



SEATH HOLSWICH MP STATE MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT

6th August 2013

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL (NUMBER 2) 2012

I rise to speak in support of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012. This bill is yet another bill that fulfils the pre-election commitments of the Newman LNP government and particularly in this case to take action against crimes that deeply concern our communities.

This bill, once passed, will ensure that drug traffickers serve a minimum of 80 per cent of their sentence prior to becoming eligible for parole. It will also strengthen sentencing laws against drug traffickers who target children. It will give victims an option to have a victim impact statement read out in court if the victim so wishes. This bill also strengthens the maximum penalties for graffiti crime and will allow provisions for graffiti offenders to be ordered to remove graffiti. It will achieve a number of other aims, but it is those I have mentioned above that I will concentrate on in my short contribution this evening.

In late 2012 I undertook an electorate-wide survey of the Pine Rivers electorate asking a range of questions, including questions about law and order. Around 82 per cent of respondents indicated that they did not think that sentencing generally reflects community standards. This general feeling amongst the Pine Rivers and no doubt the wider Queensland community is part of the reason that this bill is so important. This bill strengthens sentencing options for several crimes and provides our courts with additional sentencing options that more accurately reflect general community standards and expectations.

Drug trafficking crimes are unacceptable in Australian society and need to be dealt with in the severest possible manner. Any move to discourage drug trafficking and to take those convicted of trafficking crimes off our streets is a move that I know will be welcomed by the Pine Rivers electorate and is certainly welcomed by myself. Ensuring those convicted of drug trafficking serve a minimum of 80 per cent of their sentences is a positive step. Similarly, drug traffickers who target children are an abomination to our society and deserve to be dealt with in the harshest possible manner. I concur with the rationale behind these new penalties, being that those who supply drugs to children should be subject to higher maximum penalties than those who supply drugs to adults. A maximum penalty of life imprisonment for supplying a schedule 1 drug and 25 years for supplying a

punishing illegal activities that target Queensland children.

Whilst graffiti is a different type of crime to the drug trafficking crimes dealt with by this bill, it being a crime against property rather than specifically a crime against a person, it is nonetheless a crime that is unacceptable in Queensland society and one that needs to be stamped out and dealt with. Again in my electorate-wide survey of Pine Rivers in late 2012, graffiti crime featured prominently, listed amongst the top five crimes of most concern to my local community. Our government made a commitment prior to the 2012 election that we would crack down on graffiti crime and this bill is just

penalty for graffiti crime from five years to seven years imprisonment, which is a commendable move that indicates the seriousness of this crime and the way it is perceived by our community.

However, the real key to cracking down on graffiti crime in this bill is the introduction of the graffiti removal order, a mandatory community based sentencing order ensuring that graffiti offenders remove graffiti and contribute to cleaning up public places as part of their sentence. It is only right that those who choose to vandalise public and private property are made to right their wrong in this particular manner. This bill also allows for mobile phones or cameras used to record or capture images of graffiti to be confiscated from the offender. Graffiti offenders are well-known for their desire to share their work with others. A step such as this to provide tangible consequences for sharing their crime with others is one to be applauded.

Our government is unashamedly committed to strengthening sentences and doing everything within our power to discourage crime and to adequately punish those who choose to commit crimes in our great state. This bill is a strong step in that direction and I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.