

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

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**Submitted by:** Mr Garth Hamilton MP - Federal Member for Groom  
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# Garth HAMILTON MP

Federal Member for **Groom**

*Listening. Working for you!*



Ms Sandy Bolton MP  
Member for Noosa  
Chair  
Youth Justice Reform Select Committee  
Via: [youthjustice@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:youthjustice@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Ms Bolton

I am writing in your capacity as Chair of the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee. My electorate of Groom includes the beautiful city of Toowoomba.

Our region is a beautiful place to live, work, retire and come for a day trip. But that security and lifestyle, the 'safe place' Toowoomba and the surround villages and townships were known for has been tarnished. Repeat offenders and their terrible behaviour.

We have witnessed an escalation in behaviour by criminals in my region and it is having an enormous impact on residents, businesses, and the entire community, across Groom. It is devastating to hear the stories and we are growing increasingly desperate for real action to address this crisis.

The reality of youth crime and crime in general, is having real and has enormous consequences. The impacts are real, and it is affecting real people, families, friends, and community. This is not a 'scare campaign'.

In our endeavour to do better, to protect people and keep the community safe, we must keep victims of crime as the central focus. We cannot forget the names of those who have fallen victim, to Queensland's youth crime crisis so unnecessarily.

The impacts of crime in Queensland is not just about damage to cars, a stolen bag or computer - but human life. Let the names of those we have lost be recorded, remembers and let's deliver them a legacy of a safer Queensland.

### **Their names**

Robert William Brown  
Emma Lovell  
Carlo Stewart  
David Connolly  
Rene Latimore  
Scott Cabrie

Jennifer Board  
Kate Leadbetter  
Matthew Field  
Michael Warburton  
Balin Stewart  
Vyleen White.

When I read these names, I am numb.



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I cannot imagine the heartbreak and trauma felt by those families and friends. I have felt it through the communities I represent in Groom, when Mr Robert Brown was murdered, such needless violence.

There needs to be action.

Through this submission, I want to share some of the feedback I have received from my community. I hope the concerns of hard working, everyday Queenslanders who are now living in fear can spur change.

### **Their voices**

Helen: Saturday at 10.30pm. Break-in. It is a costly occurrence for the target. They need to be caught and punished. Am seriously thinking of a mobilizer or tracker for the car if we get it back.

Lynette: Car stolen; no car for 4 months, blacklisted by petrol station where petrol stolen; lost mobile, handbag, contents. Daughter won't let me visit her Mt Lofty residence at night or allow teenager to walk the dog because of active gangs - gun shots, car hooning. Police helpful after an event, but lack preventive police presence -need more patrols, local police 'stations' in trouble spots; clearer more immediate points of contact-police link slow, overwhelmed.

Lyndsey: Yes - home broken into 5 years ago - window glass cut around handle - and all jewellery and some other items stolen. Make parents responsible for their under 18 year old children.

Peter: Our neighbour's vehicle was stolen and rammed through the front gate to get away. Friend in Highfields was attacked with a crowbar when he wouldn't give up his keys, when they demanded him to give them his vehicle. My wife has worked at two of the largest shopping centres in Toowoomba and the level of crime and personal safety is concerning to the point she would not feel safe going to GC or CG alone.

Carmen: Yea car stolen from home. Rehabilitation of youth, financial reimbursement for cost of stolen items, tough laws. It's currently an insult that the criminals have more rights than the criminals.

Wayne: Yes, my dog barking, alerted us, i chased 3 scumbags from our property about a year ago , @ 12.15 pm all were armed , next doors video confirmed their attempt to rob and steal my wife's Audi, intimidate and invade our personal space and our castle. A fourth person was waiting in a vehicle.

John: I am very concerned about the escalating probability of my wife of 60 years becoming a victim of violent crime at the hands of young criminals who are still at large in our formerly peaceful community instead of their being incarcerated as they would have been in earlier times.



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I will continue working to get the Queensland Government to enact sensible solutions to this terrible crisis, including:

- to make detention no longer the last resort for magistrates
- to introduce tougher minimum sentences rather than the existing tougher maximum sentences
- to use ankle monitoring devices (which are almost never used).



**GARTH HAMILTON MP**  
**FEDERAL MEMBER FOR GROOM**

**13 February 2024**