




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Record of Proceedings, 28 October 2025

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

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.37 pm): That was a fine speech by the member for Chatsworth. I join my Labor colleagues in supporting the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025. I start by acknowledging and applauding Denise and Bruce Morcombe who, following a seemingly unbearable tragedy, have dedicated themselves to keeping kids safe. I saw that in action when Denise and Bruce attended Mount Gravatt State School in my electorate for the launch of Australia's Biggest Child Safety Lesson. Their foundation involved the students from the school in the process of creating the materials and then broadcasting the launch throughout Queensland and Australia. It was really evident to me how engaged the students were in the program. I am sure it has made a huge difference to their lives. Of course, every year students across my electorate participate in the Day for Daniel. I will see that again this Friday. I know that this program educates and empowers children to be safe in a range of situations.

I join with my Labor colleagues in commending Bruce and Denise Morcombe on their continued and tireless dedication to keeping children safe and in recognising that the passage of Daniel's Law is a deeply meaningful and significant moment for the Morcombe family. In my time in this parliament, and in my roles in nursing, disability support and trade unions, I have seen an ongoing evolution of approaches to keeping kids safe. The mandatory reporting and training that I am now required to participate in as a nurse did not exist when I started nursing in the 1980s. There is a range of other mechanisms in place now to keep kids safe.

I was pretty disappointed with the contribution from the member for Whitsunday. Taking a tragic murder from 23 years ago and trying to draw a line and blame the previous government was undignified. I thought it was disgraceful and undignified and showed great disrespect for the intention of this bill.

Ms CAMM: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr J KELLY: I withdraw. To suggest that nothing was done by the previous Labor government was ridiculous and was a potential misleading of the parliament.

Ms CAMM: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr J KELLY: Deputy Speaker, I seek your guidance. I did not mention that member and was merely reflecting on many statements made by many members.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): Member for Greenslopes, I suggest you move on now.

Mr J KELLY: I will take a moment to rebut those statements. I think it is worth looking at Labor's record in this area. Labor introduced the strongest and toughest legislative framework in the nation for the monitoring of child sex offenders by doubling the monitoring period of child sex offenders subject to

police monitoring. These laws increased the monitoring for first-time offenders from five years to 10 years and increased the monitoring of repeat offenders from 10 to 20 years or life. Labor permanently integrated Taskforce Orion into the Queensland Police Service Child Abuse and Sexual Crime Group. Labor almost doubled the resources for the child protection offender register since 2015 and committed to further double the resources by 2030.

Additionally, Labor introduced new laws to: expand police powers to enter the residence of a reportable offender to undertake a digital device inspection; require reportable offenders to disclose the use of their anonymising software, vault and black hole applications and their media access control address; create a new offence with penalties of up to five years imprisonment for failing to comply with a requirement to produce a digital device for a device inspection; and require reportable offenders who have been convicted of failing to comply with their reporting obligations to report those details to police within seven days. That is a short list of the things that were done and a rebuttal of the statement that Labor did nothing.

As a nurse I have worked with many people who have been victims of child sexual abuse. The impacts are devastating and lifelong. The trauma that is inflicted on the individual is highly likely to transport through the generations and cause problems for subsequent generations. This parliament has an obligation to keep kids safe. That is the intention of this bill and that is why we on this side of the House support this bill.

It should be noted that there was a wide range of views from stakeholders on both what this bill will achieve and what it will not. A number of potential unintended consequences were identified such as the potential for a false sense of security that may result for parents and guardians of children who access the scheme. This may occur because this bill will not capture all reportable child sex offenders, and it does not capture all offenders in the community who are subject to the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act.

For example, the QPS advised during the hearing that, of the 3,240 reportable offenders on the child protection offender registry, only 749 total reportable offenders, including those subject to the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act, would be under tier 2 of the register. That is less than 25 per cent. This needs to be closely monitored and parents need to be made aware of these kinds of gaps to reduce any false sense of security that could result. As a result of these potential unintended consequences, the laws must be closely monitored to ensure that if issues occur steps can be quickly taken to address them.

I have spoken to many people in my community about these terrible issues. It is always painful and distressing to acknowledge that a very significant number, if not a majority, of children who are victims of sexual assault or abuse or murder will be assaulted by someone who is known to them. Many submitters noted concerns that these laws may not protect children in these situations. The register is one important option to help keep kids safe, but it must be complemented by other measures. Education and awareness were noted by many submitters as being a very effective way to keep children safe in all situations. That is why the Day for Daniel on Friday is so important. It is about educating children.

I join my Labor colleagues in raising concerns about the proper resourcing of this scheme. It seems that the number of staff allocated initially is very small and no ongoing funding has been provided to the QPS by the Crisafulli LNP government for the operation of the register. The Queensland Labor opposition has been told that the effective implementation of a register of this type could require upwards of 100 FTE ongoing. This would cost up to \$17.5 million per year, on an ongoing basis. Finally, I again acknowledge and applaud the ongoing commitment of Denise and Bruce Morcombe to keep kids safe.