




Speech By
Hermann Vorster

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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

 **Mr VORSTER** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak in support of two very important bills being debated in cognate: the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack's Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 and the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025. Both bills are about restoring community confidence in the systems designed to protect Queenslanders. The first strengthens police powers to prevent knife crime before it happens. The second ensures that decisions about high-risk parolees are reviewed properly when lives may be at stake. These bills reflect the priorities of the Queensland government because they reflect the priorities of Queenslanders and they are about restoring safety where we live.

Jack's Law has been the subject of much debate in this House. I want to be very clear: the LNP has always backed this law, not just in words but in action. What we are doing today is not tinkering around the edges. We are making it permanent, cutting the red tape and expanding its reach so that frontline police can use it to protect Queenslanders without delay.

Some members opposite would have the House believe that Jack's Law is a Labor initiative, that they introduced and, therefore, own it. Let us unpack that. Yes, the former government trialled wanding powers, but what they gave with one hand they took away with the other. They built in sunset clauses and convoluted authorisation requirements. Those were not measures designed to empower police. They were escape clauses—caveats for a divided caucus that I surmise never fully believed in the law's necessity. We are not dealing with a united Labor Party on the issue of youth crime. Let us not forget their own backbench revolt on the Adult Crime, Adult Time reforms, in ugly scenes played out through the media. We have seen it, we have heard it and Queenslanders know the difference between leadership and hedging.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Morayfield, if you wish to make a point of order then you know the process.

Mr VORSTER: Thank you very much for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. I contrast that with what we are doing today. The Crisafulli government is making Jack's Law permanent. We are removing the barriers that stop police from using it at major events and we are sending a clear message: Queensland will not tolerate knife crime. That is an issue I have raised many times because it matters to the people I represent.

In 2023, as a local councillor, I hosted a town hall meeting on community safety with residents from Varsity Lakes, Burleigh Waters, Burleigh Heads and Palm Beach. Knife crime was a dominant concern—far and away the biggest issue raised. People were frustrated, scared and, above all, tired of inaction. Following that meeting I wrote to the then minister for police, the member for Morayfield, and

passed on suggestions from the community, which included support for expanding wandering powers and making them permanent. Not only was that suggestion completely ignored; the then minister did not even acknowledge wandering in his reply to me.

I invited the former minister to visit Burleigh and meet with residents to hear directly from them. He never did visit, despite telling me in writing that he was a regular visitor to the Gold Coast. The former minister did not take up my offer to meet and hear from my community why they wanted wandering made permanent. I ran for parliament so the member for Morayfield would have no choice but to listen to the people of Burleigh. I am here as part of a government to do what Labor would not: listen to the Burleigh electorate and restore safety where we live by making Jack's Law permanent. We are listening. We are acting. We are delivering the fresh start that Queensland voted for.

The second bill before us also goes to the heart of community safety. The Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025 fixes a flaw that has undermined public confidence in parole decision-making. Under the old laws, if a single board member decided to send a parolee back to prison that decision had to be reviewed by the full Parole Board. That was a safeguard for the prisoner. If a board member made the opposite call, keeping the parolee in the community, there was no requirement for that decision to be reviewed at all. That meant the system gave more legal protection to prisoners than to the public.

This bill fixes that imbalance. It makes sure that when Queensland Corrective Services recommends a parolee be returned to custody because their behaviour is risky, or they have breached their bail conditions, the full Parole Board must review the decision if it were rejected by a single member. This is a safeguard for the community. It means no-one stays on the street without that call being double checked. The bill also confirms that past reviews—where the board took action even though the law did not clearly say they could—were lawful. That is about certainty and common sense.

We have heard experts call the current situation under Labor's laws 'a gap' and 'a legislative oversight'. They are absolutely correct. We are closing that gap because the former Labor government did not. To make matters worse, under their watch the board had no permanent president and no direction for seven months, which meant further delays and uncertainty in decisions that affected community safety. We are fixing that failure too. This is a clean, targeted bill that puts victims and safety first, and it gives our Parole Board the powers it needs to protect the community.

Queenslanders expect their government to act when lives are at risk. These bills deliver. We are backing police to stop crime before it happens. We are giving the Parole Board the power to act when supervision fails. We are putting victims and the community's safety where they belong: at the centre of our justice system—no more loopholes, no more delays and no more excuses. This is a fresh start for Queensland, and it is the one the community voted for.

Before I conclude my remarks I will read into the record the suggestions put forward by my community in 2023, and I will table this document.

Tabled paper: Bundle of correspondence from the former councillor, Division 11, Gold Coast City council and current member for Burleigh, Mr Hermann Vorster MP, to the former minister for police and corrective services and minister for fire and emergency services, Hon. Mark Ryan MP, regarding crime and community safety on the Gold Coast [619](#).

My letter to the former minister states—

While holding out little or no hope the state will act, residents want to be proactive and have made the following suggestions they say warrant investigation: increased real police numbers on the southern Gold Coast; tougher laws and strengthened sentencing options for repeat offenders; the removal of the presumption of detention as a last resort in the Youth Justice Act; and wandering made permanent and available to police everywhere.

How right my community was, and how good of them to put someone in the parliament who will make sure their voices are translated into action. The men and women on our side of politics put community safety at the heart of their work as a government. I thank the member for Bonney, our police minister and our youth justice minister for doing an incredible job shepherding these laws through the parliament. They have been fine and strong advocates for reform. They have listened to Queenslanders, and I trust they will make sure our community is far safer than it was under Labor.