




Speech By
Hon. Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Child Protection

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (10.37 am): Tomorrow is Day for Daniel. Daniel's story changed Queensland. It changed the way we as a state think about protecting children, but the hard truth is that there are too many families who have lived through the unthinkable and too many parents who still ask, 'How can I keep my child safe?' That is why today matters. Today is not just another day in this chamber: for me and for so many across Queensland, this is personal. Before I stood in this place—before I ever imagined holding ministerial office—I served in another capacity: serving the very community where Daniel Morcombe was taken from his family and from this world by a known serial child rapist. I remember those days vividly—the fear that gripped the community, the heartbreak that never left his parents and the absolute determination of every officer who swore to never stop looking for Daniel and swore to do everything possible to never let this happen again. For years I sat across from families whose worlds had been shattered by the actions of offenders who hid in plain sight. I saw their pain, I heard their disbelief and I swore—quietly but firmly—that if I ever had the chance to do more I would. Today is that day.

We will give parents something they have never had before: the right to know. We will give them the right to see the truth that for too long has been hidden in closed files and behind locked doors. We are focusing on the worst of the worst—the predators who pose a danger to our children—and shining a light on them so that families can protect what is most precious. This is not about fear; it is about empowerment. This is not about vengeance; it is about vigilance. Too much time has been wasted and too many lives have been destroyed. For a decade those opposite had their chance and chose to do nothing. That stops with us. The Crisafulli government will not sit back and risk another child falling through the cracks of secrecy and silence.

To Bruce and Denise Morcombe, who are here today: your grace, strength and courage have inspired an entire state and nation. Our reform carries your son's name but it carries your legacy, too, because from your heartbreak has come hope, from your resolve has come reform and from your unimaginable loss has come lasting protection for generations of Queensland children. Daniel's legacy will forever stand for truth, for light and for the unwavering belief that every child deserves the right to grow up safe, loved and free from harm. That is why I joined the police, that is why I entered politics and that is why today, as a member of the Crisafulli government, I could not be prouder to serve.