




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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**SUMMARY OFFENCES (PREVENTION OF KNIFE CRIME) AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.48 pm): I too rise to contribute to the bill before the House. I congratulate the two new shadow ministers who have contributed to this bill—the member for Ninderry and, of course, the member for Currumbin; their contributions to the House have been huge—in relation to the problems that we Queenslanders face in relation to juvenile crime.

Once again we find ourselves in this House talking about the insidious problem of juvenile crime. I take members back nine years to when this government changed our strong laws. I heard the previous speaker trying to tell the House and whoever was listening to him that the government is tough on crime. What a load of bunkum. Everyone knows that this problem Queensland is facing stems from the first decision the Palaszczuk government made all those years ago. Now the new Premier, Premier Miles, has backed every single decision. In fact, one would say, given his Left nature, that he was happy to go further—further the wrong way.

I am pleased to note that we in the opposition are going to move two essential amendments to this legislation. I am talking about our amendments in relation to breach of bail and our amendments in relation to the Childrens Court. It is common sense. I will get to breach of bail in a moment. The amendments to the Childrens Court remove the provision that excludes victims and their families from the court on the basis of prejudice to offenders. That is what the Labor government brought in. It beggars belief. We know from evidence and from history that it is the Labor government that continually put the offenders before the victims—not on this side of the House. We will stand with the victims.

I will get to my electorate and the rest of Queensland in a moment, but I will say this: in Ipswich the crime rates are absolutely out of control. Along with every member who has spoken about this in this House, I send my heartfelt condolences to the family of Vyleen White. I do not think anyone disagrees that this senseless murder should never have happened. What began as a simple trip to the shops turned into a nightmare, particularly for her six-year-old granddaughter. The community of Ipswich is rightfully outraged—and it should be.

I have spent much time in Ipswich. As recently as late last week I spent some time with the LNP candidate for Ipswich West, Darren Zanow. What an incredible local champion, fighting for the people of Ipswich West on issues of crime. Those opposite can laugh and joke about it, but this is what Ipswich West needs. They need a hardworking local who is out there listening. They need someone who understands that assault in Ipswich has gone up 402 per cent since 2015. That is a national shame. Assault has gone up 402 per cent since 2015. That is why we need Darren Zanow, the LNP candidate for Ipswich West, in the seat of Ipswich West. The LNP candidate for Ipswich West, Darren Zanow, also knows that in Ipswich unlawful use of a motor vehicle has gone up 94 per cent. These are shameful figures.

Mr McDonald interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection: people are angry, they are scared and they want change. There is red-hot anger in the seat of Ipswich and in the seat of Ipswich West because they are living these figures—unlawful use of a motor vehicle is up 84 per cent; assault is up 402 per cent. Like I say, these figures are a national shame. I really congratulate Darren Zanow for putting his hand up to fight the good fight for the people of Ipswich West. He knows that it is only the LNP that has the right priorities for tackling the crime issues here in Queensland.

This government is not tough on crime. How embarrassing for that member to stand in this chamber and tell his local constituents that his government is tough on crime when their houses are being broken into, when their cars are being stolen, when their kids are waking up in the night with a knife held to their throat. That brings me to this bill.

I know that Brett and Belinda Beasley have headed home this afternoon, but they have just sent me another message with the lovely certificate they gave me. Thank you, Brett and Belinda. I know you are champions. You fight each and every day on behalf of Jack's legacy and his memory. It was less than 12 months ago that the passing of Jack's Law, which I note again was an LNP-led policy and finally years later adopted by the Labor government, introduced a trial to give police the power to use wand devices to search for weapons in safe night precincts and on public transport. In the seven months since that law came into effect we have had more than 3,400 scanning operations and 400 weapons have been seized.

I want to get to the nub of this bill, which is to ban controlled items including knives other than exempted knives, swords, machetes, axes including tomahawks, sickles, spear guns, spears and replica firearms. The member for Currumbin rightfully mentioned the impost on small and family businesses. Just to let my local Nanango retailers know, this impost does include kitchen knives and utility knives. It excludes plastic and wooden knives designed and used for eating, a knife with a rounded or dull edge such as a butter knife or a knife designed to be a cheese knife. Retailers will be required under this legislation to display signage advertising the legal prohibition against the sale of controlled items to minors as well as to securely store those controlled items.

The great electorate of Nanango takes in the Somerset region, so it borders the Ipswich policing region in terms of the figures I talked about. Let me give the House some statistics from just three towns at the South Burnett and Gympie end of my electorate—Kingaroy, Wondai and Murgon. Across those three towns, since 2015 unlawful use of a motor vehicle has increased 556 per cent. Let me say that again: if you live in the townships of Kingaroy, Wondai or Murgon, since Labor changed the laws—since they wound back our tough-on-crime laws—unlawful use of a motor vehicle has gone up 556 per cent. Yes, that includes all of the vehicles that are stolen in and around my street and taken for a joy ride and never returned or returned trashed. Unlawful entry is up 97 per cent since 2015. Assault in Kingaroy, Wondai and Murgon is up 81 per cent since 2015. Theft has increased 62 per cent.

In Murgon itself, we have gone from just two car thefts when we were last in government in 2015—just get your head around that: just two car thefts—to 44 car thefts last year, in 2023. That is 44 car thefts in one year! Car thefts have increased from two to 44—that is an increase of 2,100 per cent. Who is to blame? The Labor government is to blame. Premier Miles can try to walk it back all he likes, but at the end of the day it was Premier Miles who took all of the decisions along with former premier Palaszczuk. The buck stops with them.

Youth crime is out of control. There is only one side of this House that has the right priorities for Queensland, and that is the LNP. That is why I would call on every member of this House to consider and support the sensible amendments that will be brought before this House. Seriously think about it and support them. Do something about youth crime in this great state.

(Time expired)