




Speech By  
**Sandy Bolton**

**MEMBER FOR NOOSA**

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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)**

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (6.45 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the two bills being debated cognately. The primary objective of Jack's Law is to expand the trial of handheld scanners to detect unlawfully possessed knives beyond the Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach safe night precincts. The Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) proposes amendments to deliver operational improvements and efficiencies for the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

First I turn to Jack's Law, which extends the expiry date on the new scanning laws to 2025 and includes all 15 safe night precincts and public transport stations statewide. The driving force for the original trial was the tragic murder of two young Queenslanders attacked with knives in separate incidents in the Surfers Paradise Safe Night Precinct in 2019 and 2020. As Brett and Belinda Beasley testified at the committee hearings, their son Jack and his friends hopped off the Gold Coast Light Rail and, when walking outside an IGA, were set upon and attacked by five youths, all aged under 18, for no reason at all. As they said, sitting in the hospital room that night was just the beginning of their nightmare—not knowing if Jack was going to make it and then the cardiac surgeon walking into the room and saying those two words: 'I'm sorry'. No parent should ever go through this. Then in September 2020, 27-year-old Raymond Harris was fatally stabbed in Surfers Paradise—again, for no reason.

In the committee's review of this legislation several issues were raised, with two views at different ends of the spectrum. First, the Townsville City Council stated that the criteria used for handheld scanners would hamstring the police's ability to keep the public safe. Alternatively, the Queensland Council for Civil Liberties said that increased use of handheld scanners for searches is an invasion of privacy and could cause an individual a deal of embarrassment. However, as the department stated, the use of a handheld scanner is not a search as it is slowly passed over the person in order to detect any metal objects and they are not touched by police or the scanner. The shortfall of this bill is that it only relates to the 15 safe night precincts when it should be expanded to all of Queensland. As Brett Beasley said, Jack's Law is about child safety and about keeping all of our kids and the wider community safe.

I have spoken in this chamber previously about the issues Noosa has experienced since lockdowns ended—visiting youths rampaging in Hastings Street, jumping on cars and terrorising all. I have spoken about the trashing of our main beach last New Year, and I will speak later tonight on the recent reports of an assault, which included a knife, of a young lass. I have made inquiries via two estimates hearings as to what happened to the alcohol fuelled violence funding to pay for the overtime for our police at peak periods that disappeared and which my community has been left to fund. I do not want a death in my electorate or anywhere in Queensland as a result of bills that do not accommodate the indicators that this could happen outside of safe night precincts.

I turn to the Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). The Crime and Corruption Commission submitted that exceptions to the one-year period for commencing disciplinary proceedings should be expanded to include where the officer is being investigated by the CCC and that their investigation should not be compromised to meet arbitrary time frames. The Queensland Police Service responded that the matter raised by the CCC was not considered as it is beyond the scope of the bill. My question is: why does a bill that addresses the reasons to extend the time frame for disciplinary proceedings not consider other very relevant stakeholders such as the CCC? Wouldn't a proper process have involved them? The Department of Justice and Attorney-General has responsibility across the justice system, including for independent justice bodies such as the CCC or the DPP. They are well placed to ensure an effective policy development process that consulted with all aspects and stakeholders of the justice system.

While the bill should make improvements in a number of areas, so much more needs to be done. In a recent survey of Noosa residents, the major issue they raised was a lack of visible presence or alternatives such as drones to reduce the ongoing dangerous behaviours and noncompliance, whether on the roads, beaches or rivers. In addition to the alcohol fuelled violence I spoke of earlier, there are rollovers every other weekend on the Noosa North Shore, unmanageable visitor numbers and ongoing heavy haulage issues. That is just the tip of what my community is experiencing.

This is not acceptable. There needs to be clarity around how and when the extra 1,400 police will be actioned, where they will be located and when further drones and ICT capabilities are to be deployed. Our police and our other frontliners do an incredible job and often the thanks do not go their way and they should. They do what they can with what they have. However, they need the government to provide the tools, including legislation.

I thank the committee for their work on these bills as well as the secretariat in supporting them, and I thank the submitters who made contributions in both inquiries. Deep gratitude goes to Brett and Belinda Beasley for their ongoing work. Their strength is truly amazing. Again, I express our sorrow for the pain and horror they, the Harris family and all families of murder victims have gone and go through.

Hence why I will continue fighting to make sure that the current review into victims' rights by the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee is appropriated the time needed to do the job properly and not relegated, as it has been, to a standard eight weeks. This is not doing justice in any way for victims or their families and it needs to be granted an extension.