




Speech By  
**Bisma Asif**

**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

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

 **Ms ASIF** (Sandgate—ALP) (3.56 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the cognate bills—the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack's Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill. In contributing to the debate on making Jack's Law permanent, I would like to acknowledge the devastating loss that underpins the legislation: the tragic death of Jack Beasley. In 2019, 17-year-old Jack Beasley was enjoying a night out with his friends when his life was brutally cut short in a random attack—a senseless act of violence. This devastating incident shook not only his parents, Brett and Belinda Beasley, but it has also had a lasting impact on Queensland. I would like to acknowledge Brett and Belinda Beasley who are in the gallery. They have responded to their profound loss by founding the Jack Beasley Foundation and championing legislative changes to prevent other families from facing the same heartbreak. This tragic incident and their advocacy has led to changes made by the former Labor government to implement new police powers which would detect knives and keep our communities safe. The Labor government listened and acted to keep Queenslanders safe.

Jack's Law represents a careful, considered, evidence-based approach to tackling knife crime. The legislation allows police officers to use handheld metal detectors in places where Queenslanders should feel safe and young Queenslanders like Jack should be able to enjoy themselves without fear. Since Jack's Law was introduced by the former government, police have taken more than 1,000 weapons off our streets across Queensland, with over 100,000 wandering operations conducted. Every weapon removed is a potential life saved, a tragedy that has been prevented and a family that has been spared heartbreak. I would like to acknowledge the former police minister, the member for Morayfield, for his significant work in this space.

We understand and support the need for police to have the appropriate tools to respond to serious threats, which is why the Labor opposition will move amendments to ban the sale of machetes across Queensland unless you have a permit. Just last month there were two machete related incidents—one where a 20-year-old roamed free with a machete in the streets of Scarborough and another in Rockhampton where a machete was used for an armed robbery in broad daylight. Banning the sale of machetes is a sensible amendment that will keep Queenslanders safe.

**Mr PURDIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order in relation to relevance, on the back of the Speaker's ruling earlier.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): I will seek some advice. Thank you, Minister, for your point of order. Member for Sandgate, the point of order has validity, particularly in light of the Speaker's ruling earlier today. I ask you to come back to the bill before the House, please.

**Ms ASIF:** Thank you, I will. The direct relevance to the bill being debated is that, as far as I know, a machete is a form of knife and, multiple times in his second reading speech, the minister made reference to machetes. I will move on. If the government does truly want to keep Queenslanders safe, which the government says they do, they would support these amendments.

The Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025 aims to clarify and affirm specific decision powers regarding the board's ability to review decisions that are made by individual prescribed board members in all circumstances. It also intends to retrospectively verify decisions made following the board's review of a decision from individual members. We support a strong and effective parole system—a system that protects the community, upholds the rights of victims and ensures fair and timely decisions that support rehabilitation and the reduction of reoffending.

Firstly, I acknowledge and thank the organisations that took the time to engage with the parliamentary committee process and provide written submissions. I thank the Justice Reform Initiative, the Prisoners' Legal Service and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service. As a member of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee, I acknowledge the enormous benefit we gained from the insights of those working at the coalface of the justice system, from legal advocates to corrections staff, victims support organisations and community representatives. Their evidence is a clear reminder of the real-world impact the decisions we make in this place have outside.

Submissions provided to the committee noted that, while procedural efficiencies are welcome, the bill does not address the core issue of resourcing, especially around staffing and systems support. Concerns were raised about the potential for the bill to increase parole suspensions or worsen prison overcrowding. In fact, some submitters warned that expanding the board's powers without adequate investment in rehabilitation services and community reintegration support may simply shift problems downstream. Victim advocates also made compelling submissions. They reminded the committee that parole decisions are not just administrative processes; they are deeply human ones and must be accompanied by consistent and respectful communication with victims and their families. These are thoughtful, constructive contributions and they should not be brushed aside. They reflect a genuine desire to strengthen our parole system without compromising fairness, transparency or community trust.

However, I would like to know why these clarifications required a standalone piece of legislation, particularly when a broader community safety bill was already before the House. These amendments could have been easily incorporated in the Making Queensland Safer Bill, which has been through this place multiple times I might add. It seems as if those opposite have not quite finished reading the 'how to govern effectively 101 manual'. Frankly, this raises serious questions about the government's ability, their legislative agenda and whether the bill is more about political optics than genuine reform.

Victims must be at the front and centre of these legislative changes. Too often, victims of crime are forced to re-engage with the trauma of the original offence when parole decisions are delayed, inconsistent or poorly communicated. We support the rights of victims to participate meaningfully and safely in the parole process and believe this is a critical area where investment could make the most difference. Improved communication, better notification processes and dedicated support services are essential, yet once again this bill is silent on all of those fronts. We know that parole works best when it is combined with genuine efforts to address the causes of offending—housing, mental health, addiction treatment and employment pathways—yet there is little in the bill that addresses those, or the government's broader agenda I might add, that indicates a willingness to invest in any of those supports.

The bill also introduces new operational powers but no obligations for public reporting or review. There is no additional transparency requirements and no independent evaluation mechanism. There is no requirement to report back to parliament on how these important powers are going to be exercised or whether or not the changes are working. The public has a right to know how parole systems are being managed, particularly when those decisions affect our community's safety.

I acknowledge the hard work of those in our corrective service system, Parole Board members, corrections staff, psychologists, rehabilitation workers and victim support officers who turn up every day, often to face incredible challenges in their work and they do so with great professionalism and care. They deserve our thanks but they also deserve to work in a system that is properly funded, fairly governed and publicly accountable.

Before I conclude, I take a moment to acknowledge and thank our local Sandgate police officers for their work in keeping our community safe. Last week, I had a regular meeting with the Sandgate police who took the time to brief me on community safety matters affecting our area. Their dedication and commitment to protecting our Sandgate community is commendable. Behind every policy decision and every piece of legislation are real people. While the Labor opposition supports efforts to improve the operation of the Parole Board, we also want to see proper scrutiny, transparency and long-term

thinking, which this government seems to lack. We will continue to fight for a system that is fair, independent and effective and one that puts victims first and serves the safety of all Queenslanders. Justice must never be about convenience or headlines; it must be about fairness, integrity and the long-term interests of our community.