




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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**POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL; CORRECTIVE SERVICES (PROMOTING SAFETY) AND
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (2.57 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the cognate debate. I want to specifically talk to the Corrective Services (Promoting Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 and especially the concerns that opposition members have with clause 32, which proposes to insert a new section 340AA. The intent of the bill is to ensure that there are absolute rules when it comes to the governing of information and the withholding information to prevent information from potentially being released through right to information. If you think about it, though, a lot of the individuals in incarceration centres are very dangerous people. If you have a situation where an inmate has reported the actions of another inmate who was coming up to their parole hearing and that person's parole was denied, we fear what would actually happen to that individual. Therefore, there need to be protections in that respect.

Therefore, the original intent of the bill is good. Changing it to a balanced test approach, or a privacy test, worries me because we need to think about the victims and the informants and make sure that prosecutions are not put in jeopardy. I say to the minister that this is crucially important. The amendments that the minister just put forward today watered down the intent of the department. I asked the department a question about this clause because there was quite a bit of toing and froing from the witnesses before the committee. The Bar Association of Queensland expressed their concerns about the public interest test versus an absolute law. The department's response was—

The provision as it is currently drafted is necessary as there is a higher threshold for non-disclosure of information on the basis of public interest. Therefore, public interest immunity may not protect the full scope of sensitive and confidential information captured by the provisions from disclosure. The provision is intended to ensure public confidence in the correctional system by protecting victim and intelligence information from being released through a clearer legislative provision. The provisions are also important in promoting the safety and wellbeing of victims and encouraging victims to disclose the information while knowing that it will be protected.

What would happen to an individual who decides to be an informant against another prisoner? If this information comes out, one would think that individual would be vulnerable because the prisoner could have the ability to seek revenge. It is important in the carriage of justice that this information is protected; this information cannot get into the hands of these individuals. These individuals are in jail for a reason, and we have to remember that. We also have to remember that, when you go to jail and are convicted of a crime, you will lose some of your rights. You will lose some of your human rights because you have taken the human rights away from another individual and that is why you are in jail.

It is important that the minister looks back at the original intent of the department to ensure that there are protections for victims and informants and that intelligence is not compromised. We need to ensure that the original intent is withheld. The amendment is watering it down. I again say to the minister that the original intent was good because it will protect the rights of victims, it will protect potential information and it will protect potential informants in the prison system itself.