




Speech By
Michael Berkman

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2024

MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL

Declared Urgent; Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (11.41 am): I simply cannot support an urgency motion on legislation of this significance. As one of the very recently appointed members of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee, I would be completely abrogating my responsibilities around meaningful scrutiny of legislation if I did not stand to oppose this urgency motion.

We have already heard stakeholders in the media this morning indicating how serious these changes are, how important they are and how important it is to get input and the right scrutiny from stakeholders who know how this will play out and who know what it looks like. We cannot overlook the fact that this bill proposes to again override the Human Rights Act. If I am not mistaken, this House has suspended the Human Rights Act on only two occasions. On both of those occasions it was for the purpose of locking up more kids.

A government member: Criminals. Locking up criminals.

Mr BERKMAN: Kids. The evidence is incredibly clear on this. The earlier kids are exposed to the youth justice system the more likely they are to reoffend and the more likely they are to reoffend more seriously in the future. These are the kinds of consequences we will see if this legislation—

Mrs GERBER: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. There is a bill before the House and I believe the member on his feet is debating the content of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Maiwar, in your last few sentences you have begun to stray into the substance of the bill. I would ask you to confine your comments to the question before us, which is about the declaration of urgency and the timeframe for consideration in committee.

Mr BERKMAN: Without adequate time for the committee to consider this legislation, these consequences will not be properly considered. The legislation will not be properly scrutinised. We will make mistakes. We will miss the important detail around how this is in fact the kind of legislation that will make our communities less safe in future. We cannot pretend that locking up kids is not going to harden them and leave communities less safe.

Dr ROWAN: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Maiwar is pre-empting debate and getting into the substance of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maiwar, that is a valid point of order. I ask you to be relevant to the motion before the House. I have warned you about that previously. I will give you the call again, but please speak to the motion before the House and not the substance of the bill.

Mr BERKMAN: The objections coming from government members lay bare just how little interest they have in meaningful scrutiny of this legislation. We cannot afford to let such significant legislation coast through with less than a week for submissions and less than a week for the committee that I am supposed to sit on to actually consider the detail of the legislation.

If the opposition wants to do its job in here, I would suggest that it is incumbent on it to oppose such an egregious abrogation of our obligations as parliamentarians, which are to scrutinise legislation and to ensure stakeholders and the community broadly have an opportunity to give input on it.