

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Legal Affairs and Safety Committee](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Youth Justice Amendments
Date: Wednesday, 3 March 2021 11:53:45 AM

I write as an individual.

When I first read Bob Atkinson's report into youth justice, I was disheartened by many of his findings as to the circumstances many of these children faced but heartened by his attitude that we should try to fix these broken children, not incarcerate them.

I recall thinking that we will fail on many occasions, we will have some successes, but the struggle to fix them was well worth the effort.

These changes, in my opinion, take us a step back from the Atkinson report and this saddens me.

I recognise that the government wants to deal with a small cohort of recidivist children, some 10% is repeatedly mentioned. If this was a health issue, or one of special needs, would we decide no further help should be given or would we say, this is a greater problem than the average and we need to invest more effort into fixing it.

I hope it's the latter but the legislative changes do not reflect this. NDIS was set up so that personal needs could be met by tailoring assistance to the needs of that particular individual. I see this cohort's needs in the same way. I also accept that we will not fix all of them, but we should try, we should not give up while there is a reasonable prospect of success.

I don't live in Townsville and I haven't been a victim of crime so it's easy to dismiss my views as "do gooders". Whether I would have the same view had I been a victim is debatable; I hope so, but if I did not, perhaps that would be a reflection on me and my self-interest, rather than what's right for this cohort. If youth justice is about revenge, your response is correct, if youth justice is about rehabilitation and recovery, then it's not.

My feeling is that a focus on detention, incarceration & monitoring for these recidivist youths will lead to the same youths becoming adult offenders, in a revolving door of crime and gaol. Isn't it worth the effort to try to stop that?

A government which sees detention, incarceration & monitoring as the proper response to a specific youth problem is a government which has failed those youths. In other emergency circumstances, a government will take extraordinary actions in an attempt for resolution, but, in this instance, the government is simply throwing its hands up and admitting defeat.

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Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10