

# Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill 2026

**Submission No:** 010

**Submission By:** Helping Our Mob Everywhere (HOME)

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U2/36-40 Ingham Road (Service Road)  
West End  
Townsville  
QLD 4810

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**To:**

Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee  
Parliament of Queensland  
Email: JICSC@parliament.qld.gov.au

**Submission – Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill 2026**

I write to express my strong opposition to the Criminal Code (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises—Castle Law) Amendment Bill 2026. Although this submission is one day late, I respectfully request that the Committee accept it due to the significant and long-term implications this Bill may have for Queensland communities.

**Community Safety Requires Community Solutions — Not Escalation**

Across Queensland, families, Elders, and community leaders are calling for real solutions to crime — solutions that strengthen our communities rather than increase the likelihood of violent encounters. The proposed castle law does not address the root causes of crime. Instead, it risks creating more harm by broadening the circumstances in which force, including potentially lethal force, may be used.

The Explanatory Notes for the Bill explicitly state that the amendments would allow individuals to lawfully respond to intrusions with force that “*may result in grievous bodily harm or even death to the intruder*”. This represents a significant shift in Queensland’s legal landscape.

**Criminology Research Shows These Laws Increase Harm**

Criminological evidence from comparable jurisdictions consistently shows that expanding legal permissions for the use of force **does not deter crime**. Instead, it increases the likelihood of violent outcomes because individuals are more likely to misinterpret ambiguous situations as threats under stress — a point even acknowledged in the Bill’s own Explanatory Notes, which state that individuals “*cannot be expected to think completely objectively*” during a home invasion.

The Bill also broadens the circumstances in which lethal force is justified, including when an intruder is “*in company with 1 or more persons*” or “*damages property*”. Criminology research shows that such expansions increase the risk of fatal misjudgements, particularly in high-stress environments where fear overrides rational assessment.

**The Bill Responds to Crime Statistics — But Not to Their Causes**

The Explanatory Notes cite a reported **11.2% increase in crime in 2022–23**, including **51,000 break-and-enter offences**. However, criminology research is detailed: **reactive force-based laws do not reduce crime driven by social, economic, and developmental factors**. These trends are best addressed through prevention, early intervention, and community-led engagement — not by increasing the legal scope for violent confrontation.

## **Community-Led Programs Like *On Our Country 41* Are the Real Solution**

For years, community organisations, Elders, and frontline workers have been calling for investment in culturally grounded, evidence-based programs that address the root causes of offending. *On Our Country 41* is one such program — built on cultural reconnection, community leadership, and targeted support for at-risk youth.

These approaches align with decades of criminological research showing that **community-driven prevention strategies reduce reoffending**, strengthen social cohesion, and create safer communities over the long term. This is where government investment should be directed — not toward legislation that risks escalating violence.

### **A Call for Partnership, Not Polarisation**

We urge the Government to sit down with those of us who work directly with affected communities. We understand the drivers of crime, and we have practical, culturally informed strategies that work. With proper funding and partnership, programs like *On Our Country 41* can deliver the outcomes Queenslanders are asking for: safety, stability, and stronger communities.

### **Conclusion**

For these reasons, I strongly oppose the proposed castle law. It risks increasing harm without reducing crime, while diverting attention and resources away from solutions that are proven to work. Queensland deserves evidence-based, community-centred approaches — not legislation that may deepen fear and division.

Thank you for considering this submission. I welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further and contribute to a more constructive and effective policy response

**Irene Leard JP (Qual)**

### **Managing Director**

‘H.O.M.E’ Helping Our Mob Everywhere

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Office: (07) 4773 3077

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/foster-j>

Web: <https://helpingourmobeverywhere.com.au/>

