STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL 2023

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Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal

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QUEENSLAND INDIGENOUS FAMILY VIOLENCE LEGAL SERVICE

Submission to the Economics and Governance
Committee regarding the *Strengthening Community*Safety Bill 2023

24 February 2023

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The Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service (QIFVLS) Submission to the 57th Queensland Parliament Economics and Governance Committee regarding the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023

Executive Summary

Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service (QIFVLS) Aboriginal Corporation ('QIFVLS') welcomes the opportunity to provide submissions on the recently tabled *Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023* (the Bill).

As a member of the Coalition of Peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations (Coalition of Peaks), QIFVLS is dedicated to achieving the priority reforms and socio-economic targets outlined in the National Agreement on Closing The Gap. Together with seeking a safe community for all, QIFVLS is also dedicated to achieving Targets 10 and 11 (reducing the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and youth in the criminal justice system) in conjunction with the remaining targets and priority reforms, most notably, Target 13 (ensuring families and households are safe and that domestic and family violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children is reduced by at least 50% by 2031 as we progress towards 0). In that regard we support any measures which will achieve the safety of the community and families, particularly children.

We understand that the objective of the Bill is community safety. As an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) and family violence prevention legal service (FVPLS) devoted to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence, community safety is paramount for our organisation. What can sometimes be overlooked is that a great number of victims of the crimes we are discussing are also our clients. Like other ACCOs, Elders and stakeholder groups in Queensland, we want to work with government and the parliament to find solutions to youth crime and ultimately keep our communities safe. This is significant because our observations on the ground are that by the time many of our clients – mostly women and children - come to us for assistance and support, they will have already fallen through the cracks in the current system. Cracks which rapidly lead their children, victim-survivors of family violence, into out-of-home care and appearances before the courts as accused young persons, youth offenders and serial repeat youth offenders.

Thus, finding solutions to youth crime is relevant to QIFVLS given our experiences of family violence as an intersection point revealing systemic failures in child protection and youth crime, alongside adult crime, health, housing/homelessness, education and family law. Heavy handed and knee-jerk solutions from a criminal justice perspective will not adequately overcome the deep-seated systemic drivers and underlying factors that lead us to the situation we are facing. We do not need to highlight that the tougher-on-crime approach has been routinely proven not to reduce serious repeat youth offending. Priority Reform 1 of the National Agreement on Closing The Gap, signed up to by the Queensland Government, centres on shared decision-making and partnerships. This has not been our experience through this process.

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If we use previous tough-on-crime approaches as a guide, the success of these reforms will be to increase the number of young children being placed in custody. The Productivity Commission's 2023 Report on Government Services highlighted that in the 2021-2022 period, Queensland had a daily average number of 267 children held in detention, amidst a total of 697 children and young people in custody nationwide¹. As a percentage, that equates to Queensland holding 38% of Australia's children and young people in custody as a daily average number in 2021-2022. If the tougher-on-crime approach was working, shouldn't Queensland already be the safest society in Australia?

The point of primacy in our submission is that harsher penalties leading to increased detention for youth offenders, predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander youth offenders, will not reduce the amount of serious repeat offending unless serious coordinated whole-of-government and community efforts are made to reform and address the underlying factors and drivers leading to poverty, income inequality, low economic participation, health inequity, systemic racism and substance addiction.

Certainly, going so far as to legislate to override the *Human Rights Act 2019* to remove the human rights of children will not reduce the amount of serious repeat youth offenders. To the contrary, this will only serve to increase the numbers of children and young people being detained and ultimately feed the pipeline of children transferring from youth detention into the adult prison system. Without a prioritised focus on countering underlying systemic drivers of youth crime, Queensland's average daily youth detention population will increase. The Explanatory Notes to this Bill referenced a figure of 17% as the number of serious repeat offenders. This figure will also increase without addressing the underlying causes of youth crime.

At QIFVLS, we believe that highlighting efforts at the tertiary response level through police and the courts, while important, will not ultimately succeed unless there is sustained investment and commitment to programs at the front-end through a range of measures including early intervention and prevention. Similar sentiments were voiced by Former Commissioner Atkinson in his Youth Justice Reforms Review when he noted that the wide range of issues associated with youth offending are such that it will require ongoing investment and monitoring with respect to both prevention and response². Unless we learn the lessons of the past, we will see further unintended consequences leaving neither the community safe nor providing opportunities for the children and young people before the courts to turn their lives around and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Rehabilitation and reformation are still recognisable aims of the sentencing process.

