



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR CHARTERS TOWERS

Hansard Tuesday, 9 August 2005

CORRECTIVE SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL

Mr KNUTH (Charters Towers—NPA) (6.26 pm): I support the Corrective Services Amendment Bill 2005. The legislation is important in closing a loophole in the Corrective Services Act that could have been exploited by a number of prisoners in our correctional facilities. This bill amends the Corrective Services Act 2000 to remove any doubt that where a prisoner was released on parole and had it cancelled before 1 July 2001 then the time served on parole does not count as time served for the prisoner's sentence.

I want to raise an important issue with regard to prison sentences with regard to juvenile criminals. A large percentage of juveniles will commit crimes up until they reach the age of 15. However, that crime then decreases slightly at 16 and possibly more at 17 because they know they are about to go to the 'big house'. I will give members an example. In November last year to March this year there had been up to 223 offences committed in Charters Towers and I am led to believe that 68 offenders were charged. I believe that this is an extremely high number, especially when one considers the extensive workload that was endured by the skeleton staff at the Charters Towers Police Station at the time. I would like to thank the minister as we received four more staff and possibly there is another one to come. So we have appreciated that.

Ms Spence: You'll be able to catch a few more then.

Mr KNUTH: Yes, that is right. The crime is starting to pick up. However, with a few more police it has helped—it is an 18-man station; we might be up to 14 or 15 now—but there has been an increase in crime lately and the town is calling for something to be done. I just want to pass on that a lot of these juvenile criminals are trying to get into these detention centres. They are committing crime. It is known as 'Camp Cleveland'. It provides good food, games, new track shows and spending time there is regarded as a badge of honour amongst gangs. I believe that the Cleveland detention centre should be a deterrent for juvenile offenders. However, juveniles are prepared to steal, destroy and become a public nuisance and inflict serious bodily harm on people to get into this place. I believe that that is a big issue and needs to be addressed. It needs to be investigated.

Mr WALLACE: I rise to a point of order. The Cleveland Youth Detention Centre is actually under the stewardship of the minister for communities.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Jarratt): Order! It is not a point of order. Resume your seat.

Mr KNUTH: I thank the member for Thuringowa. I commend this bill to the House.