

## **Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises - Castle Law) Amendment Bill 2024**

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# FamilyVoice: Parliamentary Submission on Castle Law

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Background: FamilyVoice Australia is a national Christian advocacy group – promoting family, freedom, and faith: values for the benefit of all Australians. Our vision is to see strong families at the heart of a healthy society: where marriage is honoured, human life is respected, families flourish, Australia’s Christian heritage is valued, and fundamental freedoms are enjoyed.

## Introduction:

In my opinion, the request that the Queensland Parliament consider changing the law to reflect suggestions in “The Castle Law,” has great merit. Why?

People should feel safe and secure in their home. Furthermore, they should be able to act vigorously and decisively, if it’s plain to them that someone is attempting a home invasion.

The right to protect innocent life and property represents nothing new in the Australian community. They are implicit in the Ten Commandments, which instruct us that “You shall not murder” (the Sixth) and “You shall not steal” (the Eighth).

Below, I set forth four statements from the Castle Law press release, attempting to elaborate on them.

*1. The Private Members Bill... aims to bolster the legal defence available to victims of home invasions.*

There are a significant proportion of young men especially today in Qld, who are not afraid to break into homes, to steal cars for joy-riding, or to attempt other forms of crime. In recent years, some of these crimes have become brazen.

Successfully stealing a car among these thieves is now being seen as a great achievement, a badge of honour, and they are commonly not afraid of any consequences. For many Qld people, that’s become a disturbing and unsettling matter.

What can law abiding people do to protect themselves? They can call the Police, but not much else. Confronting these criminals is dangerous.

*2. “Currently a person can only defend themselves with force that is reasonably necessary in all of the circumstances. What is deemed ‘reasonable’ is open to very broad interpretation,” Mr Dametto said.*

Law-abiding people in a free country, need to have the means to take appropriate steps to protect themselves, in the event of a home invasion. But if they wish to procure a firearm for this purpose, Queensland law expressly prohibits them from doing so. Is this tolerable?

I don't believe that it is.

*3. The rationale of Castle Law is not about promoting unnecessary violence. Its aim is to give occupants legal protections against unintended consequences of defending themselves.*

Law abiding people don't want to initiate trouble, but they must be able to safely stop troublemakers, who are themselves bent on crime. In a free society, its morally legitimate and proper to do so, when the situation requires it, in order to preserve the communities' good order and safety.

*4. The safety and security of Queensland residents should be a basic human right. I believe good laws should be in place to protect good people, and adopting Castle Law is an important step towards achieving this goal.*

We are at a point today, when Queenslanders cannot take their right to safety and security, as a given. The plain facts of criminality attest to the fact that our streets are not as safe or secure as they once were. Criminal behaviour isn't likely to change, without a change in law that permits the law-abiding householder to procure and use a weapon for their self-protection, for the protection of their household, and their property.

It's time for our legislators to act on this, enabling law-abiding Queenslanders to protect themselves, their loved ones and their property.