




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Corrective Services

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.42 am): Today, the Attorney-General will introduce another historic piece of legislation into this parliament. The legislation seeks to end the practice of 17-year-olds being treated as adults in Queensland's justice system. For more than 20 years, 17-year-olds have been treated as adults in our courts and they have been treated as adults in our prisons. That has left Queensland out of step with the rest of the nation. It has been in contrast to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

As I have said publicly, successive governments from both sides of politics have either put this issue in the too-hard basket or they have simply ignored it. As opposition leader, I made a commitment to end this practice. As Premier, I am determined to end this practice.

I pay tribute to the Attorney-General for her hard work to bring this legislation before the parliament. I also pay tribute to the many community groups and individuals who have championed this issue for decades. This legislation not only delivers on my government's commitment but also gives all honourable members the opportunity to make a long overdue reform.

The legislation will go to a committee, where it will be fully scrutinised, before coming back to this House for a vote. The legislation will come into effect 12 months following the passage of the bill. We will convene a whole-of-government task force to work on the process of removing 17-year-olds from adult prisons—a process that will be complex and complicated, but it can be done and we will do it. We will do it not only because we promised to do it, but because it is simply the right thing to do.