



Speech By **Janelle Poole**

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

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

 **Mrs POOLE** (Mundingburra—LNP) (6.02 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025, and I do so wearing several hats—as the member for Mundingburra, as the Assistant Minister for Community Safety, as an ambassador for the Daniel Morcombe Foundation, as a former police officer who worked in the Juvenile Aid Bureau and, most importantly, as a mum. When it comes to protecting our children—the most vulnerable members of our community—it is not about politics; it is about people. It is about every parent's right to know, to act and to keep their children safe, and this bill carries the name of a young boy whose story changed our nation—Daniel Morcombe.

Daniel's tragic abduction and murder in 2003 shook our state, and from that heartbreak came extraordinary courage—the courage of Bruce and Denise Morcombe, who turned their grief into purpose. For over two decades the Daniel Morcombe Foundation has worked tirelessly to educate, to empower and to protect children across Australia, as have Bruce and Denise tirelessly through their work and through the child safety education program of Recognise React Report.

This Friday marks Day for Daniel—a day that Bruce and Denise Morcombe have set aside as the day to honour Daniel. We will see a sea of red shirts in schools and businesses across our state honouring Daniel at events marking child safety. We will also see Australia's Biggest Child Safety Lesson, once again online, throughout the nation through the Daniel Morcombe Foundation. I have had the absolute privilege of working closely with Bruce and Denise through my role as an ambassador for 15 years and I know that their drive has never wavered—not for one day—in their mission to prevent another family from enduring what they endured and to keep our kids safe. Daniel's Law is, in every sense, a continuation of their work, a tribute to Daniel's legacy and a testament to what determined Queenslanders can achieve when they stand up for what is right.

This bill delivers on the Crisafulli government's election commitment to strengthen Queensland's child protection laws and ensure parents also have the information they need to keep their children safe. As a former police officer, having worked in the Juvenile Aid Bureau, I know firsthand how devastating child sexual offences are for the victims, for the families and for the entire community. I have seen the lifelong trauma for victims and the heartbreak for families who trusted somebody who should never have been near their child. As a mum I know that every parent shares that instinct to protect, to know and to act.

Until now, Queensland's child protection register has been behind closed doors. Police have had access but parents have not, and Daniel's Law will change that. It will give families the information they need to make safe, informed decisions about their children's lives. As I said, this changes with this bill. Daniel's Law establishes Queensland's first ever public child sex offender register—a practical, balanced and powerful tool to help parents protect their children and strengthen community safety. It is a three-tier system that makes information available in a way that is responsible and measured, ensuring the safety of children while preventing misuse or vigilante behaviour.

Tier 1 will list missing or noncompliant offenders whose whereabouts are unknown to police. These are individuals who have breached their reporting conditions. Tier 2 allows Queenslanders to conduct a locality search to see if serious or repeat offenders live in their area, empowering parents to remain vigilant and aware. Tier 3 enables parents, guardians or anyone with parental responsibility to check if a particular person who has or will have unsupervised contact with their child is a reportable offender. This is not about punishment; it is about protection and it is about prevention. It is about giving parents the tools they need to make safe choices for their children.

We have been careful and considerate in developing this legislation. This is not a free-for-all publication of names and photos; it is a measured framework with strong safeguards and oversight and there are strict penalties—up to 10 years imprisonment—for anyone who uses the information to intimidate, harass or target offenders. This ensures the register is used for its true purpose—protecting our children—and it ensures that the Police Commissioner retains discretion to publish or remove information where it is in the public interest or where doing so could impact a victim or an ongoing investigation. This is how we strike the right balance between community safety and individual rights, between protection and responsibility.

Daniel's Law does more than empower parents; it restores confidence. It tells Queenslanders that this government is serious about protecting our children. It tells victims and survivors that their voices are heard and it tells offenders that they will be held accountable—not hidden away, not shielded, but monitored and managed in the public interest. It also aligns Queensland with the work already done in Western Australia and South Australia but with stronger safeguards, broader scope and no fee for access because when it comes to child safety, no-one should be priced out of protection.

When I joined the Queensland Police Service nearly three decades ago, I swore an oath to protect and serve. Working in the Juvenile Aid Bureau changed me forever. I not only saw the worst of humanity, I also saw the strength of children, families and communities who refused to give up. Today standing here as both a former police officer and a mother, I know this bill could save lives. It could prevent harm, it could stop one more child from suffering what Daniel did. As a parent myself, I can say with absolute conviction I would want to know—every parent would want to know. Daniel's Law is more than legislation, it is a promise. A promise that our government will always put the rights of parents and the safety of children ahead of the rights of sexual predators.

This bill empowers families, strengthens communities and honours Daniel's legacy in the most powerful way possible by keeping Queensland kids safe. I would like to thank the members of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee, the Attorney-General, the Minister for Child Safety and the Minister for Police, himself a former detective who has investigated these heinous type of offences. This bill is our promise to Denise and Bruce Morcombe—and to Daniel—that their fight for child safety was not in vain. This bill is for every Queensland child. Bruce and Denise Morcombe: this bill is for you. Bradley and Dean: this bill is for you. This bill is for you, Daniel. I commend this bill to the House.