



Speech By
Donna Kirkland

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (8.57 pm): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2025. It is a transformative piece of legislation that will deliver safer roads, smarter regulation and stronger productivity for Queensland and beyond. The bill represents a major step forward in creating a single, consistent national law for the regulation of heavy vehicle operations across Australia, including Western Australia and the Northern Territory. As the host jurisdiction, Queensland will lead the way in enacting this law and setting the standard for other participating states and territories.

These are important amendments to the legislation, as the heavy vehicle industry is, as many have already said, the backbone of Queensland's economy. It supports our supply chains, creates thousands of jobs and ensures the movement of goods across the state and the nation. From courier drivers and livestock transporters to concrete agitators, refrigerated food carriers, fuel tankers, public and school buses and some emergency services, like fire trucks and ambulances, this bill touches every corner of our transport sector.

In Rockhampton alone an average of 3,020 heavy vehicles pass through daily. On some of our regional highways, heavy vehicles account for up to 50 per cent of all of the traffic. This bill is not just about trucks, though; it is about safety, efficiency and fairness for every Queenslanders who shares the road with those trucks. The amendments within this bill are about improving accountability and, most importantly, saving lives. It strengthens the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme by requiring operators to implement scalable safety management systems that are subject to audit and can be used as evidence in court during primary duty prosecutions.

It introduces a new duty to be fit to drive, expanding upon existing fatigue laws. Drivers who feel pressured to drive while unfit can now report their concerns confidentially, empowering them to be able to speak up without fear.

The bill also expands the use of formal cautions and warnings, ensuring proportionate responses to breaches without compromising safety. It is a fairer, more balanced approach to enforcement. Importantly, this legislation cuts through bureaucracy, streamlining compliance and reducing red tape. It removes duplicate offences and adjusts penalty amounts based on a comprehensive review of 349 offences and reduces penalties for minor infractions like clerical errors in work diaries, while increasing penalties for serious breaches.

Alternative compliance accreditation will give operators the flexibility to meet obligations through innovative methods tailored to their operations. This encourages creativity and continuous improvement in safety practices.