




Speech By  
**Wendy Bourne**

**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 June 2025

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

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.52 pm): I rise to speak on the Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack's Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. Let me begin by acknowledging that no parent should have to bury their child, yet for too many that unimaginable grief has become a reality. My heart goes out to every family that has suffered such a tragic loss. My heart goes out to Jack's parents, Brett and Belinda Beasley. Since Jack's death, Brett and Belinda Beasley have been tireless advocates for reform to prevent knife related violence and protect young people. Their dedication and advocacy were instrumental in making Jack's Law a reality here in Queensland, and their continuing efforts have seen similar laws introduced in the Northern Territory, New South Wales and Western Australia.

I want to acknowledge the important foundation laid by the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021 which first enabled the trial of handheld scanners. That initiative was further developed and expanded by the former Labor government and the then minister for police and community safety, the Hon. Mark Ryan. Their work in introducing and passing Jack's Law in 2023 was critical, and I pay respect to their leadership and resolve on this important issue. In 2024 the scope of Jack's Law was significantly broadened to include more high-risk public locations. This expansion was a clear sign that the government of the day prioritised community safety over complacency, and it sent a strong message that knife crime would not be tolerated—not in our streets, not in our venues and not in our communities.

Let me turn briefly to the results. Since the introduction of Jack's Law, police have seized more than 1,058 weapons and conducted over 100,000 scans. That is 100,000 instances where the mere presence of a wand may have prevented a tragedy. Over 2,800 people have been charged and more than 500 offences have been dealt with, including through cautions, since the law took effect. Every wandering operation carried out by police, every weapon removed from circulation and every potential incident averted is a direct result of the legislative leadership shown by those on this side of the House.

The Police Powers and Responsibilities (Making Jack's Law Permanent) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 amends the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to: make Jack's Law permanent by removing the sunset clause that schedules its expiry on 30 October 2026; allow a police officer to use a handheld scanner in a relevant place without the need to obtain an authority to do so from a senior police officer; expand the application of Jack's Law to include public places that are not relevant places, by allowing police officers to use a handheld scanner in these areas provided they first obtain authority from a senior police officer; and improve policing efficiencies by streamlining the legislative framework underlining Jack's Law.

During the inquiry, 18 stakeholders made written submissions on the bill. The key issues raised during the committee's examination of the bill included: the impact of the removal of the sunset clause to make Jack's Law permanent in Queensland; allowing police officers to use a handheld scanner in defined places without the need for senior officer authorisation; expanding Jack's Law to all public places and the safeguards that are applied to this power; amendments to streamline the framework supporting Jack's Law, including removal of certain notification and reporting requirements; and consideration of other preventive measures to combat knife crime.

While supporting the bill today, I do note that the Office of the Victims' Commissioner stated—

While the Bill's proposed changes with respect to accountability safeguards (namely, clauses 10, 16 and 18) are aimed at improving efficiencies for police, their removal may erode public confidence in police responses. Any erosion in public confidence and trust that police are exercising their powers fairly and in a non-discriminatory manner may also result in a decrease in reporting of other serious crime, which may ultimately impact upon the support received by those victims of crime.

Legal Aid Queensland submitted that the requirement for the authority to be issued by a senior officer ought to remain, calling it an appropriate safeguard. The Law Council of Australia made comment on a proper evaluation process being required, stating—

The Society is concerned that the trial of the use of scanners permitting police to conduct searches without a warrant has not been subject to proper evaluation. The trial is not due to expire until 30 October 2026. It is submitted that there is sufficient time available for a proper evaluation. Given the importance of balancing community safety concerns with the rights of individuals it is submitted that a proper evaluation should be commissioned prior to any changes to the law.

As previously stated, I support this bill today, but I acknowledge the advice submitted to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee during the inquiry. Further, I would like to add that in February 2024, the former Labor government amended the Summary Offences Act 2005 to prohibit the sale of knives, machetes and other items to minors. I support the amendment proposed by opposition members to introduce a statewide ban on the sale of machetes, and increased penalties need to be considered when passing this bill.

In closing, let us not forget that in March 2023, the Premier, whilst in his capacity as the Leader of the Opposition, acknowledged that this legislation 'would do great good'. He said it and he said it often. It is important to recognise that because it reminds us that when it comes to protecting lives, this should never be a partisan issue.