




Speech By  
**Terry James**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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

 **Mr JAMES** (Mulgrave—LNP) (6.00 pm): Today I stand before the House to reflect on a deeply impactful piece of legislation that has arisen from both tragedy and resilience—Jack's Law. The Crisafulli government will ensure Jack's Law remains permanent by eliminating the sunset clause, which is set for 30 October 2026. This law stands as a testament to the unyielding strength of those who have turned grief into purpose and heartbreak into hope. This bill seeks to permanently authorise the use of handheld scanners by police to detect knives and other weapons in public places, expanding the scope of Jack's Law and addressing related legislative matters.

Jack's Law was introduced to parliament symbolically on Jack Beasley's birthday. Jack would have turned 23. It is heart-wrenching to think about the life that Jack, a bright young apprentice, could have lived had it not been cut short by a violent knife attack. At 17 years of age, Jack's life was taken by another teenager armed with a blade. This horrifying event occurred on 13 December 2019 in Surfers Paradise—a bustling area that should have been a place of joy, not tragedy. Jack's story, though deeply tragic, sparked a movement that has now led to monumental change.

Jack's Law provides police with sweeping powers to search for knives on public transport and at nightlife hotspots using metal-detecting wands. The journey to implementing Jack's Law has been paved by the relentless efforts of Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda Beasley, after their son's untimely death. Brett and Belinda turned their grief into action, campaigning tirelessly for the introduction of this legislation in Queensland. Their advocacy has been instrumental in ensuring that such violence is met with stronger preventive measures. They did not just fight for their son; they fought for future victims who might otherwise endure the same fate. 'We're doing it for every victim of a knife crime,' Jack's mum, Belinda, once said—a sentiment that captures the essence of their mission.

It is important to recognise the profound courage it takes for parents to rechannel their pain into a campaign for change. In the face of such adversity, the Beasley family refused to let Jack's plight be forgotten. Shortly after his death, they, along with other compassionate citizens, founded the Jack Beasley Foundation. Their vision was clear: to ensure that no parent would have to endure the anguish that they had suffered. The foundation's mantra focused on urging governments to take weapon searching seriously. Their efforts were not in vain. The newly elected Crisafulli government worked closely with the foundation, turning their advocacy into legislative reality. Together, they have enshrined Jack's Law—an achievement that represents the power of partnership between citizens and government.

Knife crime has left scars not only on Jack's family but also on communities across Australia. In my own Cairns community, there was the stabbing death of a 51-year-old Cairns man, a father of five children, at Cairns Central Shopping Centre in September 2021. The stabbing attacks like those at Westfield Bondi Junction and Wakeley church highlight the urgent need for preventive action.

Jack's Law is a monumental achievement, but it is also a call to action. It challenges each one of us to remain vigilant, compassionate and committed to creating a safer community. As we honour Jack's memory and the efforts of his family, let us pledge to support ongoing initiatives that prevent violence and protect lives. I thank Brett and Belinda Beasley for their courage and perseverance. I thank the Crisafulli government for their partnership in, and dedication to, enshrining Jack's Law. We should let Jack's story remind us that even in the darkest moments there is light to be found, and that light can guide us towards a better future for all.

I would now like to address the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025. This legislation is not merely about governance; it is about safeguarding the lives of Queenslanders. It seeks to empower Parole Board Queensland with the authority and tools required to make decisions that prioritise community safety above all else. Specifically, the legislation addresses the current process where individual prescribed board members can suspend parole orders and how the board reviews those decisions. The bill aims to provide a safeguard for community safety by ensuring the Parole Board reviews all decisions made by prescribed board members, including those where the board member decides not to suspend parole. It also validates previous decisions made by the board in similar situations.

Parole is not a privilege or an entitlement. It comes with stringent conditions intended to prevent reoffending and contribute positively to community safety. As such, the board plays an integral role in the criminal justice system. Parole offers prisoners a supervised transition from custody to community life under strict monitoring. This includes regular reporting, mandatory participation in rehabilitation programs and efforts to integrate into society through education, employment or training.

Swift and decisive action must follow any breach of parole conditions. If a prisoner poses an unacceptable risk, the Parole Board must act immediately to return them to custody. Unfortunately, under the previous Labor government the Parole Board was left hamstrung, devoid of the necessary legal frameworks, plagued by instability and subjected to political interference. This neglect has compromised community safety and shaken the public's faith in the system. The Crisafulli LNP government is committed to reversing this damage and dedicated to making Queensland safer and reducing the number of victims of crime. To achieve this, we have taken significant steps to strengthen the leadership and operational capacity of the Parole Board. This is where the Corrective Services (Parole Board) Amendment Bill 2025 comes into play.

This bill is designed to empower the board by providing the legal tools it needs to prioritise community safety in its decision-making processes. It ensures that the board can act swiftly and effectively, especially in situations where urgent decisions are required. This bill seeks to address longstanding deficiencies in the Parole Board system by introducing new statutory requirements and procedural safeguards. Specifically, the bill emphasises community safety as the paramount concern in all aspects of parole decision-making. It mandates thorough risk assessments and enhanced criteria for evaluating parole eligibility, ensuring that the potential threats posed by individuals are rigorously examined.

Reinstating trust in a system that had been left weakened by negligence is paramount. Labor's laws protected the rights of offenders, but they forgot to protect the rights of the community. This bill corrects that. It will expand section 208C of the Corrective Services Act to allow all urgent decisions—whether to suspend or not to suspend parole—to be reviewed by the multidisciplinary board. This new provision will require timely and thorough deliberations within the framework of a full board review, ensuring greater scrutiny, better decision-making and, importantly, safer communities. This vital mechanism for maintaining community safety must not falter. This bill is about delivering on our commitment to the people of Queensland, fixing the gaps left behind by previous administrations and restoring confidence in a system that plays a pivotal role in our justice framework. I commend the cognate bills to the House.