



Speech By  
**Hon. Jann Stuckey**

**MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 October 2013

**CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMINAL ORGANISATIONS DISRUPTION) AMENDMENT  
BILL; TATTOO PARLOURS BILL; VICIOUS LAWLESS ASSOCIATION  
DISESTABLISHMENT BILL**

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (10.17 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the three pieces of legislation relating to criminal motorcycle gangs introduced earlier today by the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the honourable member for Kawana. As was highlighted by the Attorney-General, given the very serious and urgent nature of these bills, they will bypass the normal committee process and are being discussed together in a cognate debate. I commend the Attorney-General and his team for their herculean effort in bringing this legislation forward in such a timely manner. Firstly, I address the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Bill, the VLAD Bill 2013. The bill is designed to severely punish members of criminal organisations who commit serious offences. Those who do commit such an offence will be declared a vicious lawless associate and will receive an extra 15 years imprisonment cumulative to any imprisonment imposed for the declared offence. Further, if the declared offence involved violence, an additional cumulative period of 10 years imprisonment will also apply.

The second piece of legislation is the Tattoo Parlours Bill 2013, which introduces a licensing regime for tattoo parlours and tattooists. Members of criminal organisations will be banned from owning, operating or working in tattoo parlours. This act will also prohibit these thugs wearing their colours inside licensed premises and within areas prescribed by regulation. Also, licences such as building and security provider licences will be refused to individuals who are members of these criminal gangs.

The third piece of legislation is the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) Amendment Bill 2013 which will amend the Criminal Code to include a number of new offences and circumstances of aggravation. Some new offences under this bill will include: a maximum three years and minimum six months imprisonment and mandatory crushing of any vehicle used when knowingly gathering in groups of three or more in public places, going to banned locations as prescribed by regulation and promoting or recruiting for the organisation; an increase in the maximum penalty for affray from one to seven years, with a minimum six months imprisonment and crushing of any vehicle used; mandatory disqualification of drivers' licences for three months; changes to the Bail Act with a presumption against bail for members of these criminal gangs, coupled with mandatory passport surrender; enhancement of evade police offences and search and identifying particulars powers; and myriad additional powers to the CMC.

As the Attorney-General indicated, there will also be a special, ultrasecure facility at Woodford Correctional Centre to house the highest risk members of these criminal motorcycle gangs. As prisoners they will face restricted out of cell hours, no TVs, no gym, increased drug testing, one hour

of visit time per week, frequent cell searches, phone monitoring and mail censoring. Make no mistake, those that do the crime will most definitely do hard time.

Since coming into government in March 2012, the Newman government has been unapologetic in our tough stance on law and order. We are totally committed to cleaning up our streets and making Queensland the safest place to live and raise a child. I have represented the Currumbin electorate for almost a decade now and during that time I have frequently stood up in this House and called for stronger measures. I often referred to the Labor government as limp-wristed and soft on crime, unlike the LNP who put community safety first and foremost.

While I acknowledge this legislation imposes tough penalties—some civil libertarians have even referred to them as draconian—we make no apologies for this hard-hitting stance. This government has been left with little choice but to take strong, swift and decisive action to put a halt to the obnoxious behaviour of criminal motorcycle gangs. From surveys I have conducted over the years, Currumbin residents have continually indicated that they rate law and order as the highest priority. People have a right to feel safe in their homes, and safe on their streets. As the government of Queensland, we have an obligation to deliver that.

I am in no way suggesting Currumbin is a crime hot spot—quite the reverse actually because of a close-knit community working with our dedicated police officers. From Senior Sergeant Mark Johnston at Coolangatta to Senior Sergeant Chris Ahern at Palm Beach and Senior Constable Kurt Foessel at Elanora Police Beat, these officers and their teams are to be commended for their efforts in ensuring Currumbin remains a safe and happy environment for people to live, work and bring up their families.

Despite the very best efforts of our police, there are certain low-lives in our society who believe they can live outside the law and place innocent people in danger. Well, honourable members, they cannot. Their time is up. They have shown a total disregard for public safety and the people of Queensland have had enough. This government has had enough. This government has drawn a line in the sand. Thugs that are members of these criminal motorcycle gangs are going to feel the full force of the law as we show them they do not own the streets and their behaviour will not be tolerated.

Both the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police have introduced a raft of legislation over the past 18 months that has made significant inroads in cracking down on crime. These include: tougher penalties for drug trafficking; mandatory minimum sentencing for possession and trafficking firearms; tougher penalties for assault and murder of a police officer; and the toughest unexplained wealth laws in the country. This is on top of the extra police installed throughout the state over the past 18 months—some 140 on the Gold Coast alone.

In recent weeks we have seen these criminals defy these laws and act with total contempt for our officers and the wider community. With this legislation we will find them, we will stop them, we will punish them and we will put them behind bars.

An article in the *Sunday Mail* by Greg Stolz and Josh Robinson on 6 October 2013 highlighted the widespread reach of bikie extortion and standover tactics on small businesses indicating the problem is broader than just the Gold Coast. It is a state-wide issue and requires a whole-of-state approach to once and for all stamp this behaviour out of our communities. This legislation is poised to do just that.

The Gold Coast is a premier tourism destination, one that attracts millions of domestic and international visitors each year. It is a safe, family friendly location and remains so despite the ugly actions of a few. The Gold Coast is also home to 61,500 registered businesses, 96.5 per cent of them small businesses, many of whom have been doing it tough in recent years. Unfortunately, though, it would appear some have been set up or infiltrated by motorcycle gang members and are involved in laundering and other illegal activities. Others suffer extortion, threats and standover tactics under the guises of protection. This behaviour will be targeted and stopped through this legislation and Task Force Takeback.

In order to have a swift response we need people to come forward and report these activities, to work with our officers and to contact Crime Stoppers with information that may help catch these miserable creatures who prey on decent Queenslanders. I applaud the decision to put Assistant Commissioner Brett Pointing, Superintendent Jim Keogh and Inspector Des Lacey in charge of Task Force Takeback. These are very senior officers with many years of experience, particularly on the Gold Coast. I recall their professionalism, their courage and their effectiveness when we had significant issues with out-of-control youth and parties in the Currumbin electorate about eight years ago. I have every confidence they will rid us of the scourge of criminal motorcycle gangs.

In this House on 2 August 2012 I said: 'Criminals should be afraid of this LNP government. They should clean up their act or get out of Queensland.' They would be very wise to heed these words or face some very unpleasant consequences as a result of their actions.