




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Mermaid Beach Electorate, Riding on Footpaths

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (9.57 pm): A modern-day problem on the footpaths throughout my electorate is the arrival and acceptance of motorised scooters, skateboards and electric bikes which facilitate fast and convenient travel for the younger generation yet pose a serious threat to regular walkers and older generation users of footpaths—which are called ‘foot’ paths for a very good reason. Many near-miss situations and even life-threatening collisions are symptomatic of people using excess speed on these transport vehicles with a devil-may-care attitude to get to their destination as fast as possible. A supposed 12 kilometres per hour speed limit is rarely adhered to and, as nobody is there to police that speed limit and there are no identifying licence plates or other means of detecting offenders, the current unlawful, dangerous and defiant behaviour by these riders is way out of control.

It is time to put the safety of walkers on footpaths back to the top priority of legislators and regulators, and only serious and punitive outcomes for abusers of the safety of walkers on footpaths will bring about a satisfactory desired outcome. The existence of ‘convenience’ bikes by major companies exploiting public footpaths and parks to satisfy a generational thirst for easy modal transport has added to the speed demon threat that walkers face and has also led to a bike-dumping mentality that surely counts as public littering.

We have plenty of people, including myself, who share footpaths with pushbikers who meander along at low speed and provide no threat to walkers whatsoever. It is the motorised conveyances that create the problem, and, human behaviour being what it is in many self-centred human beings, there is no regard for the safety of others as they hurtle along on carriageways that were not designed for them at speeds that defy logic and good principles, and where they threaten vulnerable young mums and dads pushing their babies in prams, oblivious to these kamikaze riders coming from behind.

If we are not prepared to ban motorised transport on footpaths or confiscate this mode of motorised transport from major offenders to address this growing problem in our communities, what is the answer? Countries around the world have already chosen to ban e-bikes for the safety of their walkers and to eradicate the visual pollution of dumped bikes all over our public areas. This issue needs to be addressed now as there is a growing usage of these speed chariots on our footpaths and an elderly person’s death is completely on the agenda if nothing is done.

It is impossible for police to be patrolling these numerous footpaths full-time for the troublemakers. However, if strong punitive measures become an official deterrent then word will travel very quickly in the user world and pedestrian safety could return to normal.