

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

**Submission No:** 72  
**Submitted by:** Juliette Mallett  
**Publication:** Making the submission and your name public  
**Attachments:** See attachment  
**Submitter Comments:**

8 January 2024



Committee Secretary  
Youth Justice Reform Select Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Committee Members,

*SUBMISSION TO THE YOUTH JUSTICE REFORM IN QUEENSLAND INQUIRY*

- Attached:** 1. PDF of Script below  
2. Victim Impact Statement – by Julie Mallett

Firstly, I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to provide a submission to the Youth Justice Reform Inquiry.

Youth and adult crime is an escalating issue with offenders engaging in criminal actions thoughtlessly and without fear of the consequences to others or themselves. Their criminal behaviours cause distress, injury and death amongst law-abiding citizens and their care-factor is zero.

I recognise that the Government has made some initial steps, attempting to address this now, crisis situation, however, my husband is dead at the hands of a longtime, repeat offender. It is imperative that Queensland Government are 'pro-active' and not 'reactive' with further action required to find a solid, long-term solution to the increasing crime in our communities.

**My story:** - 7:45pm on 6 July 2020 at the corner of Bingera Street and Bourbong Street Bundaberg. That morning my husband left for work and never came home. We owned a Distribution business, delivering automotive consumables to mechanical workshops in a wide area of Southeast Queensland. For 22 years and up to 70,000 – 80,000 km's travelled annually in a Pantech Truck, we had never had an accident. He had arrived in Bundaberg approx. 7pm. At approx. 7:10pm I rang my husband, we were chatting as he locked the door of his motel room and began walking along the footpath to pickup the meal he had ordered (and paid for). 7:45pm his last two words to me were "oh no". I heard a lot of noise on the phone before the phone cut out. I knew instinctively that whatever had just happened was not good. I was instantly thrown into a state of panic. I tried calling back, no answer. I heard nothing more until I received the dreaded 'knock' on the door approx. 2 ½ hours after his last two words to me. By now I already knew in my heart, that the Policeman at the door, was confirmation of my worst nightmare.

At that moment, 7:45pm on 6 July 2020, is the moment my world shattered into a million pieces. From that exact moment on, **every single thing in my life changed.**

Attached to this submission is my 'Impact Statement' as submitted to the Court and read by me on the day of sentencing. This young man had a life-long history of criminal activity and a very long criminal record. He was out on bail with a suspended sentence at the time of the incident.

The offender was driving a stolen a car (again), was very drunk (again), speeding and driving recklessly (again), driving at night without headlights, he lost control of the vehicle and mowed my husband down as he was walking. My husband did not deserve to die in such an horrific manner. The offender received a 10 year sentence with an SVO (Serious Violent Offender), I received a 'life sentence' without my husband and my soulmate (we were together 46 years, married 43 years).

No one should have to go through what I have had to endure, the loss, heartbreak, the nightmares, the noise I heard on the phone at that moment which was my husband being mowed down. That noise haunts me day and night. No one should have to suffer this without a support network, and our Government did not help, offer or provide any support whatsoever.

This offender was on the streets, now as an adult, because of the lack of consequences for his criminal activity in his youth and the systems failure to deal with the youth crime issue to protect our community and its law-abiding citizens. He was well known to the Police in Bundaberg and beyond. He and other criminals just jeer and laugh at the police, being arrested is considered a 'joke' among them, they have no fear of any consequences or penalties as they face magistrates courts. This must be dealt with on a Government level.

The offender (now in prison) receives, free legal, free medical, free food and lodging etc.....I received absolutely nothing, no financial, emotional, psychological help and....I AM THE VICTIM!

Throughout his criminal 'career' this offender received full Government support in all areas of his life and yet he has been an offender almost all his life! I understand his upbringing did not encourage a better way of life, however, he has a 'free will' and the ability to make better choices to change his direction, but he chooses to continue his criminal career.

All my working life, myself and my husband have paid taxes e.g. PAYG, Company Tax, Medicare Levies etc etc. Now, when I really need the Government assistance both financially, medically, psychologically etc. I am ineligible to receive the support I need, I don't understand this! As a victim of this crime that resulted in my husband's death, I am forced to carry this financial burden through no fault of my own.

I don't have solutions, only suggestions and trust my suggestions will be thoroughly reviewed for validity and not dismissed.

Note: These points are my suggestions only and I understand that each point below is subject to specific guidelines, conditional to certain regulatory requirements etc.)

