




Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL 2022; POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND  
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.43 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. First, let me pay tribute to the magnificent frontline officers, the men and women in blue who protect our communities from the cape to Coolangatta. Every shift they risk their lives trying to keep us safe from the worst elements of society. As a mother and an aunt of current serving police officers, I thank you for your service.

In Mudgeeraba, I can report that they too are doing a magnificent job, but it is not easy. I have spoken before in this place about the continuing problem of hooning. For years the Palaszczuk Labor government has failed to take meaningful action. Why they have not I have no idea. What I do know is that those opposite do not like to listen to the concerns of Queenslanders and do not care enough to do anything. While this government sits idle with their hands over their ears, the hooning continues. Last week the idiots of the Mexican Hoon Cartel were at it again doing burnouts and skids in front of my office. Hoons continue to be emboldened to engage in this behaviour because they know this government has weak laws in place. Hoons will not be deterred by a slap on the wrist, and the data shows this.

Under this government, from 2015 to 2021 the unlawful use of a motor vehicle has increased by 107 per cent—107 per cent does not seem like everything is under control, does it? That is not news to Queenslanders. Queenslanders already know the incompetence of this government. This is a dramatic difference to the previous LNP government which saw a reduction in the unlawful use of a motor vehicle of 27 per cent from 2012 to 2015—a reduction, not an increase of more than 100 per cent! Queenslanders want to know that they are safe on our roads. Queenslanders do not want to wake up with squealing tyres or exhaust backfires at all hours of the night. They want action—action that this government has failed to deliver, and the hooning idiots are thanking the government for it.

The LNP and I have been advocating to this government for years to implement stronger measures, but this government just does not care. We have recommendations and solutions on the table, but they do not want to look at them. We wanted to roll out tyre-shredding road treatments across the Gold Coast—a proposal that received overwhelming community support. They did not listen. We wanted new covert CCTV cameras installed in hooning hotspots. This inaction is beyond incompetence. It is a complete failure from this Labor government.

Weekly I receive numerous complaints of hooning across the Mudgeeraba electorate. Just a few weeks ago Richard and Lyn of Robina contacted me, raising the constant disturbance every day and every night with continual hooning and speeding in the area. They constantly hear the shrieking of tyres ripping around roundabouts and the backfire of exhausts as these hoons race each other. All they want is to live in peace. It is not much to ask and it is something that all Queenslanders deserve.

Robyn from out near Franklin Flats wants the noise to stop but also wants these idiots to be fined and charged for breaking the law as they rip up public lands with their criminal behaviour. Annette from Reedy Creek is also fed up. She fears hooning vehicles will lose control, flying off the road and crashing into houses. Annette just wants to be safe and for other road users to be safe too.

Whether it be hooning through Robina on Laver Drive or driving like idiots on the Nerang Murwillumbah Road or in quiet residential areas, the hooning continues. It is only a matter of time until another person's life is thrown into jeopardy because of the action of these idiots. This government is not helping the police. This government is making it harder for police men and women to apprehend these hoons by having fewer and fewer officers on the street. We know they are stripping our police stations of resources and officers. The police force are working tirelessly to make do with what they have but with one hand tied behind their back.

We know the extent of these funding cuts. The Labor government will take 32 years to reach its election commitment of 1,450 extra police—32 years! How ridiculous is that? Officers will continue to be diverted from Mudgeeraba, Robina and Nerang stations to other areas like Surfers Paradise all because of the shortcomings of this government. The police just want to do their job. This government needs to give them the resources and tools to do it. It is not fair for Queenslanders or for our brave police officers. The current police minister has been in that role for over six years and will no doubt try to blame a government that has not been on the treasury bench for a decade for its problems.

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In addition to all the misleading statements that the member has made, I find her remarks personally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence at your statement and ask that it be withdrawn.

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw. The minister is full of excuses but void of any accountability.

**Mr RYAN:** Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. She has just repeated the same remark. I find the remarks personally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn. I am happy to keep taking points of order on this matter.

**Mr ACTING SPEAKER:** Resume your seat, Minister. I will take some advice. The member has taken personal offence. Member for Mudgeeraba, I ask you to withdraw.

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw. I would also like to address the proposal to amend provisions of the act pertaining to illegal drugs. The opposition cannot in good faith support laws which condone the growing of illicit drugs. The government would have us believe that they have no choice while trying to say that you cannot have tougher drug laws and you cannot have well-resourced rehabilitation and proven diversion programs. The reality is that it can be done. There can be tough penalties for those trafficking and supplying drugs and there can be legitimate diversionary programs in place for those with substance use disorders. We know there are harm minimisation initiatives that can, and have, worked; however, that should not come at the expense of the rule of law and ensuring appropriate penalties exist for those who do break them. We fear this is just another example of the tired third-term government going soft on crime. They are claiming it is about reducing workloads for the Queensland Police Service, but the reality is that they are simply not providing enough resources for our police.

The issue of illegal drugs is complex, but the answer is not in allowing more drugs to be carried around in the community. The idea that a health system in crisis can cope with more people being diverted to it for treatment is just laughable. Our frontline health workers are under enough pressure before this government tries to make police matters a health issue. We know that the track record of those opposite is to promise the world and deliver nothing, so our fear is that the aim of these laws, which is to get people off drugs and back on track, will be lost in a lack of follow-up from the government.

The opposition does believe that drug diversion initiatives are evidence-based and can help, but it does not have to be one or the other. There simply will not be enough mental health and addiction service workers to help those in need as the government shunts these people from the police to hospitals. We cannot condone the purchase and carriage of illicit substances because their production, manufacture and supply is undertaken by criminal networks that trade in human misery, including paedophilia, domestic and family violence, fraud and other serious crime, including on an international scale.

After eight years of watered-down laws and a youth crime epidemic, at least Queenslanders deserve some accountability and ownership of the mistakes this Palaszczuk government has made, but they will not listen. The Labor government is failing to keep Queenslanders safe in 2023. When will this government provide solutions, not just empty media releases littered with excuses? I will not hold my breath; I would probably have to wait 32 years. When will this government do something about restoring the safety and security of communities? This Labor government finally took our advice and

re-introduced breach of bail as an offence to combat the youth crime epidemic—an epidemic of the government's own making. This government needs to listen again and implement stronger laws to get these behaviours under control. It is time for this government to get on with it. Queenslanders are fed up. Queenslanders deserve so much better than this tired and ignorant Labor government.