

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL 2023

Submission No: 75
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Economics and Governance Committee

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STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL 2023 SUBMISSION

The many aspects of youth justice are just one of the most difficult and divisive issues to address when it comes to youth and families in rural communities. I acknowledge that the Palaszczuk Government has already made significant changes to legislation over the last 5 years which has meant Queenslanders enjoy the strongest youth justice legislation in our country.

It is evident by the array of submissions to this committee that community reaction to this Bill varies between not going far enough and going too far.

My position is I feel that this Bill does get a good balance between protecting children who have made a silly mistake in their life, and those who are hell bent on being life criminals. I'm sure we have all made mistakes in our childhood. It is unfortunate that some members of our community feel that measures need to be so universal that childish mistakes are outlawed.

This Bill does not aim to make childish mistakes punishable by the most punitive actions, but finally defines a serious repeat offender and allows the law to be applied in different ways when the circumstances have changed.

I was the victim of a house break in, followed by the stealing of my car in Goondiwindi. The children who broke into my home were not just out for some fun and made a silly mistake. They were calculated and resourceful. They worked as a team, and they were organised. The night my car was stolen they also stole my housemate's car and they attempted to steal my neighbours car.

My neighbour had a holden commodore ute with a large exhaust. Had they started that car our whole street would have known. The youth had enough intel about my street to know that particular car needed to be pushed down the street before it was started. Unfortunately, they couldn't start it which is when they turned to my home. I was their backup plan.

It has disappointed me that the government has failed to acknowledge the unique issues that my community faces when dealing with youth who live in a cross-border community. I note that neither our local council, nor our outspoken community members, have made a submission to this committee. This only reflects poorly on our troubled community and our unique challenges.

I feel that some acknowledgement of our border community issues should be acknowledged by the committee and the assembly more broadly.

Specifically I feel that the committee should further explore the operation of the MACPs in a cross border community where some of the services needed don't come from Queensland.

I am calling upon the government more broadly to appoint a Cross Border Commissioner, whose role could include, among many things, a coordinating role in the implementation of MACPs in cross border communities.

Please consider and table my late submission.

Joel Richters

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