




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR COOK

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POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (JACK'S LAW) AMENDMENT BILL; POLICE SERVICE ADMINISTRATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.26 pm): Today I rise to speak in the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) cognate debate. These are two very important reforms and I am proud to stand here today to support both bills in this House. Both bills are about supporting community safety, they are about preventing harm to individuals in our community and they are also about improving operations and effectiveness in our Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. I want to start my contribution today by speaking on Jack's Law. I acknowledge Brett and Belinda Beasley in the gallery today and want to thank both Brett and Belinda for their passion to influence change and for bringing this important legislative reform to the House because without people like Belinda and Brett in our communities it would be very hard to influence any change. Given that this bill came to the House because of a very sad situation, I pay my deepest respects to both Brett and Belinda. As a parent myself, it is really important that we all support this bill to prevent lives being lost.

On Friday, 13 December 2019 Brett and Belinda received the news that their son Jack had been stabbed on a busy street in Surfers Paradise. Sadly, Jack passed away shortly after, just three months before his 18th birthday. This bill is named in honour of Jack Beasley. His family established the Jack Beasley Foundation and has since advocated for reform to youth justice laws and educated young people about the changes of carrying knives in public spaces. I want to again thank Brett and Belinda for their contribution to our public hearing. It was invaluable. I cannot imagine that it would have been an easy process to relive what happened to their son, but I thank them for having the courage to share their experience with everyone with the aim of creating positive change in our community.

In their contribution on the day, the Beasleys spoke about influencing the lives of young people through education and creating awareness. This is about teaching young people about positive relationships. I have always said that it takes each and every one of us to stand up, especially when we can prevent such situations from happening. The bill also remembers the passing of Raymond Harris, who was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise in September 2020. The bill ensures that community safety is upheld, that we prevent harm from being done to human lives, that we continue to educate young people about safety for themselves and for others and that we create a society where we can all feel safe in the community that we live in.

One of the main objectives of the bill is to extend and expand the trial of handheld scanners, or wands, to detect the unlawful possession of knives. The trial was carried out in the Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise safe night precincts. The bill proposes amendments to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to extend the expiry date of the scanning provision to 30 April 2025; to increase the scope of prescribed public areas for scanning to include all 15 safe night precincts and all public transport stations, including public transport vehicles; and to strengthen the criteria that a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of handheld scanning devices.

The committee put forward four recommendations. It recommends that the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill 2022 be passed. Recommendation 2 relates to the expansion of the wandering trial to public transport vehicles and stations. The committee recommends that in all regions the wandering trial be adequately resourced and supported by training for QPS officers; that the Queensland Police Service implement a clear, appropriate and concise public awareness campaign, which I think is really important, in cooperation with Queensland public transport providers; and that the independent review of the extended wandering trial also examine the operation of the wandering trials specifically in relation to public transport vehicles and stations. There are many facets to this bill that I think will certainly enhance community safety. I fully support the bill going forward.

Before I close I would like to speak on the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). Queensland's first responders are part of a public service that is constantly evolving to deliver to the people of Queensland essential services effectively, efficiently and responsibly. Especially given that we are also talking about Jack's bill—two very different scenarios—it is really important that we have the right mechanisms in place to support our community in the best way that we can because they rely on our public service and on policymakers to set in place the right foundations to make sure that we uphold community safety.

The committee recommends that the bill be passed. The main objectives of the bill are to deliver operational improvements and efficiencies for the Queensland Police Service and the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services by amending the following acts: the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Weapons Act 1990, the Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990 and the Disaster Management Act 2003. The explanatory notes to the bill state that the QPS evaluated the PSAA to identify opportunities for improvements and to consolidate the definitions of terms used within the act. Amendments in the bill address some of the administrative issues identified, for example, by removing duplicate or obsolete provisions.

I want to highlight a couple of key issues that were raised by stakeholders during the committee's consideration of the bill. In relation to the police discipline system under the PSAA, the bill will delay the commencement of police disciplinary proceedings until related applications for domestic violence protection orders are finalised. Given everything that is happening in the domestic and family violence space, we need to ensure that the agencies responsible for responding to certain situations are equipped to respond in the most effective and efficient way possible. In relation to reducing the legislative burden on the QPS under the PSAA and the PPRA, the bill will create a new offence in relation to the unauthorised use of confidential information and will allow medically unfit police officers transferred to staff member positions to be employed under the Public Service Act 2008. That is a reflection of the operation modernising itself to keep up with the demands and expectations from our community. On a final note, the committee supported the purpose of the bill to enhance the operational effectiveness of the QPS and the QFES to ensure that both the QPS and QFES are able to meet the needs and expectations of Queensland communities. I support both bills and commend them to the House.