

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL 2023

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Subject: Youth Justice and Human Rights
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To whom it may concern,

I write to express my sincere concern and apprehension at the recent decision to expand the punitive response to youth crime, specifically the "breach of bail" offence and the decision to override human rights conventions already in place. I would also like to express my support for raising the age of criminal accountability in Queensland.

As a high school teacher, I see first-hand - and daily - the impact that policy decisions have on our young people. My feeling is that the Queensland Labor Government's current approach to youth crime is politically motivated and not based on tangible, replicable evidence.

My suggestion instead would be to bolster spending on public schools, expand access to health and mental health services in the regions, reduce cost and access barriers to tertiary education and adequately address rising profit-driven inequities in housing by prioritising public and social housing in the regions over, for example, south-eastern vanity projects like the Olympics Games. I find that an holistic approach to crime reduction would include some analysis of root causes rather than the systemic blaming of vulnerable young people for not already having the personal resources to improve their own outcomes.

As Ms Palaszczuk is my local member, I feel compelled to express how disappointing I find this approach in light of having voted Labor in past elections, and with the 15 years of experience I now have proudly now accrued working with our amazing young people in public schools around the state at a time in which optimism for their healthy and prosperous future is increasingly harder to cling to.

Please consider.

Regards,
Helen Smith

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