




Speech By
Jim Madden

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (12.51 pm): I rise to speak in support of the two cognated bills, the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). The policy objectives of the Jack's Law bill and the reasons for them are to extend and expand the trial of the handheld scanner provisions to detect unlawfully possessed knives and other weapons beyond the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. The bill will achieve this objective by: amending the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to extend the expiry date of the scanning provisions to 30 April 2025; increase the scope of the prescribed public areas for scanning to include all 15 safe night precincts and all public transport stations, including public transport vehicles; and strengthen the criteria that a senior police officer must consider before approving the use of a handheld scanner device.

This bill is part of the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to deliver better services and keep Queenslanders safe with the bill to expand and extend an Australian first trial to detect weapons in order to combat violence. This important step brings the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill one step closer to being legalised. If passed, the bill will be known as Jack's Law, named after Jack Beasley, who was tragically fatally stabbed in 2019. We will see the Queensland Police Service trial of wand powers extended for two years and expanded to all safe night precincts, public transport modes and associated transport infrastructure. The bill is all about community safety so that people venturing out at night spots can feel some degree of safety.

The Palaszczuk government is always looking at ways to improve community safety, and not only will Jack's Law give Queenslanders using our rail networks and going into safe night precincts some piece of mind, but we firmly believe it will reduce knife crime and save lives. Our government wants to give our police and other agencies and organisations, including the Jack Beasley Foundation, the powers to keep crime off our streets.

The Queensland Police Service have confirmed that, in the Gold Coast trial, wand powers have proven to be a very effective, proactive initiative for the police to prevent violent crimes in Surfers Paradise and they support the expansion of these measures across the state. The police further advise that the Gold Coast trial has seen hundreds of dangerous weapons being detected and taken off our streets. There is absolutely no reason why law-abiding citizens need to arm themselves with knives, knuckledusters and screwdrivers, as we have seen on the Gold Coast. Police conducting wand powers in certain areas have sent a very clear message to anyone contemplating taking a weapon into a public place that it is an offence and they will be caught.

In December 2019, 17-year-old Jack Beasley was fatally stabbed outside a Surfers Paradise convenience store while on a night out with friends. The family subsequently established the Jack Beasley Foundation in a bid to drive change and educate young people about the dangers of carrying

knives in public places. Tragically, in September 2020, 27-year-old Raymond Harris was fatally stabbed after an altercation on Cavill Avenue in Surfers Paradise. The bill has been named in honour of Jack but also recognises the passing of Mr Harris.

Founders of the Jack Beasley Foundation, Brett and Belinda Beasley, have dedicated their lives since Jack's death to educating people about the dangers of knife crime. Mr Beasley is quoted as saying—

"Jack's Law is about child safety and it's about keeping all our kids, and the wider community, safe," ...

...

"I think every single Queensland parent should be right beside us in doing this. At the end of the day, we just want to keep our kids safe.

"I'm hoping Jack's Law will clean up these knives and stop these kids carrying weapons.

"It's important we're at this stage, but the trial needs to be extended."

The Police Union President, Ian Leavers, supported the government's statewide expansion of these powers and urged the committee to also support the expansion of the wandering statewide. As Mr Leavers said—

"These wandering powers for police have been hugely successful in the trial on the Gold Coast. We know these powers work, so I encourage the Committee to recommend that police are given these statewide powers immediately to ensure we can keep people safe.

I met with Jack Beasley's mother, Belinda, and members of the Beasley Foundation just this weekend and I know they want these laws to be statewide too.

Ultimately, Police and the community across Queensland will be better off when police can utilise these laws."

In closing, I would like to thank Minister Ryan, the Minister for Police, for introducing this important bill to the Queensland parliament. I would also like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee, the committee secretariat, the submitters and Hansard. I commend the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) to the House.