




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

E-Bike and E-Scooter Safety

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (10.39 pm): With the population in South-East Queensland increasing, ongoing difficulties in managing tourism numbers as well as the upcoming Olympics, it is imperative that we have the infrastructure, services and policies to deal with issues. One of the most urgent relates to e-bikes and e-scooters. This issue is filling our inboxes and is prevalent on social media and on the streets. Reports of dangerous riding, including children weaving between traffic, and statistics on the volume of accidents on our footpaths involving riders and pedestrians alike are growing.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons reported that data from 20 emergency departments across Queensland shows there are around 100 emergency department presentations from e-scooter injuries each month. Governments do not appear to track statistics on e-bike and e-scooter deaths on our roads and pathways, and we could not find anything on the TMR website or the Australian Road Deaths Database. However, when you google, you will tragically find a fatal e-scooter death in Townsville; one in Bundaberg, who was 14 years old; and another in Highgate Hill—all in this year alone.

Australian design rules are meant to limit the speed and power of e-bikes, but who checks the design rules are met? Who checks the batteries are under 200 watts? Who is monitoring the shops and eBay sellers? Who is educating riders and parents on what is legal and what is not? With ineffective design rules, police are unable to enforce the new laws introduced, but, in reality, what can they do? Chase them through the traffic?

Jurisdictions across Australia and the world are utilising various ways to prevent injuries and deaths, and we need to quickly determine what Queensland will do. Some states ban them from footpaths and others categorise varieties of them as motorbikes because, literally, that is what they have become, requiring both licensing and registration. Other states have age constraints and some ban them all together from footpaths and roads.

None of us want a nanny state but the reality is that we have to make provision here. Given that e-bikes and e-scooters were very much part of the modal shift to reduce car use and congestion, which is a very good thing, it is understandable that Transport and Main Roads have acknowledged the need for separate, dedicated lanes. That sounds wonderful, but the reality is that for many communities this has not been possible. A lack of funding and urgency, as well as a lack of space to accommodate those lanes, has left us again being reactive instead of proactive. We do not have much time. The question is: what will governments commit to now, including how much will be available for the infrastructure required for communities already impacted, and when will this be made available?