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PNM Senator Camille Robinson-Regis has called for the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Bill, 2014, to go before a Joint Select Committee for further examination and for various issues to be dealt with before it became law.

She also warned that if there was no proper policing, the legislation would be pointless.

Robinson-Regis made the comment during her contribution in the Senate yesterday.

Mentioning legislation which prohibited texting while driving and legislation which required that seatbelts be worn, Robinson-Regis said these laws were not always enforced.

“The question that keeps troubling me is the issue of policing. Right now we have a situation where people are supposed to wear their seatbelts, children are supposed to be in their car seats, persons are supposed to drive without their cell phones and also drive without drinking.

“But the policing of this has not been extremely effective and if this legislation is to have any real effect we need to understand what would be the mechanism for really effectively policing all of these changes that would be taking place,” Robinson-Regis said.

Another factor of concern in the bill was the fact that police officers would also be required to assess people suspected of using drugs.

“That is going to create some issues and it is something that needs more careful consideration and we need to look at that a lot more closely because there are some concerns where people are wondering how that would work effectively.

“How do you ensure that a blood test would be taken when it would most effectively show that someone is under the influence of drugs?” Robinson-Regis asked.

Senator and Planning Minister Bhoë Tewarie, who agreed that policing was an issue, said sometimes the police officers were better at lockdowns, referring to the nationwide roadblock which crippled the country on March 23.

He said the highest road deaths figures were on Independence Day and New Year's Day.

In her contribution, Senator Rev Joy Abdul-Mohan called on parents to ensure their children were properly secured in the car, saying too often children were spotted "jumping up and down" while in the back seats.

Opposition Senator Shamfa Cudjoe also called for the bill to go before a Joint Select Committee.

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.tt/news/2015-05-12/call-new-road-bill-go-jsc>