#### For the Victims

- Where a death has occurred due to unlawful activity, that Government support is immediately offered and available for; - financial, legal, medical, psychological and other (without the expectation that this support is to be paid back to the Government)
- Widows Pension to be reinstated for Victims of crime who are left to bear financial burden. (Age and financial status should not be considered in this circumstance)

For the Offenders-Youth and Adult

- Review of the maximum sentences for youth and adults whose unlawful activity causes the death of another. Although the death of the other person was unintentional, the unlawful actions leading to that death was intentional.
- Parents to share the responsibility of their child's criminal actions.
- Youth offenders of serious crimes treated as adults in the courts.
- Mandatory minimum sentences for youth and adult offenders.
- A Government Scheme for offenders whereby all financial support is only paid when choices are made within the regulated boundaries of the program, for example: -
  - a. Work (such as 'work for the dole' program).
  - b. Education: – schooling and higher education – a portion of their financial support to be deducted to cover this opportunity - mandatory attendance.
  - c. Curfews in place for all participants.
  - d. Rehabilitation scheme – mandatory attendance.
  - e. Financial payment – proportioned: (suggestion)
    - i. A portion to be of cash component
    - ii. Food vouchers
    - iii. Deductions for accommodation, education and other.

Currently, all financial, medical, legal, housing and other support is freely given as a regular benefit and allowance without contribution by the receiver. During the Judges sum-up on 5 October 2021 before handing down sentence for the offender who killed my husband, he said “not one member of this young man's family has ever worked a day in their lives and they have never had any positive 'input' into their community.”

I ask, “why is our Government so freely supporting criminals and not the victims”?

As I close my submission, I would again like to offer my thanks for the opportunity to contribute to this Youth Justice Reform Inquiry and for the opportunity to share my story.

I look forward to hearing the outcomes of this inquiry.

Respectfully yours,

Julie Mallett



# **IMPACT STATEMENT**

**By Julie Mallett**

**Written between - July 6, 2020 and September 13 2021**

On July 6, 2020, David Mallett, my husband of 43 years, arrived in Bundaberg for work approximately 7pm. I rang him around 7:20 to have our usual phone chat when he was away for work. David was just putting his gear in the room, I heard him then lock the door of his motel room and begin to walk toward town to pick up the meal he had ordered from the Tavern while our conversation continued. We shared our usual "how was your day?" which lead us to chat about our business and work as was normal, I then asked about the weather in Bundaberg as it was very cold here at home. Before he finished telling me about the weather in Bundaberg, he suddenly said "OH NO", the word 'no' faded into a lot of noise and then the phone cut out. I tried to call him straight back, the phone rang, but there was no answer. That split second the noise ceased and the phone cut out, was the moment my heart skipped a beat and I suddenly was cold as ice, my heart beating through my chest like a pounding hammer against a nail. I struggled to stay focused, coherent, clear headed. I was trembling and shaking so fiercely I could barely walk and struggled to make a call to family for help as I could not steady my hands. What had just happened? Whatever had happened wasn't good, I felt it. I was verbally repeating and praying out loud, saying over and over and over – "God No... No... Please No!

That moment was sheer panic, fear, terror and dread and will haunt me for the rest of my life. I knew something terrible had just happened but had no idea what. I felt like my very soul had just been ripped in two, even though I had no idea what had just happened, I felt it! As time moved like a swirling swamp of mud, my head was swimming, but I knew I had to get to Bundaberg immediately. I managed to ring my son in-law to see if he could drive me, I was in no state. He proceeded to send a message to our girls to tell them something had happened to their Dad and would update them as soon as we knew anything. Time seemed to have no consequence as it just kept ticking by. Multiple calls were repeatedly made to police, hospital, ambulance and 000, but no answers came. I knew what that answer was going to be. My fears were confirmed when a Policeman knocked on my door over 2 hours later...there was no denying what my heart and soul had felt in that instant he said, "Oh No".

David and I met when I was 16 and he was 18. We were together for 46 years of our lives, married for 43 of those years. He was my love, my life and my soulmate. He would ring me during the day...everyday while he was driving, for no reason in particular but to say "just ringing to tell you I LOVE YOU" I will never again get to hear those words!

The hardest, most painful thing I have ever had to do in my life was to tell our precious girls their Daddy didn't make it. Their screams of anguish, the tears and sobs of that moment will haunt me forever. You (offender) STOLE from us our loving, loyal, forever smiling Husband, Daddy, Poppy and Master to his loved puppy Truman. I never had time to say "goodbye", I never had time to say, "I love you", that privilege was STOLEN from me forever.

