

## Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024

**Submission No:** 1  
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**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public  
**Attachments:** No attachment

### Submitter Comments:

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to make a submission on behalf of victims of youth crime across Queensland. I have represented victims of youth crime in our region (Toowoomba) and across the state for the past three years since my family became victims of a non-violent home invasion and vehicle theft in October 2021. At the time, in spite of our best efforts we were completely excluded from the justice process. In the wake of this crime I met with our local Member, David Janetski. I wrote to the then Minister for Youth Justice, the Police Minister, and the Attorney General. There was a Cabinet reshuffle, which saw Di Farmer MP take over as the new Youth Justice Minister. Minister Farmer invited me to be a part of her Youth Justice Strategy Reference Group. In this forum I was able to convey my thoughts and those of other victims to the Minister without fear or favour.

At the top of my list was that victims should have the right to be included in the justice process. It is critical that victims who are impacted by crime are given the opportunity to have confidence in our justice processes. That confidence, or lack thereof will be conveyed to the public at large. The fact is that I and so many other victims of crime did not have that opportunity and therefore had no confidence in our justice processes. In my case, one of the young offenders who had 11 pages of criminal history perished in another stolen car just six months later, as I was informed by a senior police officer a year later. Indeed, what confidence could I have in a justice system that excluded me, the victim, and released a habitual young offender who went on to kill himself? I wish to make the point that a home invasion in the dead of night while you are fast asleep, and woken to find your front door wide open and vehicle gone, is seriously traumatising. It takes time to get one's life back on track. Some struggle to achieve it entirely. So my top call to the Committee is to recommend that even when young offenders are involved and a crime is deemed to be non-violent, there may be circumstances where it is important that those victims are able to participate in the justice process. I understand that the laws before the Parliament allow for victims and their families and friends to be part of the court process on an opt out basis. The scope of inclusion of victims should be as broad as possible to include any crime where victims suffer physical violence or psychological trauma. Furthermore, such inclusion should begin from the moment the crime is reported. Victims should be kept well informed through the police investigation process or youth justice conferencing. I would have liked to present at the public hearings but due to prior commitments I apologise that I am unable. I thank the Committee for your consideration.