

~~This is a short term response to a problem that is going to require a short, medium and long term solution. In the medium term, Mareeba and Tablelands residents will be establishing a bicycle users group to help both local and state governments plan and design their investment strategy for road networks and bike paths. In the longer term, I hope that we can see a dedicated bike path off the highway linking Mareeba and Atherton. It has benefits not just for commuting to work in Mareeba but also for cycle tourism right through the Atherton Tablelands which has enormous potential.~~

~~(Time expired)~~

~~Interruption.~~

## JUVENILE JUSTICE (SENTENCING PRINCIPLES) AMENDMENT BILL

### First Reading

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.36 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Juvenile Justice Act 1992 for a particular purpose. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

*Tabled paper:* Juvenile Justice (Sentencing Principles) Amendment Bill.

*Tabled paper:* Juvenile Justice (Sentencing Principles) Amendment Bill, explanatory notes.

### Second Reading

**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.36 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Violent and dangerous young offenders are a genuine threat to the social order of Queensland where, on a daily basis, serious crimes are committed by children. Responding to youth crime must be measured and based on evidence and research. Some might try to say that youth crime rates have dropped over the past few years, but the number of actual crimes continues to rise. We cannot ignore the importance that deterrence and sound rehabilitation play in tackling youth crime across Queensland.

This bill will reintroduce an amendment to the Juvenile Justice Act that will remove the reference to 'detention as a last resort' and replace it with 'detention where appropriate and for a length of time that is justified in the circumstances'. There can be no doubt that courts should not be held to this statement of 'detention as a last resort' when they are dealing with extremely violent or habitual juvenile offenders.

Recent figures indicate that detention as a last resort has meant most violent young rapists and armed robbers never see the inside of a detention centre. Not one of the 35 juveniles convicted of producing or supplying dangerous drugs went to detention in 2007-08, and 114 of the 147 convicted violent robbers also escaped detention in 2007-08. Figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in late February this year indicate that only five per cent of all juvenile offenders were sent to detention in 2008. I seek leave to have the remainder of my second reading speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

In mid 2008 Griffith University held a symposium on Youth Violence where it was noted that Violence is concentrated among young people, generically 12 to 25, the early years of the age crime curve tends to show that there's a rapid increase of violence around 15 to 16 and starts to go down at 18 to 20. But that doesn't dispute the fact that young people are also likely to be victimised as well.

Queensland Professor Paul Mazerolle has analysed police crime statistics. In his findings it was found that youth violence is on the rise. In Queensland the number of assaults committed by males aged 15 to 19 grew by 15% between 1996 and 2005. And during the same period, the number of assaults committed by females rose dramatically.

These figures should be a wake up call to anyone who wants to take the path of apathy towards youth Violence.

Detention should not be seen as a holiday or a break for young offenders, it should provide real rehabilitation and reform to break the cycle of violence and give the young person a chance at a better future. In a 2008 survey conducted by the Child Guardian it found that of the 60 young people surveyed in 2007 almost 75% of young detainees had been there previously, and on average most had been there 5 or more times.

Periods of detention need to be proportionate to the crime and for a period of time that ensures the offender is able to access and complete meaningful rehabilitation programs. The figures currently indicate a revolving door of juvenile detention.

In the same survey by the Child Guardian it was found that the average length of imprisonment for over half the Juveniles in detention was less than 3 months. As we know from adult corrections, getting on to a rehabilitation program can take months and for them to be effective it needs an intensive approach.

This Bill seeks to restore balance and common sense and uphold community expectations to the way in which young people are sentenced to periods of detention and for the length of such sentences.

I commend the Bill to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I mention to the member for Southern Downs that there is currently on the *Notice Paper* a bill amending the same act.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, adjourned.

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## ~~PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS~~

~~Resumed from p. 691.~~

### ~~Skilling Queenslanders for Work~~

~~**Ms JARRATT** (Whitsunday—ALP) (11.40 am): The Bligh government's Skilling Queenslanders for Work program has existed to support those with significant barriers to employment or who are at risk of long-term unemployment. While support for this cohort remains a central plank of the government's policy, we are also focusing on a new generation of job seekers who will be impacted by the global economic downturn. All predictions point to a period of growing unemployment that will particularly impact the young and the unskilled.~~

~~Skilling Queenslanders for Work has assisted more than 21,000 job seekers during the first nine months of the 2008–09 financial year, but we believe that more needs to be done to counter the looming threat. That is why the Bligh government has stepped up its efforts to engage with those already unemployed and those at risk of being unemployed through programs like Get Set for Work in which early school leavers or those at risk of leaving school early are mentored and assisted to identify their particular strengths, build on these skills and access an entry point into either the workforce or further training.~~

~~I was pleased to attend the graduation of a group of young people in Caloundra last week where enormous benefits have flowed from engagement with the Get Set for Work program. The government's latest employment strategy, the Green Army, is shaping up to be extremely successful on two fronts. Firstly, placements of up to six months in employment projects will benefit young people, long-term unemployed and recently retrenched workers who will earn a wage while learning new skills or undertaking training. At the same time, this program will be working to conserve and restore the natural environment in communities across the state.~~

~~In a new era of state Commonwealth partnership, the Bligh and Rudd governments have joined forces to deliver the Productivity Places Program which is already providing additional training places for job seekers. The Productivity Places Program has placed over 16,000 participants in Queensland in training already.~~

### ~~Fuel Subsidy~~

~~**Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (11.42 am): After 12 years the Labor government in Queensland is finally going to get its way and have Queenslanders slugged with a fuel tax. For 12 years now Queensland has been the only state that has not had to pay a fuel tax. It has been one of the great legacies of the last conservative government in Queensland. In 1997 the coalition government recognised the impact that a fuel tax would have on Queenslanders and moved to ensure that the fuel tax that was levied by the Commonwealth government was returned to Queenslanders to compensate them for the distances that are involved in the geography of Queensland.~~

~~For 12 years the Labor government has sought every opportunity to erode that fuel tax, to erode the credibility of that legacy of the coalition government and has looked for any excuse to take that 9c out of the pockets of Queensland motorists. It appears that by 1 July it will have finally succeeded in eroding that great legacy of the coalition government and imposed a fuel tax on Queensland motorists.~~

~~A fuel tax will have a profound effect on every Queenslanders who owns and operates a motor car. It will have the greatest effect on those people who live in rural and regional Queensland where long distance travel on a weekly or daily basis is a fact of life. Those Queenslanders have no option but to use fuel in large quantities. For those people to be slugged by a Labor government is an outrage. It is an outrage for the Labor government to use the imposition of a fuel tax on those people as a source of funds to try to cover its economic mismanagement that has seen it go broke in a boom and rack up a record level of debt. It has now turned to a fuel tax to try to cover its own economic mismanagement.~~

### ~~Logan Refugee Health Clinic~~

~~**Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (11.44 am): I am privileged to represent an area that welcomes and supports humanitarian refugees from diverse areas such as Africa, Burma and the Middle East.~~