The depth of grief is beyond anything I could have imagined. The depth of loneliness is so debilitating, so overwhelming, and reality is still a daily battle I cannot comprehend.

At the exact moment he left...EVERY..SINGLE..THING..IN..MY..LIFE..CHANGED! David's death literally changed every single thing in my world going forward. Nothing is the same, nothing will be the same....ever! There is NO 'normal' in my life!

It has changed the way I eat, what I eat, when I eat, if I eat.

It has changed the way I sleep, I don't sleep, as I close my eyes I'm haunted by the ever present image I have in my mind of him being hit and hurt and lying there, lifeless.

It has changed my friendships, my family dynamic,

It has affected my job, my financial status, the loss of his full-time income, leaving my future and the rest of my natural life with ongoing financial pressure.

It has affected my self-worth, self-esteem, my confidence, my emotional and mental capacity, my physical body, my hobbies and interests, my sense of security...

Everything has changed!

I have lost my sense of who I am, I feel lost, disconnected, I don't know where I 'fit', I feel I have no identity without David. I feel I have no purpose or reason to be here without my soulmate.

In an instant, my world was shattered and every single thing in my life changed.

**I was thrust into this 'new life' that I didn't ask for and DON'T WANT!** It is the hardest, most gut-wrenching, debilitating, traumatic, life-altering ordeal that I must live with. There seems no point or purpose to my existence, but faith in God and a loving family have been my saving grace.

I am constantly haunted by his last words and the noise I heard, which I now know was him being hit by the car, I'm haunted by the cries of my girls losing their Daddy. I am haunted by all the beautiful happy memories, knowing that we can never make more memories together.

Every memory begins happy but ends in tears and often sobbing as that joyful memory dissolves into the reality of WHY he is not here.

I still cry every day. It's been 15 months and I am still living under a cloud of darkness that I can't seem to fight my way out of. I feel like I'm living two completely separate lives ... one is where I'm pretending to the world and those around me that everything is alright, I'm fine, I'm ok ... and the other life is where my heart constantly cries out in pain, shattered and broken ... I just want him back!!

In those 15 months since he left, I have done much, out of necessity to survive, not by choice but because I must, because I'm the one left behind.

Special days .... David's birthday was heartbreaking; my birthday was even worse; Christmas, the most agonising; our wedding anniversary, I cried all day. These special days leave me depressed, in a very dark place, heavy-hearted and unbearably sad. To wake up every morning alone is miserable, but so much worse is waking up on those special days alone and broken. The holidays we had forward planned, our weekly 'date night', celebrations, agreeing to disagree after an argument, romance and intimacy, all TAKEN from me. My precious family have helped me through these days even though they too feel the loss of their loved Daddy and Poppy on their special days of birthday parties and family get togethers.

Life is about choices, I made a choice to love, honour and cherish the man I married, David, my soulmate, for life. On July 6, 2020, choices were made; to consume intoxicating substances; to steal a car; to drive that car dangerously; all without regard for anyone or anything. Those conscious, intentional choices lead to the death of my Husband, my children's Daddy and my grandchildren's much-loved Poppy.

My life with David, my future with him, my love, my joy, my passion, were taken from me, were STOLEN from me. Those choices ripped my heart in two and tore the very soul from me, I have been 'SENTENCED' to a lifetime of grief, heartache, emptiness and a lifetime of financial hardship without him, because of those choices.

We have 3 beautiful daughters and 4 precious grandchildren whom David adored and treasured. We are a close family and are all suffering the loss of our precious spiritual mentor and heart of our family, our fun loving, always happy, always smiling, always full of 'dad jokes', who's deep love for Jesus and his family was evident to everyone who knew him.

Only through family, friends, church and God's amazing grace and mercy are we able to travel this endless journey of loss, sorrow and grief.

The Bible teaches us to 'let go of both the wrong and resentment and hate, to pray for those who hurt us and to love everyone'. The Bible says "*Then graciously forgive one another in the depths of Christ's love*". **I cannot forgive what you've done but I FORGIVE YOU because that's what Jesus taught us to do.** In Psalms it says, "*you saw me before I was born. Every day of my life is recorded in your book. Every moment...laid out before a single day had passed*" And try as we will, there is nothing we can do to change that! I can't change the past, God knew before David was born how he would perish but....Jesus also says, "*one day we'll be reunited with our redeemed loved one in the presence of the Lord never to be separated again.*"

That is Jesus promise to me and my family.

Signed:



Dated: September 13, 2021