




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

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

 **Mrs POOLE** (Mundingburra—LNP) (5.06 pm): I rise to contribute to 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. I will be confining my remarks, however, to the Jack's Law bill. With your indulgence, if I could please show my appreciation for all of our first responders as part of Thank a First Responder Day. I give great thanks to my former colleagues who join me in the chamber: the police minister, the member for Ninderry; one of my old officers in charge, the member for Burdekin; the member for Lockyer; the member for Nicklin; and the member for Mackay. Thank you so very much for all your service.

On this side of the House, we have always said that we will give our emergency services the laws, the tools and the resources they need to do their job. This week, we continued to deliver on that promise. This week we take another step to make Queensland, and my electorate of Mundingburra, a safer place.

Following Jack Beasley's tragic passing after a knife related crime on the Gold Coast in 2019, Queenslanders demanded change. Thanks to the tireless advocacy of Belinda and Brett Beasley and the Jack Beasley Foundation, our state began that journey. The Beasley Foundation have done some incredible work in ensuring from deep tragedy has come necessary change. To echo the sentiment of my good friend, the Minister for Police: every instance of knife crime leaves a lasting impact on victims, their families and the community. We will not stand by while innocent lives are lost. We have been supportive of Jack's Law from day one and today's improvements will make it better and more effective than ever before. Let us be clear: this government is finishing what the last one could not because, while the former Labor government started by supporting Jack's Law, in 2023, they introduced a maze of red tape that made it virtually impossible for our police to use it effectively.

Operational police were buried under evidentiary tests and subjective thresholds so much so that major events such as schoolies were excluded as they no longer could meet the strict criteria introduced by the former Labor government. Thousands of young people attend schoolies every year, a place where they are celebrating completing their schooling and starting their adult life. They, too, should be able to celebrate in a safe environment and those opposite took away the powers of the police to make that a reality. Their legislation was simply a continuation of the soft-on-crime approach we have seen from the previous Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government and that resulted in a decade-long youth crime crisis.

I was a police officer for 28 years. I worked the streets of Townsville and I know the heartbreak of walking into a family's worst day and I know what it means when our officers say this law will save lives. That is why I rise today, not just as a former police officer but as a mother, and I want to speak mother to mother to Mrs Belinda Beasley. Belinda, I cannot begin to imagine the pain you have lived

through, but I want you to know your son's name will not be forgotten. His death has not been in vain and because of your strength and courage, thousands of weapons have been taken off Queensland streets.

Since April 2023 over 115,000 people have been scanned under Jack's Law, more than 1,100 weapons have been seized, over 300 charges have been laid and through that entire time there have been just two complaints—nothing to do with police conduct. This is a testament to the professionalism of our frontline officers and the effectiveness of this legislation when used properly, yet under the former government our police were blocked at every turn. They were asked to prove that a serious violent crime had occurred in a location in the previous six months before being allowed to act to prevent one in the next six months. This is not justice; this is a failure of common sense.

This bill does what should have been done long ago: it makes Jack's Law permanent by removing the sunset clause that is due to expire on 30 October 2026. It allows handheld scanning in all public places, not just our safe night precincts, our transport hubs or our shopping centres. It removes the burdensome authorisation process for relevant places. It prioritises the rights of our victims over offenders and it restores confidence in the community. It does so while maintaining safeguards: scanning is random, police must wear body worn cameras and officers are required to undertake specific training. We have struck the right balance between liberty and safety.

I have recently visited former colleagues in the Mundingburra electorate and told them that this bill was coming and their reaction was relief, support and gratitude. They have said thank you—'Thank you for listening to us and thank you for giving us the powers to allow us to do our job effectively.' The support for this bill has been overwhelming from the police, from the Jack Beasley Foundation, from the Queensland Police Union, from councils across the state and from Queensland families who just want to feel safe in their neighbourhood again. Queenslanders are calling for action, not excuses. They are tired of hearing what cannot be done. They want to see laws that work, that empower our police and that put community safety first, and that is exactly what this bill delivers. It delivers on our commitment to make Queensland safe. We will give police their power back—the power to keep our community safe.

We are making Jack's Law permanent. We are expanding it to cover all public spaces. We are restoring the authority of police to act decisively without unnecessary red tape slowing them down and we are doing it with safeguards in place. As the Premier has said, we will be a government that keeps our promises, and today we fulfil our commitment to make Queensland safer, to back our police and to honour the legacy of Jack Beasley with the laws that will save lives.

I note the parliamentary Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee tabled its report on the bill and it made just one recommendation: that the bill be passed. We thank the committee for its scrutiny and support of the bill and, likewise, I am also proud to support this bill.

To the parents and caregivers across Queensland who just want their kids to come home safe, I say: I hear you. To Belinda Beasley, from one mother to another, I say: your strength, your voice and your determination are making a difference far beyond what any of us can measure. Jack's name will live on not just in memory but in action. I commend these bills to the House.