




Speech By
Hon. Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

Record of Proceedings, 28 October 2025

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

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (11.12 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025 progresses important legislative amendments to the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004. The amendments in the bill introduce a new framework—the first of its kind in Queensland. It will be known as Daniel's Law in honour of Daniel Morcombe, the 13-year-old boy with unforgettable blue eyes who was abducted and murdered by a twice convicted paedophile on the Sunshine Coast in December 2003. Daniel was on his way to buy Christmas presents for his family when he was snatched. It took eight years and an undercover police investigation to bring him home. His family never gave up. Their courage, determination and dedication drove change.

This bill delivers on the Crisafulli government's election commitment and fulfils a promise to Bruce and Denise Morcombe to establish Queensland's first ever public child sex offender register. Daniel's Law will establish the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register in Queensland to make information more accessible to the community and allow parents, guardians and those exercising parental responsibility to access information to make informed decisions about who has, or will have, contact with their child. The bill is part of our plan to restore safety where you live by putting the rights of children and parents before the rights of sexual predators.

The bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly on 27 August 2025 and referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee. On 17 October 2025, the committee tabled its report on its examination of the bill. The committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I thank the committee for its support of the bill. It is acknowledged that a significant amount of work goes into examining legislation, and I sincerely thank the committee for their diligent and timely work.

I would also like to acknowledge and express my appreciation to the organisations, stakeholders and government representatives that provided submissions and appeared before the committee to provide valuable input on the bill. In particular, I thank Bruce and Denise Morcombe for their appearance and insights at the committee. I thank Bruce and Denise Morcombe for more than two decades of advocacy through the Daniel Morcombe Foundation. Their important work has built strong foundations to keep children safe from harm and abuse through advocacy and education.

Daniel's Law will ensure a lasting legacy, centred on transparency and accountability, that promotes safety and awareness. Daniel's Law is about keeping children safe. Be assured, those who commit heinous and horrible crimes will no longer be allowed to hide. The community will be armed with information to take proactive, preventive action. The Queensland government is committed to ensuring that those who commit offences against children cannot hide behind the current lack of publicly accessible information.

The objectives of the bill are clear. Firstly, the bill will increase general community awareness and vigilance by making particular information about certain reportable offenders more accessible to the public. The public register will give parents, guardians and other persons who care for a child access to information that may allow them to act at an individual level to keep children safe. Furthermore, the bill has been designed to guard against misuse of offender information by introducing offences targeted at conduct intended to, or likely to, incite others to intimidate or harass another person they believe, or suspect, is an identified offender, as well as against the unauthorised sharing of information accessed or obtained through the public register.

The bill builds on the existing non-public register and existing information-sharing mechanisms. The public register will supplement the existing disclosure powers by allowing members of the public to proactively seek information about current reportable offenders. While recognising that any risk to the lives or sexual safety of children is unacceptable, and that everything must be done to safeguard children against these risks, the Crisafulli government also acknowledges that the public release of information about certain offenders must be undertaken in a measured way.

The bill is modelled on the limited public notification scheme operating in Western Australia and follows the passage of similar laws in South Australia. The bill has been crafted to ensure that it is fit for purpose in Queensland, taking into consideration multiple factors, including our diverse demographic. The commitment expressed through this bill ensures Queensland is brought in line with Western Australia and South Australia, in increasing public access to information to help keep Queensland children safe.

I turn now to the three tiers of the public register. Tier 1 is the missing noncompliant offender website. Under tier 1, the Police Commissioner may publish particular personal details, including photographs, of reportable offenders who have failed to comply with any of their reporting obligations or who have failed to comply with a requirement of a supervision order under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003 and whose whereabouts are unknown to the police. The bill's objective of increasing community awareness and vigilance is achieved through tier 1 of the public register. All members of the community will be able to access the website where the information under tier 1 will be published. Reportable offenders who breach their strict reporting obligations pose a significant risk to the community.

