



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE


Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2025

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

Second Reading

Resumed from 28 October (see p. 3377), on motion of Mr Purdie—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Dr O'SHEA** (South Brisbane—ALP) (3.43 pm), continuing: As I was saying yesterday, the register will be administered by the Queensland police and will allow for the release of personal details of certain reportable offenders in three distinct tiers. Tier 1 information will be available on a public website and will provide details of reportable offenders who have gone missing. This will include their photographs as well as the details of any vehicles associated with them. Tier 2 allows Queensland residents to apply to temporarily view photographs of certain reportable offenders who reside in their local area. Tier 3 enables parents or guardians to inquire about whether a specified person is a reportable offender if the specified person has had or will have any unsupervised contact with their child.

The committee heard from numerous stakeholders during their inquiry into this bill. Bruce and Denise Morcombe consider that Daniel's Law strikes the right balance between the rights of children and the rights of offenders, stating they felt it was measured in its approach, provided parents with the tools to improve the safety of their children and acted as a deterrent to future offending. The Principal Commissioner of the Queensland Family and Child Commission, Mr Luke Twyford, was also supportive of the bill, stating—

... the protection of children from harm must be the paramount consideration in all decision-making. While adult privacy and reputational rights are important, they cannot outweigh the obligation to ensure that children are safe. The harms caused to a child by sexual abuse can be lifelong, irreversible and often intergenerational.

During the committee process, some stakeholders raised issues with certain aspects of the bill. The Queensland Council for Civil Liberties, the Sexual Violence Research and Prevention Unit, Legal Aid Queensland and the Queensland Law Society raised concerns that the public register may create a false sense of security for carers. Many other organisations echoed this concern and highlighted the need for community awareness in relation to the limitations of the register. The importance of raising this awareness was underlined by the advice provided by police during the committee process that less than 25 per cent of reportable child sex offenders would be included in the local area search under tier 2.

Stakeholders also called for community education about the nature of child sex offending, that most child sex abuse offenders are people known to the child and not necessarily known to authorities and will not be captured under the public register. It must be stressed that the register is just one part of what has to be a holistic approach to keeping children safe. Other issues raised related to: ensuring

the Queensland Police Service was adequately resourced to administer the register; the uncertainty about when the system will be built and when it will be operational; and the fact that any automation of processes should be carefully set up and monitored to avoid mistakes.

Concerns were also raised that the scheme will not be reviewed until after five years of operation, with the Crime and Corruption Commission recommending a 12-month interim evaluation. The opposition asks the government to consider additional, earlier and ongoing reviews to ensure the system is operating as intended and to address any unintended consequences, particularly in relation to the impact on victims.

I note that during the committee hearing Denise Morcombe expressed her hope that the register will one day operate nationally, and the committee commented that it strongly supports the introduction of a consistent national framework. I ask the government to work with other premiers and police ministers, as well as the federal government, to develop a national register to keep children safe.

To finish, I would like to mention the Daniel Morcombe Foundation's documentary *Don't Waste It*. It is a very moving tribute to Daniel and an important educational resource to help our young teenagers stay safe. The documentary shows that what the Morcombe family have managed to achieve in the past 20 years is really remarkable, turning a devastating, life-changing tragedy into something positive by fighting to keep kids safe in Australia and around the world. As was stated in *Don't Waste It*, the astounding work of the Daniel Morcombe Foundation in keeping children safe is Daniel's legacy.