




Speech By
Adam Baillie

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 10 June 2025

POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MAKING JACK'S LAW PERMANENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; CORRECTIVE SERVICES (PAROLE BOARD) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BAILLIE** (Townsville—LNP) (8.40 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack's Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 and the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025. These bills are being debated in cognate. The Crisafulli government committed to making our community safer and is a government that does what it says it would do. Behind every crime is a victim, and for too long victims have not been put first. We are changing that. Making Jack's Law permanent will enable police to use handheld metal detectors in high-risk locations without a warrant.

This legislation is named in honour of Brett and Belinda Beasley's late son Jack, who was tragically killed at the age of 17 in December 2019 during a night out with friends in Surfers Paradise. I would like to take a moment to recognise Brett and Belinda. They have shown remarkable courage and resilience in the face of unimaginable tragedy. After losing their son to a fatal stabbing, they channelled their grief into action and founded the Jack Beasley Foundation to educate young people about the dangers of knife crime and advocate for stronger safety measures. Their dedication to preventing youth violence has led to impactful education programs aimed at making communities safer. Through their unwavering commitment they have transformed personal loss into a powerful movement for change, ensuring that Jack's legacy helps protect others from similar harm. I sincerely commend them for all of their efforts.

Jack's Law, named in honour of Brett and Belinda's son, grants police additional powers to detect and remove dangerous weapons, particularly in areas frequented by young people. After a successful trial in 2021 in the safe night precincts of Broadbeach and Surfers Paradise, the former government extended the trial, but in April 2023 Labor introduced a complex and onerous system that made the job of police far more difficult—in effect, dissuading them from cracking down on knife crime. The reforms introduced various considerations that needed to be made prior to commencing a wandering operation. In effect, they were regulatory roadblocks. It was a continuation of the soft-on-crime approach we saw from the previous Labor government that resulted in the youth crime crisis and the public intoxication and urination laws, which I mentioned earlier today.

Despite the cumbersome changes implemented by Labor, the results speak for themselves. Between April 2023 and May 2025, 1,124 weapons were seized with 115,334 persons wanded by senior police officers. That is 1,124 times a weapon was confiscated and potentially another tragic death prevented. Over 3,000 people were charged as a result of operations. Of concern, statistics have shown that the number of offences involving knives in a public place which is not defined as a 'relevant place' have only increased. The changes included in this bill will make our community safer, and we aim to ease the burden on our frontline police officers by ensuring processes are efficient to help them get on with the job.

We have many ex-police officers on this side of the House: the member for Nicklin, who is also on the committee that reviewed this bill fulsomely; the member for Mackay, who spoke previously; the members for Mundingburra and Lockyer, whom I am fortunate enough to sit next to in this place; the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines from the Burdekin; and the police minister, who was a detective. They have all served. My colleagues will tell you, based on firsthand experience, how stretched our frontline officers are. From speaking with current frontline officers, we know there are inefficient procedures and administrative arrangements that do not advance the fight against knife crime; if anything, they prevent the cops from doing their jobs.

Within this bill there are a number of amendments that will ease the administrative burden. Making Jack's Law permanent will place the rights of the victims over the rights of offenders and build on our commitment to restore community safety. It is another step we are taking to make our communities safer. In addition to the Making Queensland Safer Laws, the bolstering of our Police Service with more boots on the ground and making Jack's Law permanent will provide our police with more of the tools they need to get the job done. Most importantly, it will save lives.

I would also like to speak to an issue that sits at the core of our justice system—community safety and the vital role of the Parole Board Queensland. We know that parole is not a privilege or an entitlement; rather, it is an essential mechanism designed to prevent reoffending and contribute positively to the safety and security of our communities. It is a system built on oversight and accountability. Today, with the introduction of the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025, we seek to strengthen that oversight and ensure decisions made by the board align with our unwavering commitment to public safety.

Currently, the Parole Board Queensland has sole responsibility for all board ordered parole decisions. When a prisoner is released on parole they are closely supervised by Queensland Corrective Services community corrections officers. However, if that prisoner fails to comply with their parole conditions, or presents an unacceptable risk to the community, the QCS chief executive may request that their parole be suspended. This decision can be made swiftly either by the board itself or by a prescribed board member.

In cases where parole is suspended the board is required to convene within two business days to confirm, cancel or overturn this decision. However, there is a critical gap in our legislation. When a prescribed board member chooses not to suspend parole, allowing a prisoner to remain in the community, the current Corrective Services Act 2006 does not require the board to review that decision. That means that, under the current law, a request for urgent suspension can be rejected without further scrutiny, leaving open the possibility that a decision to keep a prisoner in the community may not have received adequate oversight.

This bill seeks to rectify that gap. The Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025 will mandate that the Parole Board Queensland must review all decisions made by prescribed board members following a request for immediate suspension from QCS whether parole is suspended or not. This essential safeguard will ensure consistency, accountability and, most importantly, community safety. By ensuring every decision is subject to review we uphold the principle that public safety is paramount in our justice system.

This is about protecting Queenslanders. This is about ensuring public trust in our parole system. This is about reinforcing accountability for decisions that impact our communities. Both of these bills deliver on our commitment to make our community safer. I commend these bills to the House.