In addition to a photograph of the reportable offender, information published will also include a reportable offender's name and year of birth and a unique Queensland Police Service identifier. The Police Commissioner may decide to publish additional personal details about an offender, such as descriptions of visible distinctive tattoos, if considered necessary. This approach ensures that only the information considered necessary to keep the community informed is published. This information is not intended to employ the assistance of the public in locating these offenders, as police will remain diligent in their search and investigations; however, Policelink contact details will appear on this page. In the event members of the public wish to report information to police, they may reference the unique police identifier listed against the particular reportable offender.

All people who access the public register will have access to protective safety information to enhance public awareness and be required to acknowledge the limitations inherent in the public register before information is able to be accessed. The bill requires that a reportable offender's personal details must be removed from publication as soon as practicable once located by police. The introduction of tier 1 may also serve as an incentive for offenders to comply with their reporting obligations to avoid or promptly end their details being published.

Tier 2 is a locality search function. Under tier 2, Queensland residents will be able to request images of particular reportable offenders residing in their locality. Upon application, photographs will be available for inspection by the person in a secure way designed to be accessible only by the person who made the request. Tier 2 is limited to reportable offenders who pose the greatest risk of reoffending against children and includes:

- a reportable offender who commits a further reportable offence against a child, listed in schedule 1 of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004 after receiving notice of their reporting obligations—in simple terms, that is a reportable offender who is a repeat offender;
- a reportable offender whose reporting obligations are imposed for the remainder of the offender's life; and
- a reportable offender who is subject to a supervision order made under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003.

The bill also ensures that where police identify or receive information that a reportable offender demonstrates a serious risk to the life or sexual safety of a child or children generally the Police Commissioner is empowered to include their photograph in a tier 2 request made by a person within their locality. The bill defines 'locality' as the general locality where the person resides, which will usually be the applicant's suburb or town. The definition accounts for Queensland's vast geography and diverse population contexts, acknowledging there may be circumstances requiring a different approach that encapsulates adjoining suburbs or towns to the person's residential address.

A person must provide valid government issued ID such as a Queensland driver's licence to confirm their identity and residential address. This means that a person cannot, for example, request images of offenders residing in any area to which the person may be intending to relocate. Photographs of reportable offenders will be provided in a controlled manner for the purposes of enhancing public awareness and safety. This targeted approach has been purposefully taken, striking an appropriate balance of community safety and the protection of children.

The bill provides the Police Commissioner with discretionary powers to determine whether to publish, provide or remove information about reportable offenders who are subject to tier 1 and 2 of the public register. To guide decision-making, the Police Commissioner may have regard to various matters including:

- the effect that publication, removal or provision of the identifying information might have on a victim of an offence committed by the offender;
- whether the publication, removal or provision of the identifying information would be likely to prejudice a criminal proceeding in relation to the offender or an investigation by a law enforcement agency in relation to a contravention or possible contravention of a law by the offender;
- whether the publication, removal or provision of the identifying information is in the public interest and consistent with the purposes of the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004; and
- any other matter the Police Commissioner considers relevant.

Providing the Police Commissioner with discretionary powers regarding the publication, provision and removal of information ensures that a flexible approach can be taken with respect to individual cases, acknowledging that a range of persons may be impacted.

Tier 3 is the parent and guardian disclosure scheme. Under tier 3, parents, guardians and people with ongoing parental responsibility for a child will be able to apply for confirmation about whether a particular person who has had or will have unsupervised contact with their child is a reportable offender. The bill defines 'unsupervised contact' and includes physical contact and contact that occurs by electronic communication with a child without the presence of another adult.

The bill stipulates that an application under tier 3 must be made in a way approved by the Police Commissioner and must be accompanied by any documents or information as required by the Police Commissioner. If an application is approved, the Police Commissioner will have discretion to confirm whether the person is a current reportable offender or subject to a supervision order through a 'yes' or 'no' response. No further information about the offender or their offending will be disclosed.

It is important to note that the public register will sit alongside necessary tools available to parents, guardians and other people with ongoing parental responsibility to keep children safe from sexual harm. Even when a 'no' response is provided under a tier 3 application, applicants will still receive information that promotes the use of proactive protective behaviours to keep children safe.