Summary of QIFVLS submissions

QIFVLS offers the following feedback:

- We are deeply concerned that a less restrictive approach to reducing serious repeat offending could not be utilised other than to expressly remove human rights protections under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.
- We desire a community solution to ensuring community safety for victims of crime but we do not believe that harsher penalties leading to increased youth detention will have the desired effect.
 This is supported by previous failed efforts and a litany of reports.
- Priority Reform 1 of the National Agreement on Closing The Gap emphasises shared decisionmaking and partnerships. The legislative process so far for this Bill has been the total opposite with no meaningful consultation.

² Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (QLD), Youth Justice Reforms Review (2022), https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/about-us/reviews-inquiries/youth-justice-reforms-review page 14

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¹ Australian Productivity Commission (2023), Report on Government Services (Part F: Youth Justice services) https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2023/community-services/youth-justice

- From our experiences, family violence is the cornerstone linking an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person's connection with the youth justice system, child protection, adult crime, health, housing and adult crime. Reducing youth crime requires a whole of government approach to tackling the underlying causes and drivers. The Bill does not prioritise such a course of action.
- We urge the government and parliament to engage in a shared consultation process to comprehensively overcome the challenges of youth offending and the social causes and drivers behind it with evidence-based solutions.

About QIFVLS

QIFVLS is a not-for-profit legal service formed under the Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program ('FVPLSP') through the Department of Prime Minster and Cabinet's Indigenous Advancement Strategy ('IAS'). FVPLSP fills a recognised gap in access to culturally appropriate legal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims of family and domestic violence and sexual assault.

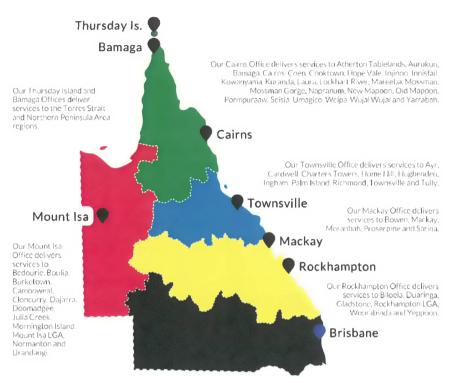
QIFVLS is one of fourteen (14) Family Violence Prevention Legal Services ('FVPLSs') across Australia and one of the thirteen (13) FVPLSs that are part of the National Family Violence Prevention Legal Service ('NFVPLS') Forum. We are one of two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled family violence prevention legal service providers in Queensland.

QIFVLS is exclusively dedicated to providing legal and non-legal support services to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims/survivors of family violence and sexual assault with a breadth and scope of services which stretch to the outer islands of the Torres Strait, neighbouring Papua New Guinea. Together with its legal services, QIFVLS can be distinguished from other legal assistance providers through its advantage in providing unique, specialised, culturally safe and holistic assistance from the front-end via a wrap-around model that embraces early intervention and prevention. We advocate this model in supporting access to justice and keeping victim-survivors of family violence safe.

QIFVLS services 80+ communities across Queensland including the Outer Islands of the Torres Strait, neighbouring Papua New Guinea and provides services in the areas of domestic and family violence; family law; child protection; sexual assault and Victims Assist Queensland (VAQ) applications. QIFVLS supports its clients through all stages of the legal process: from legal advice to representation throughout court proceedings. In addition, QIFVLS responds and addresses our clients' non-legal needs through our integrated non-therapeutic case management process, which is addressed through the identified role of the Case Management Officer. QIFVLS as a practice, provides a holistic service response to our clients' needs: addressing legal need and addressing non-legal needs, that have in most cases, brought our clients into contact with the justice system in the first place.

