




Speech by
Gavin King

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard Thursday, 12 July 2012

CAIRNS ELECTORATE, JUVENILE CRIME

 **Mr KING** (Cairns—LNP) (3.16 pm): Juvenile crime has reached crisis point in Cairns. The proof is found in the Queensland Police Service's annual statistical reviews. Over the last four years of the previous Labor government, juvenile crime skyrocketed from an already high 2,840 offences in the far northern region in 2007-8 to a frightening 3,571 offences in 2010-11. That is an increase of 731 offences in just four years. That means that the people of Far North Queensland—homeowners, families and businesses—were subjected to 10 crimes by a juvenile offender every single day in 2010-11. This massive spike cannot be attributed to population growth, considering the extremely high rate of repeat offences.

What did the member for Mulgrave and his now gainfully unemployed Labor colleagues do about this disturbing trend in juvenile crime? They put their collective heads in the sand. They denied there was a problem. They told the people of Cairns and Far North Queensland that everything was just fine. Everything was fine according to the previous Labor government. Unlike the previous Labor government, we recognise just how serious this issue is. We understand the terrible impact juvenile crime has on people's lives. Because we recognise this, we are acting. Just after we were elected, together with my colleagues in Barron River and Cook, we released the Cairns Crime Action Plan featuring short-, medium- and long-term solutions.

Today I would like to congratulate and thank a number of services and businesses for their remarkable contribution to a pilot school holiday program put together as part of our crime action plan. The program worked with 12 troubled youth, most of whom had been in contact with the juvenile justice system, over the two-week school holiday period just passed. I congratulate David Jackson and Team Wild for their leadership on this program. I congratulate Neighbourhood Watch leaders Boyd Scott and Steve Grasso, artist Hayley Gillespie and Ken Dalton from Redlynch Boxing Fitness. I thank businesses such as Rainforestation, Blazing Saddles, Mungalli Falls wilderness retreat and many others. As part of our crime action plan these people are taking ownership of the longstanding crime problem in partnership with this new, decisive LNP government. I thank them for their incredible work. I also look forward to the police minister visiting Cairns next week to outline further initiatives as part of our crime action plan.