




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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ADJOURNMENT

Maroochydore Electorate

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (6.47 pm): Another violent thug walked free from court this week and the Sunshine Coast community are asking how can an offender who committed such an assault get away with a suspended sentence. Recently we saw an alcohol-fuelled assault in Maroochydore where the offender received a suspended sentence and had allegedly committed a similar offence on the Gold Coast just a week before. These two events are not only unsettling but also, I believe, undermine public confidence in our system of justice when we need to have confidence.

I have taken this matter up with the Attorney-General. I understand that the matter is with the police minister as an appeal request. I thank the Attorney-General for passing that on to the police minister. I would ask the government to appeal the sentence for this terrible, cowardly act committed in Maroochydore. I also believe there needs to be consideration given to appealing another sentence involving an incident where a security guard at a shopping centre was attacked with quite horrific impact. I call on the government to act now to appeal inappropriate sentences such as this which allow violent offenders to walk free from court while the suffering of their victims goes on.

I have met with family members of those who have been impacted by such crimes and they are horrified. The victims of crime are often left with serious injuries and damaged lives following a violent assault such as these. They, like the community, want to see justice done. They want to see a deterrent to this happening again. The community wants to see people who commit violent crimes such as this locked up, not given a slap on the wrist. There needs to be appropriate consequences and tougher penalties for offenders to deter people from such senseless violence. I call on the government to take action in this regard and to appeal these sentences.

I am also calling on the government to resolve the issue of funding for public safety measures in the Safe Night Out precinct on the Sunshine Coast. People of all ages, but young people in particular, come to the entertainment precinct. It has the busiest taxi rank on the Sunshine Coast. There needs to be an overall, integrated strategy to help tackle alcohol-fuelled violence. The LNP had such a strategy. This government has been in limbo. It is less than two months before Christmas. The festive season for some and the silly season for others is about to begin. We want to see people kept safe. The plans need to be in place, not this limbo. It makes it so hard for those who are doing the right thing to try to keep the public safe to have this undermined by a lack of action. I want to see plans put in place with funding to enable this to happen as soon as possible.