I will now address the stringent safeguards and offence provisions contained within the bill. The bill excludes certain offenders from the public register. As mentioned, the bill aims to strike an appropriate balance of community safety and the protection of children. The public register will not enable the disclosure, publication or provision of information about child reportable offenders, other certain reportable offenders who committed offences as a child, offenders who are participants in a witness protection program, or offenders where a court has prohibited the identification or disclosure of their personal information.

I cannot stress highly enough that vigilantism will not be tolerated. The bill is focused on empowering Queenslanders to better protect children, with trust placed in the community to do the right thing and not engage in vigilante behaviour. Careful consideration has been given to this issue, with the bill containing three new offences prohibiting misuse of information accessed or obtained from the public register. Each of these offences carries a significant penalty.

It will be an offence, punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment, for a person who, by a public act, engages in conduct by which the person intends to intimidate or harass another person they believe or suspect is an identified offender or incites other persons to intimidate or harass another person they believe or suspect is an identified offender. If such conduct is not done intentionally but the result of the conduct is likely to intimidate or harass, the maximum penalty will be three years imprisonment.

It will also be an offence for a person to, without the approval of the Police Commissioner, display, distribute or publish any identifying information obtained from the public register. This offence will be punishable by a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment. Additionally, all persons who access the public register will receive warnings about the misuse of information including the penalties for the offence provisions. The penalties attached to the offence provisions and associated messaging will act as a strong deterrent against vigilante behaviour.

The bill includes broad safeguards to those involved in administering the public register. A person involved in the administration of the public register will not be liable, civilly, criminally or under an administrative process, because of an act done or omission made honestly by the person. Furthermore, protection from liability is extended to the state. To ensure the effective operation of the public register, the bill provides that, unless the Supreme Court decides a relevant decision is affected by jurisdictional error, all relevant decisions to release information are final, may not be subject to judicial review or any other form of review, and may not be subject to a declaratory, injunctive or other order of a court.

The amendments in the bill will impose limitations on human rights, most prominently on those persons classified as reportable offenders. However, those limitations must be considered in the context of the objective of establishing the public register to allow public access to information about child sex offenders in order to protect Queensland children and put the rights of parents and families ahead of sexual predators. The public register is necessary to prevent children from being subjected to the devastating harm that results from sexual offending and the state has a positive obligation under a number of rights, including the right to life, to protect an individual from real and immediate risks to their life.

The bill maintains the paramount purpose of the public register and the importance of protecting children from the devastating and lifelong harm which results from sexual abuse. Therefore, to ensure the effective operation of the public register, the bill makes clear that the Human Rights Act 2019 has no application on the substantive provisions designed to facilitate the public register. The required statement regarding exceptional circumstances for the human rights override refers to the child safety crisis gripping Queensland communities, as shown by many horrific abuse cases and allegations over recent times. This is a serious issue for Queensland and there is an urgent need for government to do more to protect children. In that regard, the Crisafulli government is delivering for Queensland by actioning its firm commitment to establish a public child sex offender register to safeguard families to take protective actions in the best interests of children.

The bill proposes a five-year statutory review of the public register, to be carried out by an independent and appropriately qualified person. A report about the outcomes of the review will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The review will coincide with the expiration of the override declaration. The review will assist to inform the government of what is working and what needs improvement. This is key to ensuring that we are continuing to deliver for Queensland to reinstate safety in our community. The public register will be a significant tool for parents, guardians and the community to ensure that Queensland children are protected and kept safe.

I once again acknowledge the tireless efforts of Bruce and Denise Morcombe, who have relentlessly advocated for the legislative reform we see being delivered today. While the public register cannot completely negate the risk of sexual offending against children, it provides an invaluable opportunity to raise public awareness and impart valuable information about safeguarding children. These reforms empower parents, guardians and people with parental responsibilities with an additional tool to make informed decisions to help keep their children safe. These reforms will also mean that the community can be more vigilant when moving around their local communities and to keep children safe from harm. The bill reflects careful considerations and strikes an appropriate balance of community safety and the protection of children. I have full confidence that, alongside the public register, the Queensland police will remain relentless in targeting those who do harm to the most vulnerable members of the community. I commend the bill to the House.