




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 30 March 2023

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

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of these bills in the cognate debate. In doing so, of course I recognise the very important reason we are here. I also recognise Jack's family, who have been present in the gallery throughout the debate. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to meet them briefly yesterday evening. It is truly remarkable, as many members on both sides of the House have commented, that they have turned their horrific loss into an opportunity to change our community for the better forever. All members of the House, I hope, are united in that purpose today.

New sections of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act contained in clauses 4 and 5 of the bill provide an important aspect of public reporting about the use of new handheld scanner powers. Firstly, new section 39J of the PPRA will require the commissioner to publish a notice about each of the handheld scanner authorities on the Queensland Police Service website within two months after the authority has been issued. This is really important.

I want to make some comments about wandering generally. I agree with comments made earlier by the member for Lockyer. This is an evidence-based approach and approval process and it is appropriate and fair. It strikes a sensible balance between addressing the unlawful possession of knives in public places and the human right to enjoy freedom of movement, which we all enjoy and will continue to enjoy, in this great state of Queensland.

Wandering is a reasonable and measured approach to what we all know is an incredibly serious problem that can also have catastrophic consequences. There is a real proportionality to the power we are giving the police and the offence it prevents. I have seen news reports of young people under the age of 18 being strip searched at musical festivals in other states. That is alarming when we compare that process to something as relatively benign as wandering. When I think about subjecting a young person to a strip search without a parent present because they might have a small quantity of drugs or a tablet on them, that is not a proportionate response like the one we are talking about here.

In comparison, wandering is something that every person who goes to an airport consents to, as the member for Lockyer said. In other words, it is a fairly normal part of life. It is something that happens regularly to a wide variety of people. It is not something that the average person would be disturbed to have done to them or concerned about. The principle of proportionality is important.

When I think about legislation like this and the alternatives, I view them through a parental lens. The idea of one of my children being strip searched is horrendous. We know that wandering happens where young people are more likely to be present. Therefore, they are more likely to be wanded. I have no problem with my child being wanded and checked for a knife. If they do not have a knife on them there is not going to be an issue.

I would think most Queensland parents would agree that these wandering powers get the balance right. They are proportionate. We want to make sure our young people are safe on their nights out. I certainly hope that this is something that I never have to worry about. I am sure members know that I am the mother of a young son. I have absolutely no problem with him being wanded because this legislation gets the balance right and I know that it will keep him safe.

I support Jack's Law. This is an important thing we are doing here today in the spirit of bipartisanship. I commend the bills to the House.