



Speech By **Natalie Marr**

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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

 **Ms MARR** (Thuringowa—LNP) (4.13 pm), continuing: Let me emphasise: this register is a tool and not the whole answer. Daniel's Law is not a silver bullet. It will not erase the scars of past abuses or single-handedly reform our justice system. What it does is complement existing safeguards, from mandatory reporting laws to enhanced police resources and family support services. It is one vital piece in a broader puzzle of child protection. We must pair it with education campaigns in schools and trauma-informed counselling for survivors, but as a tool it is indispensable. Imagine a parent in Kirwan in my electorate wanting to know about a new babysitter or a youth group leader and discovering a hidden history of harm. That simple act of access could prevent the next tragedy. That is the power of this register—proactive, practical and profoundly human.

Let me delve deeper into the grooming tactics that make this law so urgently needed. Predators do not operate in isolation. They are cunning, manipulative and deeply embedded in our social fabrics. Predators are not only grooming children; they are grooming families. They build trust over time, attending barbeques, volunteering at events, weaving themselves into the everyday rhythm of community life. This register disrupts that facade. By shining a light on known offenders, they can no longer hide behind a veneer of normalcy. Families deserve to know, not out of paranoia but out of prudence, who is seeking proximity to their children.

What gives me such confidence in this model? It is not untested theory; it is proven practice. The Western Australian scheme has been operating for more than 10 years and has also undergone rigorous review. Launched in 2012, Western Australia's public child sex offender register has been a success, with multiple evaluations affirming its role in enhancing community safety without the feared deluge of vigilantism. Daniel's Law is modelled on this blueprint, incorporating Western Australia's lessons to ensure our Queensland version is even stronger. We have borrowed the best—the tiered access, the oversight mechanisms—while tailoring it to our unique state needs. This is not reinvention; it is refinement, and that longevity—that scrutiny—provides a level of comfort we can all embrace.

In Western Australia the minister authorises the publication of information of offenders whom they consider pose a serious risk and do not otherwise meet tier 2 criteria. Importantly in Queensland, this discretion will be retained by the Police Commissioner. Of course, no legislation is without challenges and we have addressed them head-on. Moreover, we have learnt from Western Australia's decade of operation to prioritise considerations of community awareness, safeguards against misuse and lessons from WA of protection against unintended harm. Education is at the forefront. Safeguards are robust, with strict penalties for misuse such as harassment or false reporting.

As we debate this bill, I urge my colleagues to join me in this bipartisan imperative. Child protection is not red or blue; it is the colour of innocence, the laughter of a child at play, the trust in a parent's gaze. We have waited too long. Daniel Morcombe's family waited too long. The next potential victim—perhaps a girl in Kirwan or a boy in Heatley—cannot wait any longer. I am deeply honoured to have served on the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee that led Daniel's Law, protecting

the vulnerable as a duty I hold close to my heart. In closing, let us honour Denise and Bruce Morcombe's vision—a Queensland where knowledge is our shield, where communities stand vigilant but united, and where predators find no safe harbour. Pass Daniel's Law today and make it law, as we promised, and together let us build a safer tomorrow for every child in this great state. This is about protecting the next victim—to shield that child from the unimaginable terror of these heinous crimes. I commend the bill to the House.