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Our Brisbane Office delivers services to Beenleigh, Brisbane LGA, Caboo'ture: Cleveland, Ipswich, Logan, Moreton Bay, Pine Rivers, Reddliffe, Southport and Wynnum,

As demonstrated by the above map QIFVLS is mainly an outreach service where our teams go into rural and remote communities to meet with clients. QIFVLS services over 80+ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Queensland. Recognising that Queensland is nearly five (5) times the size of Japan; seven (7) times the size of Great Britain and two and a half (2.5) times the size of Texas³, QIFVLS has eight (8) offices in Queensland —

- (1) a service delivery office in addition to its Head Office located in Cairns, responsible for servicing Cape York communities, Cooktown; Atherton Tablelands, Innisfail, and Yarrabah (and communities in between);
- (2) a service delivery office in Bamaga responsible for servicing Cape York communities as far north as Bamaga and Umagico;
- (3) a service delivery office on Thursday Island responsible for servicing communities stretching to the Outer Islands of the Torres Strait, neighbouring Papua New Guinea;
- (4) a service delivery office in Townsville responsible for servicing Townsville, Palm Island, Charters Towers, Richmond and Hughenden (and communities in between);
- (5) a service delivery office in Rockhampton responsible for servicing Rockhampton, Woorabinda, Mt Morgan, Biloela (and communities in between);
- (6) a service delivery office in Mount Isa responsible for servicing Mount Isa, the Gulf of Carpentaria communities, as far south as Bedourie and across to Julia Creek (and communities in between);

³ https://www.qld.gov.au/about/about-queensland/statistics-facts/facts

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(7) a service delivery office in Brisbane responsible for servicing the Brisbane local government area.

Family violence as the cornerstone

QIFVLS' experience is that family violence is the cornerstone or intersection, that links an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person's connection to the adult criminal justice system, the youth justice system, child protection system, housing and/or homelessness and the family law system.

These 'connectors' are further compounded or exacerbated for those living in regional, rural and remote parts of Australia, where there are restrictions on the availability of actual on the ground services to assist a victim-survivor escaping a violent relationship⁴ (i.e., domestic violence support services and shelters; actual police presence within a community).

Through QIFVLS' provision of legal advice, legal casework, and non-legal supports, QIFVLS has witnessed the multi-faceted impacts of family violence daily, including the intersection between family violence, family law, child protection, and the criminal justice system.

In contrast to siloed government responses, QIFVLS advocates for uniform and consistent strategies that improve responses in the policing and criminal justice system, corrective services and the child protection system.

The Bill's conflict with the Government's existing policy

The increasing rates of youth detention are occurring amidst a backdrop of overall youth offending decreasing, as noted in the Youth Justice Reforms Review prepared by Former Commissioner Atkinson. Accordingly, the government's proposed reforms will have the effect of increasing the likelihood of young offenders returning to custody, thus entrenching them in the criminal justice system and structurally dismantling their families and communities.

A litany of reports have detailed that higher imprisonment rates only serve to reinforce dysfunction and disempowerment, perpetuating the cycle of offending and imprisonment. The longer high incarceration rates persist, the further entrenched the norms that cause offending become and the more difficult and expensive they will be to address.

The Government's policy position for youth justice, the *Four Pillars*, states that one of its objectives is to keep children out of custody, alongside reducing reoffending. While we wholeheartedly agree with the importance and necessity of community safety, we have deep misgivings about the conflict between the objective to keep children out of custody and the growing number of children who are being placed in custody, especially being held within watch house conditions in excess of a few days.

When the Honourable Minister Ryan stated that 17% of serious repeat offenders are responsible for almost 50% of serious crimes by young people, we worry that some in the community may interpret this with a false sense of security, for want of a better term, in that we only have a relatively small number of offenders to deal with. This ignores the fact that our collective failures to address the underlying causes and drivers of youth crime will assuredly see that figure of 17% rise when this matter is revisited. Looking at this from another angle, if this Bill is focused on making serious repeat offenders accountable for their actions, what protections are in place for the children who aren't serious repeat offenders yet find themselves caught in the net and sentenced to detention?

⁴ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), Alcohol and other drug use in regional; and remote Australia: consumption, harms, and access to treatment 2016-17. Cat.no. HSE 212. Canberra.

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Overriding the operation of the Human Rights Act 2019, ss43 & 44

The Bill and the Explanatory Notes make frequent reference to the requirement for the amendments to include declarations overriding the *Human Rights Act 2019* (HRA) so that the human rights of a child subject to these provisions will not apply. We are cognisant of corresponding rights and responsibilities. We are also mindful of the rights of families and the general community to safety. Yet we are gravely concerned that a less restrictive approach to reducing serious repeat offending could not be found other than to expressly remove human rights protections for children.

