

Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025

Submission No: 31

Submitted by: National Network of Incarcerated & Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls

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Attachments: See attachment

Submitter Comments:



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

Dear Committee Secretary

RE: Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025

About us

The National Network of Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women & Girls (The National Network) is an organisation made up of ciswomen, transwomen, gender diverse people, and girls who are currently incarcerated or have been in cages across so-called Australia. We aim to end the incarceration, exile, surveillance and punishment of women and girls by organising against the intersecting gendered, racial and class violence that produce prisons and police. We are committed to Indigenous sovereignty which requires the abolition of the Prison-Industrial-Complex, and we believe that only women and girls who have been trapped in cages across so-called Australia should be determining the terms through which we endeavour to free all women and girls in cages. Our membership is drawn from all-over so-called Australia.

Submission to the Inquiry: Opposition to the 'Adult Crime, Adult Time' Legislation

We write to express our full and unequivocal support for the submission made by **Sisters Inside** in response to the proposed 'Adult Crime, Adult Time' legislation.

The National Network share Sisters Inside's unequivocal opposition to the "Adult Crime, Adult Time" legislation, which we believe represents an abandonment of children—especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children—in favour of punishment and political theatre. This legislation is not about safety. It is about control, retribution, and stoking public fear through a politically manufactured youth crime crisis.

This regressive and punitive legislation will not serve the interests of community safety, justice, or human rights. Instead, it will entrench punishment, expand the carceral system, and target already criminalised children—especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children—for political gain.

We endorse the key points made by Sisters Inside, including:

- **The legislation constitutes a breach of international human rights obligations**, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Bill moves Queensland further from human rights compliance by treating children as adults for the purposes of punishment, in contravention of basic principles of youth justice.
- **It will harm Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children**, who are already targeted by the criminal punishment system. The Bill denies the racialised impact of these changes, perpetuating systemic racism under the guise of equal application.



- **Children with disability are further marginalised** by this legislation, with no meaningful consideration of the disproportionate impact these amendments will have on children with cognitive, psychosocial, or intellectual disability—despite overwhelming evidence, including from the Disability Royal Commission, that they are particularly vulnerable within the legal system.
- **Mandatory sentencing and life imprisonment for children** are inhumane and violate the basic dignity of children. These measures will strip judges of discretion and children of their right to be seen as capable of change.
- **The claim that harsher penalties improve community safety is false and unsupported by evidence.** All available research shows that increased incarceration leads to more harm, not less. The legislation deepens cycles of trauma, family separation, and systemic neglect.
- **Restorative justice options are being gutted**, and no transformative justice options are being explored as alternative solutions to incarceration. This demonstrates a clear preference for control and retribution over healing and accountability.
- This legislation expands indictable offences and **collapses the legal distinction between child and adult, effectively erasing children in law and practice.**
- This Bill misrepresents public safety concerns while ignoring the **root causes of criminalisation: poverty, neglect, racism, and systemic abandonment.**
- **The consultation process was fundamentally flawed**, excluding the voices of children directly affected, their families, and organisations led by people with lived experience of criminalisation.

This Bill is a profound abandonment of care for some of the most vulnerable children in our communities. It enshrines punishment over support, political expediency over justice, and silence over truth.

We support Sisters Inside in rejecting this legislation in its entirety. We reject the racist, colonial, and punitive framing of children as ‘beyond help’. We reject the idea that safety can be achieved through harm. And we reject the myth that there is a youth crime crisis in Queensland—**what exists is a crisis of political opportunism, scapegoating children to mask state failure.**

We urge this inquiry to listen to the lived expertise of criminalised communities, to abandon this legislation, and to invest instead in care, support, and community-led solutions that affirm children’s dignity, futures, and rights.



We stand in solidarity with Sisters Inside in calling for the full withdrawal of this legislation and a redirection of resources toward real, community-led solutions grounded in justice, care, and liberation—not incarceration.

Yours sincerely



TABITHA LEAN

14 April 2025