

Youth Justice Reform Select Committee inquiry into youth justice reform in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

Dear Members of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee, I am writing to express my profound disappointment and growing concern over the recent and troubling increase in youth-related crime within the Helensvale area on the Gold Coast, particularly highlighting the brazen theft of my vehicle and marine equipment. It is distressing to note that the security of our private properties is no longer assured, even in broad daylight. This month, my car was stolen from my private residence's driveway, an audacious act carried out by teenagers. This incident was not isolated; shortly thereafter, our 'tinnie' motor was also stolen, underscoring the boldness of these young offenders. In our street I know of at least 4 cars being stolen. It is apparent that the actions taken in 2015 concerning the Youth Justice Act have emboldened individuals, who now operate with a sense of impunity. The Youth Justice Reform initiated by the Palaszczuk Labor Government, which included the removal of breach of bail as an offence and the directive to consider detention for youth offenders as a last resort, seems to have contributed significantly to an environment where repeat offences have become the norm. The removal of early intervention programmes has also stripped away essential services designed to redirect youth from the path of crime. The committee's establishment to address the concerns it initially created is a step forward; however, without tangible actions and reforms that effectively balance rehabilitation with accountability, the community's safety remains at risk. It is imperative that the experiences of Queenslanders like myself are not dismissed as media exaggeration but are acknowledged as a legitimate crisis that requires immediate and decisive action. I implore the committee to review the statistics of stolen vehicles and equipment within the Helensvale area and consider them a testament to the urgency of the situation. As a member of the community and a business manager, I witness the direct and indirect repercussions these crimes have on families and local businesses—eroding the sense of security and trust in the systems meant to protect us. In closing, I urge the committee to: Re-evaluate the amendments made to the Youth Justice Act in 2015 and consider the reintroduction of bail offences to deter repeat offending. Reconsider detention policies to ensure that they effectively discourage youth from reoffending, while also providing structured rehabilitation opportunities. Reinstate and possibly expand early intervention programmes to prevent youth from embarking on a path of criminal activity. I look forward to the committee's response and am willing to provide further details on the incidents mentioned if required. It is my hope that by working together, we can restore the safety and security of our communities on the Gold Coast. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.