We note section 13(2)(c) of the HRA provides that limiting a human right is reasonable and justifiable where it can be demonstrated that the limitation will help the government to achieve its purpose. The Statement of Compatibility acknowledges that in certain provisions, an effect of the amendments will be such that the rates of youth detention, especially among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, will rise.

While we all have the goal of ensuring community safety, we fail to see how imprisoning more children, curtailing their human rights, feeding the pipeline into the adult criminal justice system and entrenching disadvantage will protect victims of crime and keep the community safe in the long run. We submit that the government has not effectively demonstrated how the new legislation will achieve its purpose in the long run.

Echoing the statement provided by the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner, we believe that the government must consult widely and properly consider evidence-based solutions rather than override human rights protections⁵.

Why do human rights protections for children need to be removed in order to reduce serious repeat offending?

We are aware that human rights provisions are generally interpreted broadly and that a person or families not being safe in their homes could impact sections 24 and 26 of the HRA. At QIFVLS, section 26 of the HRA holds relevance to our work as a family violence prevention legal service, reinforcing our desire for community safety. Yet in this regard and on this issue, the critical point in this discussion that needs to be asked is why does Queensland's *Human Rights Act* specifically include rights particular to children – children in the criminal justice system and corrections (sections 17, 32 and 33) - and rights specifically referring to the cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (section 28)? Rhetorically asking, why were these vulnerable groups specifically in need of protection under the *Human Rights Act*?

Exceptional circumstances

The Statement of Compatibility acknowledges sections of the new legislation which are incompatible with human rights. In that regard, we note provisions in the Bill containing the section 43 Override Declaration. There are two points which are striking in this regard. Firstly, the *Human Rights Act 2019* is explicit that the section 43 Override Declaration is intended for *exceptional circumstances* such as war, health emergencies or other threats to public safety or life on a grand scale.

We note that section 44 of the HRA requires that the member who introduces a Bill containing an override declaration must make a statement to the Legislative Assembly explaining the exceptional circumstances that justify including the override declaration. On reviewing the statement made by the Honourable Minister, he refers to there being a 7 percentage point increase in the number of young people being categorised as serious repeat offenders in the Children's Court Annual Report. In a 12 month period, it

⁵ Queensland Human Rights Commission, https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0020/42509/2023.02.21-Media-statement-Rush-to-pass-youth-justice-laws.pdf

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has risen from 10% to 17%. What was not mentioned in the Minister's statement was that the Children's Court Annual Report goes on to mention that while 17% represents a larger percentage of young people than in previous years, "this is the first time those young people have been measured against the Serious Repeat Offender Index so that may account for the difference."

We acknowledge the seriousness of the offending behaviour by serious repeat offenders amidst a backdrop of decreasing rates of youth offending. However, we want the government to clarify how referring to "a small cohort of youth offenders" is akin to a threat to public safety on the same scale as a war or a COVID-19 health emergency to the point that human rights protections for children are being overridden.

We are deeply troubled by the fact that this course of action is being taken when we know that sending more children into detention does not lead to a change in their behaviour and ultimately does not lead to safety for the community or victims of crime without firstly addressing the root causes and drivers of youth offending.

Estimated costs to government

We welcome the Bill's inclusion of multi-agency collaborative panels (MACPs) and support their effectiveness in bringing together relevant agencies and non-government service providers. Queensland's Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce examined the concept of multi-agency responses in the context of domestic and family violence⁷. We support utilising multi-agency responses accordingly in relation to youth justice responses.

It was noticeable to QIFVLS though that while the Minister announced a package of new investment measures amounting to \$332 million, an amount of \$100 million was dedicated to diversion and rehabilitation. While we look forward to clarifying the exact investment amounts, the issue of investment raises a point previously made by QIFVLS regarding investment by government and where and for what purposes, government resources are being invested.

