

# Expanding Adult Time, Adult Crime and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviour Amendment Bill 2026

**Submission No:** 123

**Submission By:** Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion

**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public

---

17 March 2026



Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee

Email: [jicsc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:jicsc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Submission by Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion

## **Re: Expanding Adult Crime, Adult Time and Taking a Strong Stance on Drugs and Anti-Social Behaviors Amendment Bill 2026**

Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion (QAI) is an independent, community-based advocacy organisation and community legal centre that provides individual and systems advocacy for people with disability. Our purpose is to advocate for the protection and advancement of the needs, rights, and lives of people with disability in Queensland.

QAI's Young People's Program (YPP) delivers disability advocacy to children and young people with disability up to eighteen years of age. Our advocates support children to uphold their rights and interests and to increase control over their lives. We work directly with children who are engaged in the criminal justice system and have a regular presence in many Queensland's youth detention centres.

Considering our experience, we urge the panel:

- Do not amend the *Youth Justice Act 1992* to prescribe new Adult Crime, Adult Time offences;
- Retain and expand the current Police Drug diversion Program (PDDP)
- Do Not introduce a new Illicit Drug enforcement and Diversion Framework (IDEDF)
- Do not expand police powers within prescribed Designated Business and Community Precincts (DBCP's).

Instead, we recommend you

1. Implement the Disability Royal Commission recommendations;
2. Implement the recommendations of Statutory bodies; and

- Leverage existing disability supports for to children found unfit for trial or of unsound mind.

### **Disability Royal Commission**

The priority for responding to young people involved in the criminal justice system should focus on fully implementing the recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission Volume 8, sets out 24 recommendations to Australian governments based on evidence from thousands of people with disability. We are concerned the proposed laws run counter to these recommendations, in particular 8.22 concerning the *Age of Criminal Responsibility*. We also draw your attention to Recommendations 8.20 *Improving police responses to people with disability* and 8.21 *Diversion of people with cognitive disability from criminal proceedings*.

### **Statutory Body Recommendations**

Experts advising the Queensland Government have raised concerns about the treatment of young people in youth detention and the importance of education in reducing incarceration, specifically:

- Queensland Ombudsman’s 34 recommendations to improve conditions in state-run detention centres in the 2025 *Combined Inspection Report for Youth Detention Centres*.
- *Involve Me, Don’t Exclude Me* wherein the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Commissioner, found that the children most represented in youth detention are also those most likely to be suspended or expelled from school—particularly First Nations children, children with disability, and those in out-of-home care.

### **Leverage existing disability supports**

This Bill proposes expanded police powers within Designated Business and Community Precincts (DBCPCs). Children with disability need to receive consistent supports to live safe and stable lives. Instead, police frequently arrest children previously found not legally responsible for their actions, and these powers will now extend to antisocial behaviour in designated areas. As a result, children who are unfit for trial are funnelled into watchhouses

and detention, separated from their families and without existing disability supports, including NDIS support workers and positive behaviour support plans. Police need stronger diversion pathways that connect such to their existing disability supports.

When a child is found to be unfit for trial or of unsound mind, it is our view that they should be given the option to develop a disability informed first responder plan, leveraging their existing disability supports and plans at times of crisis. The arresting officer or court would then have increased confidence in relying on existing diversion options, such as s11A of the *Bail Act 1980* which references need for services and supports. We can provide more details of this solution on request.

The ongoing changes to the *Youth Justice Act 1992* over the past two years disproportionately harm children with disability and breach their human rights. As the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> year, we are reminded to consider the impact of our laws on the lives of people with disability in Queensland.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Matilda Alexander.

Matilda Alexander CEO

Queensland Advocacy for Inclusion