

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDERS — GPS TRACKING

823. Ms R.S. STEPHENS to the Attorney General:

I refer to the expansion of GPS monitoring conditions for family violence perpetrators by the Cook Labor government.

- (1) Can the Attorney General outline to the house how these tougher monitoring requirements build on the measures introduced by the Labor government in 2020?
- (2) Can the Attorney General advise the house how these measures will protect the community and hold domestic violence perpetrators to account?

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

Thank you very much for the question, member.

- (1)–(2) It was in 2017, on the election of the government, that the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence was appointed. We have already passed new legislation introducing new offences like persistent family violence and declarations of serial family violence offenders and increased penalties. However, we recently announced new measures to track domestic violence offenders in the community to stop them in their tracks. The courts will be required to mandatorily order the affixation of a bracelet to domestic violence offenders in three circumstances, the first of which is when a person is accused or convicted of breaching a family violence restraining order by the commission of a family violence offence, and that includes 30 offences ranging from murder right down to stalking and threats. Secondly, a person who is accused of a family violence offence who is subject to a serial family violence offender declaration will have a bracelet affixed mandatorily. Thirdly, a person who is released from prison under parole or a post-sentence supervision order for a family violence offence and a restraining order is in place—as there usually is because on imprisoning a family violence offender, the courts regularly impose a violence restraining order to take effect upon the person’s release from custody—will also have a bracelet affixed mandatorily by order of the Prisoners Review Board. Those offenders who are directed to stay at home on bail can have a bracelet mandatorily affixed as well to make sure that they stay there. Additionally, we will be introducing a mandatory term of imprisonment for those people who have been ordered to wear a bracelet but cut it off, because but for that bracelet, they would likely have been behind the wall. If they cut their bracelet off, that will be an express ticket to go back behind the wall. I note that when the Supreme Court orders the affixation of a bracelet under the High Risk Serious Offenders Act, the unlawful removal of that bracelet by an offender results in a 12-month mandatory term of imprisonment. We think that a six-month mandatory term in these circumstances is very good.

The technology has been developing apace. We introduced this as a trial. Now we are breeding it out into a larger cohort—those people I have referred to. But I want the chamber to rest assured that technology is developing all the time and that we will be taking further measures to keep pace with the development of technology, including artificial intelligence, which will help us keep track of these types of offenders. This government will not rest and will not slacken off in its effort to suppress domestic and family violence.