QIFVLS advocates that any investment or resourcing must be done so based on effecting generational change. This in turn will require commitments to long term funding measures and a focus on achieving 'outcomes' as opposed to being output orientated. Evaluation frameworks will also need to be established to monitor and track the achieved outcomes. These outcomes should also be measured against the Targets Queensland has signed onto achieving arising out of the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap, namely Targets 10 and 11 (overrepresentation within detention/ prisons of adults and young people who are Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander).

Additionally, the focus on 'preventative measures' must shift away from a tertiary response – that is the more punitive criminal justice type response as well as the child protection response – to a focus on bolstering at the *front end* in relation to early intervention and prevention. This focus on a shift away from tertiary responses to front end early intervention and prevention was highlighted in the 2019 Queensland

https://www.womenstaskforce.qld.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0014/700601/volume-2-the-mountains-wemust-climb.pdf

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⁶ Department of Justice and Attorney-General (QLD), Children's Court Annual Report 2021-2022, https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/tp/2022/5722T2094-21DD.pdf, page 7

⁷ Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce (2022),

Productivity Commission Report on Imprisonment and Recidivism⁸ with the following key findings made by the Queensland Productivity Commission (QPC)⁹:

- social and economic disadvantage is strongly associated with imprisonment, around 50% of prisoners had a prior hospitalisation for mental health issue and/or were subject to a child protection. However, for female indigenous prisoners, this figure rose to 75%;
- In Queensland, the rate of imprisonment has increased by more than 160% since 1992. The costs of imprisonment is likely to outweigh the benefits, with increasing imprisonment working to reduce community safety over time given that it costs approximately \$111,000 per year to house a prisoner; prisons are not effective at rehabilitation, and can increase the likelihood of reoffending;
- High indigenous incarceration rates undermine efforts to solve disadvantage currently an
 Indigenous male in Queensland has almost a 30% chance of being imprisoned by the age of 25.
 Long term structural and economic reforms that devolve responsibility and accountability to
 Indigenous communities are required. Independent oversight of reforms is essential.
- The reforms suggested by the QPC, required as an essential first step, the overhaul of the decision-making architecture of the criminal justice system, including the establishment of an independent Justice Reform Office to provide a greater focus on longer term outcomes and evidence based policy making.
- The rate of Indigenous imprisonment is continuing to grow increasing by 45% between 2008 and 2018. This rate of growth was 50% faster than for non-Indigenous people. Additionally, whilst women in Queensland were imprisoned at much lower rates than men, it was found that female imprisonment rates in Queensland had increased by more than 60% over the last decade.

The QPC went further in their report, creating a visual time-line highlighting the stark reality of successive government policy that has focused on tertiary responses and the risk factors that gave rise to a person's contact with the criminal justice system in Queensland, especially if that person was an Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander:

⁹ Queensland Productivity Commission, August 2019, Summary Report – Imprisonment and Recidivism, p. 2.

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⁸ Queensland Productivity Commission, August 2019, Summary Report – Imprisonment and Recidivism, p.11

Contact Risk factors Exposure to drugs, tobacco or alcohol in the wornb Before birth Development of condenital disabilities 6 Parental absence Lack of a stable home environment Early exposure to criminal behaviour Familial involvement in crime Early childhood Abuse or trauma Removal from home Disorganised schooling inability to keep up with classmates due to disability/disadvantage Disproportionate disciplinary action (e.g. expulsion at a young age) Primary school Cognitive impairment Indigenous Anti-social peer networks Excessive consumption of alcohol or drugs Poor academic performance and opportunities Leaving school early without moving into other education or employment First police contact High school Mental illness Unemployment First Substance addiction Non-Indigenous Post-school/ adulthood Damage to relationships due to imprisonment Loss of housing or employment due to imprisonment

Figure 12 Risk factors and contact with the criminal justice system, Queensland

Early intervention and prevention strategies and programs, based on the trajectory by the QPC, must be targeted, before birth. This focus aligns with QIFVLS' long-term strategy of early intervention and prevention.

