




Speech By
Adam Baillie

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND PUBLIC CHILD SEX OFFENDER REGISTER (DANIEL'S LAW) BILL

Second Reading

 **Mr BAILLIE** (Townsville—LNP) (7.54 pm): Tonight I rise in strong support of the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025. This bill puts the safety of Queensland's children first. At the outset, like many of my parliamentary colleagues, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to two extraordinary Queenslanders, Bruce and Denise Morcombe. In the face of every parent's worst nightmare, they have shown courage, strength and purpose and, in the process, have inspired an entire nation. When they lost their beloved son Daniel, they could have stepped back from the world and hidden away. Instead, they stepped forward. They made a promise that Daniel's story would never be forgotten and that no other family would endure the pain that they have carried. They have kept that promise through tireless advocacy, through education and through sheer determination to make Queensland a safer place for every child.

Through the Daniel Morcombe Foundation, Bruce and Denise have reached thousands of schools and countless children, teaching them to recognise, react and report. Earlier this year it was fantastic to host Bruce and Denise for the Dance for Daniel where we really saw the Townsville community spirit as people got behind their cause. There were over 400 attendees at the Ville and I note that the event sold out in 17 days. In Townsville, support for their cause is well and truly evident.

The Morcombes have worked hand in hand with police, governments and communities. Their efforts have led to real change with better education, more vigilant communities and, with this bill, there will be new laws. They have turned tragedy into hope and heartbreak into a legacy of protection and awareness that will endure for generations. On behalf of the people of Townsville and all Queensland families, I say thank you. Thank you for your strength, thank you for your advocacy and thank you for your love for Daniel. Your tireless efforts over the past 20 years have changed lives and will continue to protect children for many years to come.

The Crisafulli government was elected on a platform to make our communities safer. If people put aside the additional resources for police, such as more boots on the ground and an extra police helicopter in Townsville, and they just look at some of the legislative changes and measures that we have taken over the past year then they will see that we are working hard to deliver on that commitment. We have introduced the Making Queensland Safer Laws and Adult Crime, Adult Time is being applied to 33 offences, restoring consequences for actions and putting the rights of victims ahead of the offenders. We have expanded Jack's Law and made it permanent, removing dangerous weapons from our streets. We have made changes to domestic violence legislation to enable protection for victims sooner. With this bill, we are putting the rights of parents and families ahead of sexual predators.

Topics such as domestic violence and child sex offending are difficult to talk about. They are topics that we often do not want to talk about in the public space. They are things that happen in our society, whether we want them to or not. It is important that we do talk about them in this place and

recognise that they do occur and how they occur and take measures to try to prevent them from occurring in the future. As a parent myself, I know—and I think every parent knows—that nothing matters more than keeping your children safe. Whether you are a parent in Townsville, Magnetic Island, Palm Island or anywhere in Queensland, for that matter, the fear of something happening to your child is universal.

Daniel's Law is about making sure that every parent, guardian and caregiver has access to information to make informed decisions about who their children are spending time with and to be informed about the risks that might exist in their neighbourhood. Under Daniel's Law, Queensland will establish a three-tier public child sex offender register. It is the first of its kind in our state. It is not the first of its kind across the nation. It is largely based on the Western Australian model. For our state, that is a big step forward.

It is a practical, commonsense tool. It gives families access to the right information without comprising investigations or putting anyone at unnecessary risk. Tier 1 will publish details of missing noncompliant offenders—those who have breached their obligations and whose whereabouts are currently unknown. As a result, those offenders represent the highest risk to the community. In addition to a photograph, those offenders may have their name and year of birth published on a website because the community deserves to know if someone dangerous is on the run. Tier 1 information will be available to all members of the public to keep the community informed. An offender's details will be removed from that publication when the reportable offender is located or when the offender reports their current whereabouts to police. As a result, they will be taken off that tier.

Tier 2 will allow residents to conduct a locality search. If a family wants to know if a repeat offender or lifelong offender lives in the area, they can make that request. Facial images of repeat offenders or those with lengthy reporting obligations will be released for a particular suburb or area if the applicant provides valid proof of identification and resides in the same suburb or area within which the request is lodged. If someone wants to buy a new house and they want to do a pre search, that is not allowable. People cannot share information about their suburb with others. It is a safety measure that is in place if people are concerned about the suburb in which they live.

Tier 3 will allow parents or guardians to check a specific person who has or will have unsupervised contact with their child, whether that is through sport, school or family circles. As with tier 2, tier 3 applications will require the applicant to provide personal details of themselves and their children as well as sufficient information to identify the person they are inquiring about. It is important to note that any information accessed or received through the public register must be treated as confidential. I did touch on that earlier. This means that recipients cannot share search results with others. There are clear exclusions. It will be a serious criminal offence to misuse or share this information improperly. For example, anyone who intimidates, harasses or incites violence against someone they believe to be an offender faces up to 10 years in jail. This ensures the register is used responsibly and to protect children.

We know that the reality is that this register will not, in isolation, keep our children safe. It is a shared responsibility held by parents, families, community groups, coaches, churches, neighbours and so many more. This bill provides one more tool to help keep our children safe.

Queenslanders want to know that offenders are being monitored and that the system is working for victims, not the people who hurt them. By making this information available we are demonstrating we trust parents, we trust the community and we will always put children first. Daniel's Law is about protecting the most vulnerable in our community—our children. It is about empowering parents and guardians to make informed choices.

Every Queensland child deserves to grow up safe—safe at home, safe at school, safe online and safe in their community. This bill helps make that a reality. I am very proud to be part of a government that is taking these important steps to keep our community safe and keep our next generation safe. As such, I commend this bill to the House.