sandgate Road at Cameron Street and Northgate Road, where just last week there was a serious vehicle accident. The installation of traffic lights at these two intersections has been an issue of some contention in my local community. When we make changes to our roads to improve safety they are not always welcomed. They can have other impacts. They can move traffic to different local roads which can cause concern. I want to acknowledge the fact that Transport and Main Roads officers came out and talked to my community about the need for these improvements. Again, I thank the minister for these ongoing improvements.

We have a significant amount of investment on our local roads to keep the community safe. When we have Sandgate Road—I formerly had Gympie Road and the Gateway north—and these major thoroughfares, we need to be always looking at technology improvements and ongoing investment to ensure they are safe for our communities. Installation of traffic lights at both Cameron Street and Northgate Road intersections and making London Street a cul-de-sac by closing the northern end where it meets Northgate Road will again increase road safety and keep my community safe.

I have spoken many times in this House about the dangers drivers face at the Banyo railway level crossing. Again, I acknowledge the Minister for Transport, Minister Bailey, and his department who have been nothing but supportive when it comes to exploring innovative solutions to improve this dangerous crossing. Through those conversations and the advocacy for my local community in partnership with the minister, I was able to secure \$200,000 for a transport strategic planning study at the crossing.

No solution there will be simple, but I think as local members what we always need to do is have honest and frank conversations with community. We need to consult openly. We need to take community with us so that if there are solutions—and, indeed, there may not be many solutions available to us given the nature of this village and the development around it—we do have to have those conversations. They are conversations and investments that we are willing to make to keep the community safe at state level.

Unfortunately, we have had to go it alone because the Brisbane City Council is not willing to come to the table, make those same investments and have those frank conversations. I look forward to that study being delivered. I know that we are out to tender and I will have an announcement in regard to who will do that work. I thank the minister for being willing to come to the table and honour the voices of my community.

This bill confirms that money collected from penalties imposed from camera detected offences will be used for road safety campaigns but also expands on this by providing the ability to spend money on research and development to test new options and technologies that may affect road safety in a positive way. For all of the reasons I have just outlined, we need to continue to do that. We need to continue to invest in research. We need to look for new options and technologies and new solutions that can continue to keep road users safe.

During the Transport and Resources Committee's examination of the bill, the department noted that the trial and testing of recent innovative initiatives, such as the new mobile phone and seatbelt-detection technology, could not be funded by the camera detected fund under the current act. The amendments in this bill will provide the department with the ability to spend money on research and development, and I have no doubt that will have a positive impact on road safety.

As someone who is passionate about caravanning and camping—I do want to acknowledge my colleague from Barron River—and someone who has travelled the length and breadth of Queensland, including regional Queensland, I was pleased to read the submission of the Caravan Trade and

Industries Association of Queensland and the concerns they raised regarding the road toll. They highlighted some of the additional risk factors we have seen caravanners face when towing a van or trailer and the recent increase in people who may not have as much experience. Research and development is so important not only in our road network but also in caravan technology to ensure not only that those who tow such large vehicles are safe but also that other road users are kept safe. Road safety affects every Queenslanders. All road users have a responsibility to ensure everyone gets home safely. These amendments will enable government to invest in the technologies that may go towards reducing the road death toll.

I would like to thank the Transport and Resources Committee and committee secretariat for the work they have done with regard to this bill and all of the organisations that have made submissions and participated in the inquiry process. I commend the bill to the House.