

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL 2023

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Committee Secretary
Economics and Governance Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

To whom it may concern

Opposition to the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023

Thank you for the opportunity (sort of) to comment on the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023 (the Bill).

Despite the passing of the deadline for written submissions on this issue, I feel compelled to register my objections to the Bill with the committee, noting that the committee intends to consider late submissions if practicable.

That less than 72 hours was allowed for written submissions to the public consultation speaks volumes about the Queensland Government's intentions for genuine public consultation on this matter. It is also a reason for the limited detail in the response that follows.

I recognise that there is genuine concern on the issue of youth crime in Queensland, not least where I live in Townsville. However, the Bill proposes laws that would:

- be inconsistent with the *Human Rights Act 2019*
- be inconsistent with the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*
- do nothing to 'Strengthen Community Safety'
- serve only to more deeply entrench disadvantage for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our community.

Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander incarceration rates in the general population, and particularly in the youth population, are a matter of international shame. Any laws that seek to increase the rate or duration of incarceration for young offenders will disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kids. And this at a time when the rest of the country is pushing to increase the age of criminal responsibility (yet another matter on which we can't claim to be proud on the international stage).

Youth crime is a significant concern. But it is a symptom of a much larger and more wicked problem. It is a problem that results from the oppressive policies of successive governments at the state and federal levels. In the context of the Bill, it seems this is not a legacy the current Queensland government is eager to shake.

I urge all Queensland Parliamentarians to show leadership and take the tougher road: look for real solutions to the root causes of crime rather than capitulating to the noisy few and

political expediency: you have an opportunity to incubate real change that will benefit current and future inhabitants of this great state.

Yours Sincerely

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