




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (4.00 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2022. As many speakers have already addressed, there have been too many road traffic crashes this year, too many road traffic fatalities, too many road traffic hazards—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Members to my left, if you do not mind keeping it down a bit, that would be great.

Mr RYAN: Just in the last few days a lady lost her life on the D'Aguilar Highway just outside of Caboolture, and our thoughts are with her family and friends and her eight-year-old daughter, who was in the car with her and is currently in hospital.

Too many lives are being lost on our roads. It is the resolve of everyone in our community, whether it is this parliament, government agencies like the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Queensland Police Service, to not only make our roads as safe as possible but also ensure that those people who are operating vehicles on our roads are doing so responsibly and as safely as possible so we can reduce the number of fatalities, the number of casualties and the amount of road traffic trauma.

I have a very keen interest in the amendment bill before the House, particularly those matters which go to road safety. Queensland's more than 12,000 police take road safety very seriously. It is a vital part of their jobs to ensure that our roads are as safe as possible and that those on our roads are acting lawfully and consistent with road traffic legislation. Along with the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Queensland Police Service has a common goal; that is, to ensure all road users are confident and safe road users. One way they are able to ensure that is through the Camera Detected Offence Program, which was introduced in Queensland to enable the use of camera technology to reduce road trauma by deterring unsafe and illegal driving behaviour.

It is interesting when you look at the history of this, because there was a clear reduction in road trauma following the introduction of speed cameras and red-light cameras almost 25 years ago. They were introduced under the Borbidge government. One of the interesting debates at the time was around the use of the revenue generated. When the bill was first introduced by a good bloke, Vaughan Johnson, who was the transport minister at the time, it had all of the revenue going into the Consolidated Fund. It was up to Jim Elder, the deputy leader of the Labor Party at the time, to move an amendment to have those funds hypothecated into road safety purposes. It is an interesting debate and I was going to refer to the page in *Hansard*. On 27 November 1996, at page 4510 of *Hansard* Jim Elder said—

A number of members have raised this issue already, so I will not spend a lot of time going over the point again. One of the Opposition's major concerns about this Bill has been revenue collection and the fact that the introduction of speed cameras will be seen as a straight revenue generator for consolidated revenue—that the significant amounts of money that will be generated as a result of the introduction of speed cameras will go straight into Treasury coffers.

Jim Elder moved an amendment, to his credit Vaughan Johnson accepted it, and that is a legacy of the introduction of speed cameras. Two good things came of that: those detection devices have led to the reduction of road trauma; and the hypothecation of that money has gone into initiatives and programs to reduce road trauma and increase road safety. It is a credit to both of those people that they were able to support that legislation and the amendment at the time.

Like police on the roads, those camera detected offence devices are a deterrent for poor behaviour. The fixed and mobile cameras detect offences such as speeding, failing to stop at red lights, using mobile phones and not wearing your seatbelt. The types of cameras currently used include: portable speed cameras, red-light cameras, fixed red-light and speed cameras, point-to-point speed cameras, automatic numberplate recognition cameras for unregistered and uninsured vehicles, and new cameras for mobile phones and seatbelt detection. Because of those amendments in 1996 the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act ensures that funds raised through penalties above and beyond the cost of administering the program go towards road safety education and awareness programs, road safety accident and injury rehabilitation, and improving the safety of state controlled roads in particular blackspots.

In the late 1990s this state became the first jurisdiction in Australia to legislate the investment of revenue from those penalties into those road safety priorities, as I have already explained. The intent has not changed, but the release in April this year of the Queensland Road Safety Strategy 2022-2031 is the result of the review of the strategy and how we need to modernise our legislation to ensure it remains relevant not only to the safety initiatives that require investment but also to the evolution of technology around road safety initiatives.

This bill will enable the funds raised through the Camera Detected Offence Program to continue to be invested in road safety initiatives in targeted initiatives to help Queensland achieve road safety targets and reduce road trauma. Our target in the Road Safety Strategy is to achieve a 50 per cent reduction in lives lost and a 30 per cent reduction in serious injuries on Queensland roads by 2031. It is the hope of all members of this House and every member of our community that we achieve those reductions sooner and that we exceed those reductions, because of course every life lost is a tragedy. As my colleague the Minister for Transport and Main Roads has already said, these are ambitious targets, but they are targets worth striving for.

Under the amendments to the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 in this bill the fines from camera detected offences continue to be available for road safety education and awareness programs such as the StreetSmarts campaign, flashing signs in school zones, safer road infrastructure and rehabilitation programs for people injured in road crashes. The amendments will continue to ensure that all excess revenue from camera detected offences is invested into these priority road safety initiatives; however, the amendments also modernise these provisions and clarify that funds will be allowed for expanded road safety responses beyond existing operations, including through monitoring and identifying trends, research, trials, implementation and evaluation. This will support the development and implementation of road safety programs and initiatives that use new approaches such as new technologies, new innovations and proactive measures. For example, funding may be applied for—but not limited to—supporting work with road users, employers and community groups to motivate and influence safe road user behaviour.

This could occur through incentivisation, enabling participation through subsidisation, collaboration and sharing expertise partnerships, and undertaking proactive research or other initiatives; it could be used for new and emerging targeted programs of work designed to reduce road trauma, such as the trial and evaluation of distinct and increased drug-driving deterrence or anti-hooning technology and expanding the reach of the existing Automatic Number Plate Recognition program right across the road network; or it could be used for infrastructure and related technologies to prevent crashes on roads where serious crashes have not yet occurred but where analysis shows a serious crash risk exists.

As I have already said, the amendments make it clear that Camera Detected Offence Program funds in excess of administration costs will continue to be directed to activities and initiatives that enable improved road safety behaviours or practices. This may now include adopting new approaches, new technologies and more proactive measures. Educating drivers is a key factor to ensure our roads are safer.

As put forward in the bill, to reflect contemporary thinking, road trauma is the result of 'crashes' not 'accidents', and they are tragedies. Punitive measures on their own are not enough. What we must remember is that, even with legislation in place, it is ultimately up to drivers and passengers—all road users—to ensure they make responsible and safe decisions on our roads. Their lives ultimately could depend on it. I support the bill. I encourage all members to do so as well.