




Speech By  
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**MEMBER FOR TRAEGER**

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### **FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM AND KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.10 pm): I rise to speak on the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026. A good place to start is why we are debating this bill. It resulted from the terrible Bondi massacre many of us heard about when we were on holidays. Part of my response was an immense sense of frustration and anger. You could see from a mile off that they were going to make this all about firearms, which had nothing to do with what drove that issue, but it made me reflect on the years building up to that point.

I listen to the ABC in Mount Isa a lot. We have a local ABC that does a lot of community events before switching over to the national ABC, so then you get journalists from Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne coming on. For years I heard them talking about attacks on synagogues and other Jewish places. I remember Dad coming back from Sydney years ago and saying, 'They took me to a Jewish school. They've got armed guards outside the school.' He said, 'This is Australia, Rob.' I'm thinking, 'Armed guards at a school?' I didn't understand it to the point where you almost think, 'Is this real?' It was hard to imagine, but this was building up for years. Politicians were coming on from Canberra saying, 'Yes, it's the rise of the Neo-Nazis; that's the problem.' I thought, 'This is ridiculous. Clearly it's these extremist Islamic people, the religious zealots who are all wound up and angry coming onto our shores. They are clearly the ones. Everybody knows that.' I just kept hearing time and again that the rise of the Neo-Nazis was the big problem. I thought it was a big stitch-up and that they were trying to cover this up instead of dealing with the problem.

I must say that it was pretty silent here too. The KAP went down to one of these protests one morning as a counterprotest. I was walking along the street and they cut me off. I found out they were all saying 'condemn Israel', so we went out with a sign that said 'condemn Hamas' and we got walked off by security, mostly because we were on parliamentary land, but all the same we were the ones trying to say, 'This is not right. They shouldn't be allowed to be supporting Hamas out there.' There was a lot of pro-Palestine and anti-Australia sentiment out there. It is not a big issue up north. We are not in Western Sydney or some of those areas where it manifests more strongly, but all the same we are still saying, 'What are we not seeing that others are?' This is why we are not acting. We were quite bemused when we marched in the first March for Australia. We thought, 'Hang on. Let's send a signal to the Australian public to say that if you want to come here, you've got to assimilate. Don't bring your dirty washing from overseas and start wars over here. You've got to be Australian.'

I remember a story that is important for me to share here that outlines my position. Only a few months back I was at a roadhouse in one of the small towns in my electorate. Late one night I was driving home after one of those big rallies. There was a fellow there who was of ethnic origin. He had dark skin. I sort of half knew him. He had been out west for a while. He said, 'Robbie, I want to see you.' He was fairly curt in his manner and I thought, 'Here we go. He's going to give me a mouthful about immigration.' He said, 'I just want to commend you and your dad for what you're saying, because I've come to this country and I want to work. I see these so-and-so's coming in who want to cause trouble

and they shouldn't be here. I've come here to work and provide for my family. If you want to come here, don't bring your troubles from overseas.' He was speaking my mind back to me. Most people would say, 'Gee, Rob, you don't want people like that.' Of course we want people like him. He is as Australian as I am. He wants to assimilate. He appreciates being here. These people have this attitude that they do not like us and they hate the things we stand for. Don't bring it over here. If I go overseas I will respect your culture and whatever you are doing over there. I am not going to cause a stir, nor do I seek to. But if you are coming over here, respect our civility, our social cohesion and our values.

There was tacit approval of all of these rallies and everything that kept bubbling away here in Brisbane. They were allowed to rally and march. We kept watching and saying, 'They shouldn't be allowing this.' Then when it boiled over to Bondi you could see that happening. They were not cracking down on this. What is the response from the government? 'Let's blame licensed firearm owners. They're responsible for all of this. That's the problem. That's where we will drive this from.' Anyone can go and check the evidence. I am evidence driven on this and I have to commend the government for their firearm response. They came out early with a very solid response. I thought, 'I don't know if I believe this. It's a good, solid response.' But you have held strong and I commend you for that. It was the weak thing to do to say, 'Let's just give a response to the Australian public that sounds like we're going to do something.'

As the number of guns has increased in Australia the number of gun deaths has gone down. Your licensing does not work. The main work that is needed has always been in relation to unlicensed firearms and the people who operate outside of the legal framework. If a guy who has been going for his weapons licence for two years, who's sharing a house and who is sending up all these red flags with ASIO gets a gun in New South Wales, that is a problem with their process. Have a look at where you are operating it and the operators in the system. Do not blame everyone else who is complying. The bloke in Normanton who has 10 guns and you want to take him down to four—that is not making anyone safer. Those blokes in Bondi only used two or three firearms and they had seven bombs in their car that we are never going to make illegal. They were going to find a way to do damage in Bondi whether you license things or not.

Unfortunately, you can find a pub in any major city where you can find illegal guns. I cannot tell you where they are, but I have it on good authority that you can find illegal guns out there. It is not hard. We have to crack down on that, and I can see that this legislation seeks to do that. I am all for spending that effort there, but do not spend it on the farmers, graziers and recreational fishers like Shane and me. We are doing you a favour by shooting pigs and taking care of your biosecurity issues most of the time. Whether we have 10 or two dozen firearms does not make a difference. If the Prime Minister believes that reducing the number of guns from 10 to five saves lives, why not take it down to zero? If you believe that reducing the number correlates with fewer deaths, why don't you advocate taking it down to zero? It was an arbitrary number that made no sense. It just said, 'We're doing something.' You had your time to do something on immigration. You had your time to do something with cracking down and jerking ASIO into gear. You had your time to crack down on those people and not letting them protest. You had your chance with all of that. Now—and I am speaking to the federal government here—you try and bully everyone in every state into saying, 'It's all about licensed firearm owners. That's where you need to spend the effort. That will make the difference.'

Be careful where you go with that mental health issue, because there are farmers out there with depression who might think, 'I'm not going to go and get checked out now because if I do I could lose my firearms licence.' There is good intent, but inadvertent effects can create much worse situations. I would say that most of these people, over 90 per cent, are law-abiding people who are trying to do the right thing. The last thing you want to do is incentivise them not to get check-ups, not to see doctors and not to get treatment for their mental health, so be careful where you go with that. I again commend the government for what they have done on weapons licensing. They have stood strong against the other states. Cracking down on illegal firearm owners is a good thing.

I foreshadow that I will be moving an amendment to remove sections 57 and 58, which relate to people who have convictions that are quashed or not recorded. I am sure some of the other regional MPs have the same issue. The KAP has a massive line-up of people with spurious, vexatious decisions from weapons licensing officers who deliberately find excuses not to give them a firearms licence when they have genuine reasons. They do not understand the process. This will give them more ammunition to fuel that fire, which is unfair.

I want to touch on the freedom of speech issue. The government is walking on very dangerous ground here. It is not something we like, but we are facing extraordinary circumstances in this state that need extraordinary responses.