Youth Justice Reforms Review by Former Commissioner Atkinson

Source QPC analysis

The Youth Justice Reforms Review prepared by Former Commissioner Atkinson was telling, particularly in highlighting the disproportionate representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander young people at all levels and the strong desire for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander stakeholders and Elders to be involved at all levels of decision-making related to policy and legislative development as well as

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Cairns QLD 4870	Cairns QLD 4870	Townsville QLD 4810	Rockhampton QLD 4700	Spring Hill QLD 4004	Mt Isa QLD 4825
P: 07 4045 7500	P: 07 4030 0400	P: 07 4721 0600	P: 07 4927 6453	P: 07 3839 6857	P: 07 4749 5944
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operational and oversight roles. This is especially so given the intersectionality revolving around youth justice, child protection, family violence, health, and housing as a starting point.

It is worth noting that the review also identified matters deserving of consideration. They are:

- 1. electronic monitoring;
- 2. partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people;
- 3. identifying and managing cognitive impairments;
- 4. developing the capability to work with serious repeat offenders;
- 5. sustained commitment to early intervention;
- 6. developing place-based responses to preventing youth crime;
- 7. improved data collection;
- 8. sustaining an integrated whole of government response; and
- 9. engaging with the Queensland community about youth offending.

The National Agreement on Closing The Gap

Former Commissioner Atkinson's reference to partnerships and the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and Elders bears revisiting when seen in the context of the National Agreement on Closing The Gap ('CTG Agreement'). This Agreement was signed up to by the federal government together with all state and territory governments, including Queensland. Together with 17 socio-economic targets, most relevantly Target 11 (reducing the rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in detention), the CTG Agreement contained four priority reforms contained within the CTG Agreement—

- Priority Reform 1 Formal partnerships and shared decision-making;
- Priority Reform 2 Building the community-controlled sector;
- Priority Reform 3 Transformation of mainstream institutions;
- Priority Reform 4 Sharing data and information to support decision-making.

Despite the existence of a Justice Policy Partnership involving government agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), all committed to reducing the incarceration numbers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, there was no meaningful consultation with ACCOs prior to the introduction of the Bill. The Explanatory Notes refer to the government receiving 197 submissions via the online survey portal, of which QIFVLS was one. However, lodging an online submission cannot be characterised in the same manner as the good faith back-and-forth consideration of stakeholder viewpoints and feedback a reasonable person would expect in a detailed and considered consultation process.

As an FVPLS committed to community safety, we like other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations, stakeholder groups and Elders want to be part of the solution. Many of the victims of these offences come from our own communities. This is a complex issue with many causes and underlying factors and deep-seated intergenerational trauma. On this point, we are deeply disappointed that there has been no meaningful consultation process. The Explanatory Notes and the Statement of Compatibility openly concede that there may be a rise in the numbers of children sentenced to detention and that human rights protections ordinarily afforded to Australian children will be removed for the purposes of this legislation.

Closing the Gap is not a notion solely relegated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to figure out. What affects Australia's First Nations peoples, families and communities will affect all of us as

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Australians, our families and communities and this is already evident in the current community outcry over youth crime. When we consider the socio-economic targets and the priority reforms, especially shared decision-making and partnerships and the lack of consultation, we feel that we are at a crossroads.

It is deeply disappointing that in the same week the Path to Treaty Bill 2023 was introduced to Parliament, a ground-breaking moment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland, against the backdrop of referendum to be held on the Voice to Parliament, in the same week, this Bill is introduced. This is a clear example of a 1 step forward and 10 step back approach which is clearly at odds with the intent and purpose of the National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Queensland Police Service relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Her Honour Judge Richards DCJ's findings resulting from the 2022 Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service (QPS) responses to incidences of domestic and family violence highlighted the significant work required by the Queensland Police Service to rebuild fractured relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities¹⁰.

In announcing the significant funding boost to the QPS, we submit that a professional service provided by the police, with community safety paramount, will need to be allied with culturally appropriate services when dealing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, noting that many of the young people coming to the attention of police will be either primary or secondary victim-survivors of family and sexual violence.

Conclusion

We take this opportunity to thank the Committee for considering our submissions regarding the Bill. We trust that the Committee appreciates our viewpoint as both an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation and a Family Violence Prevention Legal Service.

We look forward to being involved in future consultations that will contribute to informing the Bill as it progresses through Parliament.

^{10 &#}x27;A Call for Change', Final Report, Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service responses to domestic and family violence, https://www.qpsdfvinquiry.qld.gov.au/about/assets/commission-of-inquiry-dpsdfv-report.pdf
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