




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

Record of Proceedings, 29 March 2023

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

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (6.15 pm): I rise today to make a brief contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Bill and the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). Before I get to some of the detail of the bills, I express my deepest sympathies to the Beasleys for their loss and commend them for the action they are taking. It was an honour to meet them in person and as part of the committee process to hear firsthand from them. I encourage everyone to read their contribution in the committee hearings, if they have not already. They are courageous and outstanding individuals who are making a difference. I will talk more about them in a minute.

They, like the Fields, the Leadbetters, the Stanleys—Paul Stanley founded the Matthew Stanley Foundation—the Morcombes and others, have suffered greatly, grieved much and made a conscious decision to try to make a difference both in memory of their loved one and for the sake of others. The Beasleys are in my prayers today. I pray that God will comfort them in their low times and give them strength to keep going and make that difference. Again, I honour them today.

The primary objective of Jack's Law is to extend and expand the trial of handheld scanner provisions to detect unlawfully possessed knives in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. The bill achieves this objective by amending the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to extend the expiry date of the scanning provisions to 30 April 2035; 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 a handheld scanner device.

On 30 April 2021 the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021 commenced, enacting amendments to numerous statutes including the PPRA. The PPRA amendments, in part, allowed police to use handheld scanners to detect unlawfully possessed knives in the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach SNPs as part of a 12-month trial. The primary goal of the trial was to detect and deter the unlawful possession of knives in those areas of the Gold Coast. This would then provide public safety benefits by reducing the opportunity for serious violent offending involving knives and other bladed weapons.

A catalyst for the trial was the tragic murders of two young men who were killed with knives in separate incidents within the Surfers Paradise SNP, in 2019 and 2020. 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 spaces. In September 2020, 27-year-old Raymond Harris was fatally stabbed after an alleged altercation on Cavill Avenue, Surfers Paradise. This bill has been named in honour of Jack and remembers the passing of both Jack and

Mr Harris. The winding trial has been a success, and many knives have been taken off the street. It is the view of the LNP opposition that it should be rolled as soon as possible across the state as quickly as possible by making the scanning provisions permanent.

I have spoken many times in this House on community safety, policing matters and justice bills. As we recently debated, changes made to legislation by the Palaszczuk government in 2015 weakened our laws. As a result of these changes, crime has increased, particularly amongst young repeat offenders. The LNP has consistently advocated on behalf of Queenslanders for the state Labor government to be tougher on crime. The current youth justice system is failing in many regards.

In terms of the Redlands coast, our community has suffered several tragedies in the last 20 years. I have risen in this chamber previously to commend the work of the Matthew Stanley Foundation out of which came the One Punch Can Kill campaign and the Walk Away Chill Out programs which aimed to curb youth violence after the tragic death of Matthew Stanley in 2006 at the age of 15 from a coward's punch in the Redlands coast. The attacker was convicted of manslaughter and committed to juvenile detention. Matthew's father, Paul, established the Matthew Stanley Foundation to prevent such incidences of youth crime continuing to occur. I was very proud in a small way to be able to help Paul at a time when the foundation was particularly active and also to work with former MP for Cleveland Phil Weightman and then minister Kate Jones to support Paul in the work that he was doing in our schools with the Walk Away Chill Out program. I am very proud of that and the bipartisan work together with then minister Kate Jones. I also want to honour former member Mr Phil Weightman for the great work that he did previous to me. At the time that Matthew was killed from a coward's punch, we also had a son of a similar age to him and these things really hit home.

The deaths of Matt Field and Kate Leadbetter and baby Miles on Australia Day 2021 was a tragedy that also rocked the Redlands Coast community. A repeat offending youth with an extensive criminal history stole a car and with it killed three innocent people, stealing their lives from them and leaving behind shattered parents, grandparents, other family members and friends. The Field family have been courageous too in the face of their absolute tragedy. They are joining with thousands of other Queenslanders to call for youth justice reforms, and that fight continues. Russell Field is on the record stating that several recent crimes which resulted in the loss of innocent lives could have been potentially avoided if the government had acted sooner. Mr Field said of the current youth crime laws—

If anybody says they're working, they have rocks in their heads. The sentence should be there as a deterrent, and it needs to be a greater deterrent so kids think first before they commit a crime.

Mr Field also commented that the government needs to be more proactive than reactive.

I had the privilege recently of meeting with Brett and Belinda Beasley and I want to commend them on the work that they are involved in. I met them through the committee hearing process. They are working so that no-one else has to ever go through what they have. I want to honour them for the courage to fight the fight and keep pushing for reforms through the work of the Jack Beasley Foundation. After working with Paul Stanley and seeing how tough that is to continue to do day in and day out—the hardships, the emotional lows—I want to commend the Beasleys for what they are doing with their campaigns Detect Knives, Save Lives and 'I live my life ... without a knife'. Spending time with victims—those who have suffered a great loss—is an absolutely sobering experience which deeply affects you. It deepens your resolve to join them to ensure that no-one else has to endure the same loss. We all agree in this House that much more needs to be done and as quickly as possible. I support the bill.