




Speech By
Jimmy Sullivan

MEMBER FOR STAFFORD

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**CORRECTIVE SERVICES (EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND SECURITY) AND
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr SULLIVAN** (Stafford—ALP) (3.06 pm): I rise to support the Corrective Services (Emerging Technologies and Security) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill provides sensible changes to assist our corrective services facilities to modernise and keep up with technological advancements. It will assist corrective services in responding to emerging security threats and other changes in the correctional environment.

I will place on record, as I did in the committee stage of this bill, that my wife works under the Queensland Corrective Services portfolio as a legal professional member of the Parole Board of Queensland. This legislation creates no conflict of interest and I am comfortable contributing to the debate. It does remind me, as I have put on record before, that I do not pretend to be the smartest lawyer in any given room because I am not even the smartest lawyer in my own house.

Thank you to the minister and department for progressing these reforms. I was pleased to be part of the committee that could progress them to today's debate. It is important across government that we keep up with technology—for public safety, for the basic rights of those in the system and, of course, for workplace health and safety for our staff. It came to us as a committee because it increases the safety of officers and it falls within the industrial relations area of our committee. This government is committed to workplace health and safety across industries. Whether it is industrial relations reforms, workers compensation or workplace health and safety across industries, it is our government that has a track record of supporting the rights of Queensland workers who dedicate their skills and hard work to serving the public.

I am proud to serve in a caucus with the members for Mundingburra and Caloundra who know this work firsthand. I thank them for their service. As a student lawyer I had experience with the then QPSU of doing commission supporting documents for out at Wacol. As a 22- or 23-year-old I had the same view as many others when presented with those workplaces—there but for the grace of God go I. I have mates from school who are now working there. Over the years I have met with AWU delegates at the facilities at Wacol, Townsville and Toowoomba. I respect the work they do and support their contribution to our community in corrections, health and youth justice.

This bill is about keeping up with technology—something we all need to do. Let us empower our state workforce to do the same. This bill provides clear authorities for more up-to-date body scanners. It is less invasive than strip searches that have previously been required. Technology has advanced. I think our approach to this as a community has shifted and it is something that we can all accept and recommend.

The bill recognises CCTV, body worn cameras and other technology and the role they can play to improve safety in correctional facilities. As the minister said in his contribution, these are facilities—let's be frank—that can be volatile. We are dealing with people within restricted areas. Anything we can do to improve safety or to de-escalate violence when it occurs should be supported.

The bill also enables more effective emergency responses and, importantly, provides boundaries and requirements when such a declaration is made. This covers natural disasters, health emergencies, community safety emergencies and the like. I thank the minister for clarifying the threshold in such declarations during his contribution, recognising the request of the committee, so I thank him for that. It would have been handy if those opposite had paid attention to his speech or, indeed, read the committee report instead of trying to manufacture faux opposition to reform that should be a no-brainer.

This bill also tackles the specific issues associated with the emerging and growing industry of drones. Some opposite—again, trying to manufacture problems—pretended that this would somehow impact a farmer surveying their station or ‘a dad playing with his son and a drone’. As a side note, I am not sure why it could not be a mother playing with her daughter, but that is another point. This bill obviously is not aimed at farmers or Queenslanders playing in the park with their kids. Drones are an emerging technology that pose a real and understandable risk to the management of places of detention. It is twofold: by using electronic devices for the purposes of contraband or by surveying or possibly interfering with security of places of detention. These are serious issues. They are places of detention. Those opposite should get a grip, get on board and cut out the lame, faux opposition.

I thank the chair and members of the committee. It was quite a collegial effort in the most part. I thank the departmental staff for their briefings. They were quite detailed. Answers to questions taken on notice and the further information requested were very detailed and helpful. I thank the secretariat staff all the time because they do a great job. I would particularly like to point out their work on this bill because the content of this legislation could perhaps be seen as outside of our regular portfolio content. I thank them for going that extra mile and delivering on what is really important reform. I thank the secretariat and their staff. Again, I thank the minister and draw the attention of those opposite to the minister’s genuine remarks in his contribution which will answer any questions they raise in the debate. I commend the bill to the House.