

Making Queensland Safer Bill 2024

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I fully agree with Sandy Bolton MP who chaired the former YJRC, which included three members from each of the two major political parties. She travelled across Queensland producing a detailed report in April this year with sixty recommendations to create greater community safety. It has been positive that the Government supported these either fully or in principle, with over half of them in some form of progress. However, there has not been any response from the at time Opposition to those recommendations, with slogans such as 'Adult Crime, Adult Time', disregarding the calls for evidence-based responses. This should be concerning for all as it goes against what Queenslanders asked for in efforts to decrease crime. Sandy and I believe it is imperative that political parties move beyond grabs and slogans to get votes, to what will work to create safer communities now and into the future. Nowhere during the inquiry were calls for 'adult time', as without the appropriate rehabilitation during detention including for their siblings and families, communities will continue to see the intergenerational cycle grow, with increased criminalisation, instead of decreased. The unacceptable statistics of reoffending after incarceration demonstrates clearly that detention for youth without long term rehabilitation of both the offender and the environment which fostered the criminality increases crime, not decreases. Regardless of the age of the offender, we need consequences for actions and interventions to reduce reoffending. Communities need to feel safe and those who threaten that safety need to be removed from where they do harm. However, the responses to deep and often complex issues involving perpetrators who were often victims themselves are not resolved by quick fixes, media grabs and slogans. It takes multiple responses including to the offender and their families—hence why all sixty recommendations from Sandy's seven-month inquiry must all be actioned. Ken Cunliffe, who established the Voice of Victims, a Toowoomba Advocacy organisation after being a victim of crime, and was a force behind a crime forum held in Toowoomba, said in a recent media statement he was disappointed that the final report of the committee was not adopted by the LNP and praised Sandy for her work as Chair and for her fight to make the report public. He said the following in that statement: "Good policy development takes a great deal of time and thought. It does not follow any particular political agenda. Ideally it should be enthusiastically supported by all sides. That is what the YJRC set out to do. It came up with sixty (60) recommendations that would stand Queensland's youth justice legislation in good stead, providing safety and security for the community, but also dealing with young offenders appropriately. No government can claim to have a mandate to deal with youth crime if they abandon these recommendations." "The YJRC chaired by Independent MP Sandy Bolton was an excellent piece of work involving all sides of politics as the panel and a broad cross-section of Queensland's population as contributors." Sandy has raised again the need for the Opposition to respond to what they will or will not commit from the sixty recommendations as part of respecting victims, their families and the many frontliners who must live every day with the policies and decisions made by any Government. We need to end this danger now and adopt the YJRC recommendations to lower the threshold and expand the criteria for serious repeat offender declarations, as well provide interventions in line with what was evidenced as successful, including schooling through the MOB Academy as an example which is for one (1) or two years – not short-term interventions which has shown limited success. Even though according to reports, there have been some appropriate changes to youth justice, more needs to be done and Sandy is tracking every aspect of those recommendations, and the new modelling we mentioned in our July 2024 Noosa 360 update, that is being developed for police allocations following her inquiries during 2023 Estimates Hearings. As included in Sandy's April 2024 Noosa 360 update, the full sixty recommendations

from the YJRC's report can be viewed in full at
<https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/tp/2024/5724T612-1B7E.pdf> Sandy's Chair's Foreword for
that report is available at <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/tp/2024/5724T736-BBBD.pdf>