




Speech By
Ariana Doolan

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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

 **Miss DOOLAN** (Pumicestone—LNP) (5.27 pm): I rise today to speak to the cognate debate on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack's Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 and the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill. I will begin by speaking on the subject matter relating to the corrective services amendment bill 2025. This bill represents a set of sensible and necessary changes that will strengthen the effectiveness, integrity and responsiveness of Queensland's correctional system and, importantly, enhance public safety.

The people of Pumicestone, like many Queenslanders, expect our justice system to be firm but fair. They want to know that those who pose a serious risk to the community are being properly managed and that there are clear consequences for breaching the trust placed in them through parole or community-based orders. This bill introduces key amendments to support those expectations.

One important change is that the bill gives the chief executive of Queensland Corrective Services the ability to swiftly suspend a parole order if a person poses an immediate and serious risk to public safety. This change will mean faster action to protect the community, especially in urgent situations, and more consistency in how much risks are managed. Critically, this power is not unchecked. The legislation includes safeguards to ensure that decisions are subject to oversight by Parole Board Queensland. This is a practical balance—one that prioritises public protection while still maintaining due process.

A further vital reform in this bill is the correction of a longstanding legislative gap in parole suspension decisions. Under the current law, if a prescribed board member of the Parole Board decides to suspend a parolee and return them to custody, a full board review must take place within two business days to confirm or reverse the decision. However, if a single board member does not suspend a parolee, keeping them in the community, there is currently no requirement for that decision to be reviewed. This creates an imbalance where the community is not afforded the same level of protection or oversight as the parolee. This bill corrects that imbalance. It ensures that when Queensland Corrective Services requests a suspension due to an individual's behaviour—behaviour indicating they may no longer be safely managed in the community—all decisions, including those to leave the parolee in the community, must be reviewed by the full Parole Board. This is about putting community safety and victims' rights first.

As the President of the Parole Board, Michael Woodford, has clearly stated, this bill 'corrects a substantial gap that has existed in the parole suspension framework for some time'. He acknowledged it was a legislative oversight and emphasised the importance of rectifying it. We are acting on that advice. This bill also retrospectively validates prior decisions made by the full board where parolees were returned to custody after initial decisions by single board members to leave them in the community. This ensures those important community safety decisions remain legally sound and enforceable.

Another commendable aspect of this bill is its focus on improved information sharing. One of the great challenges in managing risk is making sure the right people have the right information at the right time. These amendments will allow for more effective collaboration between corrective services, police, child safety and health services. This will be particularly important in managing individuals with complex needs such as those with mental health issues or those subject to child protection concerns. As someone who proudly represents the Pumicestone electorate—a region with growing families and a strong sense of community—I know how important it is that our systems work together to keep people safe. Whether it is in Caboolture, Bribie Island, Ningi or Sandstone Point, people want confidence that our laws are being enforced consistently and that risk is being managed proactively, not reactively.

This bill also makes improvements to how community corrections are administered. These changes will clarify the powers available to staff and help ensure that breaches of conditions are dealt with appropriately. Community-based supervision is only effective when there are clear boundaries and reliable enforcement. That is what this bill delivers. It also modernises outdated provisions, improves alignment with other Queensland statutes and increases public transparency around policy and performance. These might seem like technical adjustments, but they speak to good governance and a commitment to continuous improvement in public administration.

What this bill does not do is overreach. It is not about a big headline; it is about fixing what needs to be fixed based on frontline feedback and operational experience. That is good legislative housekeeping and it is what my constituents expect us to do in this place. I also want to acknowledge the contributions of key stakeholders in shaping this bill, from frontline corrective services officers to the Queensland Human Rights Commission and from the Parole Board to Commissioner Paul Stewart, who has rightly noted that QCS ‘does not ask the board to suspend a parole order for trivial matters’. These are real, tangible risks being addressed. This is a bill that supports public safety, respects individual rights and provides the tools our correctional services officers need to do their jobs effectively. It aligns with our LNP government values—responsible governance, accountability and the protections of individual and community freedoms.

In terms of the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack’s Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, this bill delivers on a core promise of the Crisafulli government to make Queensland safer. It gives police the powers they need to get dangerous weapons off our streets and protect our communities. This legislation honours the life of Jack Beasley, a 17-year-old whose life was cut short in a senseless knife attack on the Gold Coast in 2019. Jack’s tragic death devastated his family, but their courage in creating the Jack Beasley Foundation has driven real, lasting change. Jack’s Law was trialled successfully in 2021, but under the former Labor government it was burdened with complex red tape. Officers needed to satisfy evidentiary tests, make predictions about future crime and navigate layers of approval before they could use basic handheld scanners. Despite that, between 2023 and 2025 more than 1,100 weapons were seized, over 115,000 people were scanned and 3,000 were charged. That is thousands of potential tragedies prevented.

While safe night precincts were covered, knife offences in other public spaces continued to rise. This bill fixes that. It makes Jack’s Law permanent. It removes unnecessary barriers, allowing officers to act quickly in declared areas. It expands powers to all public places like parks, beaches and events with appropriate authorisation from senior officers. It simplifies reporting requirements, cuts red tape and provides nation-leading wandering powers, all while preserving civil liberties. Scanning must remain random, body worn cameras must be used and officers must be properly trained before exercising these powers. This bill reflects the feedback of those who use it every day—our police officers. It is supported by frontline personnel, police unions, local governments and, most importantly, the Beasley family.

Let us also be clear: Labor’s last-minute proposal to ban machetes is nothing more than a political stunt. Queensland already has strong laws prohibiting the possession and sale of knives, including machetes, and with this bill we will have the tools to detect and remove them from all public areas. Labor’s policy would penalise legitimate agricultural workers and regional Queenslanders without improving community safety. If it was such a good idea, then why did those opposite not do it when they were in government?

This bill gives police what they have asked for. It empowers them to act, prevents knife crime before it happens and delivers on our commitment to community safety. To the Beasley family, thank you for turning tragedy into change. This law is Jack’s legacy. Every weapon taken off our streets is a potential life saved. On behalf of the people of Pumicestone, I am pleased to support both bills and I commend them to the House.