



Speech By  
**Tim Mander**


**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2016

**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Townsville, Crime**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.09 pm): I am a product of the Brisbane suburbs, having been born and bred in the north-west of Brisbane. However, this afternoon I want to speak about Townsville. Townsville is a great city. I have travelled to Townsville on more occasions than I can count, through various occupations over the years. Population-wise, it is the largest city in the north. It is the unofficial capital of the north. Its climate is unsurpassed, particularly in winter. In winter I cannot think of a better place to be than in Townsville, enjoying its incredible warm weather. Its lifestyle is casual and carefree. Of course, it is the home of the North Queensland Cowboys, who had on Friday night a very lucky win against the mighty Brisbane Broncos. I did tip the Cowboys—although do not tell anybody—so I am quite happy about it.

As good as Townsville is, unfortunately a black cloud is hanging over its head. Townsville has now become the unofficial capital of crime in this state. That little bit of paradise is being overrun by criminals who have absolutely no respect for the law. Why has this occurred? It has occurred because this state Labor government is soft on crime! It refuses to get tough on those who would disrupt our peace.

Some of the recent crime statistics from North Queensland are startling. Townsville comes in at No. 1 for assaults in the state. The city of Townsville comes in at No. 2 for robbery. Car stealing puts it back up to No. 1 in the state. Unfortunately, on drug offences it comes in at No. 3. The residents of Townsville do not want to be known for those startling statistics. When they go to sleep at night, residents of Townsville want to know that they are secure and they need have no fear of intruders coming into their houses. There is no greater violation than having a criminal in your house. Residents want to lock their cars in their garages, knowing that they will still be there in the morning. They want their daughters to be able to walk the streets of Townsville feeling safe and not fearing attack. Unfortunately, at the moment that is not the case.

The most disturbing statistic is that over 50 per cent of those crimes are being committed by juveniles—that is, young offenders aged from 10 to 16 years. Property crime is rife. Young people are stealing cars, they are breaking into homes and they are stealing in general. We all know that young people make mistakes. We all know that they deserve a second chance. However, do they deserve an eighth, a ninth and a tenth chance? I do not believe that they do. A core group of repeat offenders have absolutely no respect for the law and we cannot keep going soft on those repeat offenders.

The residents of Townsville have had a gutful. They are setting up Facebook pages. Over 4,000 people have signed a petition. They are saying, 'Enough is enough!' The No. 1 priority for any government is to keep its citizens safe. This state Labor government is failing the people of Townsville, because it is soft on crime. The LNP members who previously represented the Townsville electorates

knew how important this was, which is why they kept fighting for tougher laws, particularly on youth crime. The current crop of members for Townsville, Thuringowa and Mundingburra say that they are not soft on crime, but they do not back that up with any action.

What is this state government going to do to address the crime spree that is occurring at the moment in Townsville? The people of Townsville deserve answers and they deserve to be kept safe.