



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) (12.50 pm): I rise today to speak on the Community Protection and Public Child Sex Offender Register (Daniel's Law) Bill 2025. It is very appropriately named Daniel's Law.

Imagine this: a child, innocent and trusting, is lured away from safety by a predator who has spent months or even years weaving a web of deception. The heinous act that follows is a violation. It is the shattering of a young soul, leaving scars that may never fully heal. Rape, molestation, exploitation: these are the brutal realities inflicted on too many Queensland children every year. One in five girls and one in eight boys will endure sexual abuse before turning 18, often at the hands of someone they know—someone hidden in plain sight—and the next victim could be your daughter playing in the park, your son at footy practice or the neighbour's kid down the street. This is the nightmare we must confront head on. Daniel's Law is not optional. It is our moral imperative to shield the next child from the unimaginable terror of these crimes. We owe it to them and to the survivors who carry the weight of what never should have happened to act now without apology or delay.

Today I rise not just as an elected representative of Thuringowa but as a mother, an aunt and a community advocate who believes that government must act decisively when the safety of our children is at stake. Daniel's Law is that decisive action. Named in heartbreakingly honour of Daniel Morcombe, whose tragic death in 2003 shattered our state and ignited a movement for change, this bill establishes Queensland's first public register for child sex offenders. It is a tool, a beacon of transparency designed to empower parents, carers and communities with the knowledge they need to protect those they love most. Let me be clear from the outset: this is not about vengeance or sensationalism; it is about prevention. It is about breaking the cycle of predator behaviour that has gone unchecked for far too long. It is about learning from those who have walked this painful path before us.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge Denise and Bruce Morcombe, whose courage and tireless advocacy have brought us to this point. Denise and Bruce have turned unimaginable grief into a force for good and Queensland owes them a profound debt of gratitude. Their words, their wisdom and their unwavering focus on the next victim have shaped this legislation in ways that will save lives. As Denise so powerfully reminded us during our first public hearing into this bill, this is about protecting the next victim. Providing a tiered, accessible register arms us with information. It allows us to make informed choices and intervene before harm occurs. Let's talk about the structure of this register, because critics might whisper that it is too hard or too innovative. As the Morcombes have rightly pointed out, the three-tier approach is a measured one. This is not a blunt instrument; it is a calibrated response honed by years of consultation and evidence.

Tier 1 is the missing noncompliant offender webpage. It displays facial images and particular personal details of offenders who have breached their obligations and whose whereabouts are unknown to police. Tier 2 is the locality search, a local area search allowing Queensland residents to request to temporarily view facial images of particular offenders residing in their locality. Tier 3 is the parent and

guardian disclosure scheme, which enables parents, guardians or people with ongoing parental responsibility to apply for confirmation about whether a particular person who has, or will have, unsupervised contact with their child is a reportable offender.

This graduated system balances transparency with fairness, prevention with proportionality. It is not about casting a net over everyone; it is about targeting those who pose the greatest threat while giving authorities the flexibility to adapt as risks evolve. Let me emphasise that 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.

Debate, on motion of Ms Marr, adjourned.

 **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.