




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

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ADJOURNMENT

Kawana Electorate, Law and Order

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (7.12 pm): Yesterday, I ran a Facebook survey in my electorate of Kawana and to date 335 local residents have responded. Of those residents who wanted me to raise issues this week in parliament, 55 per cent nominated crime as their No. 1 issue. It is easy to see exactly why Sunshine Coast residents are concerned about crime when we have a Labor government that continually puts the rights of perpetrators ahead of victims. We have a Labor government that is so complicit in its neglect of its duty to keep Queenslanders safe, when it wound back the LNP's strong criminal gang laws, which has seen criminal gangs, drug manufacturing and crime explode once again in our great state. One has only to look at the increased rate of ice use in our community, which has a direct link to these criminal gang networks. We know when there is increased drug dependency, crime rates go through the roof.

Unfortunately for the Sunshine Coast, under this Palaszczuk Labor government crime has exploded. We only have to look at the latest Queensland police annual statistical review, released late last year, to see that the overall crime rate across the Sunshine Coast district from 2015-16 to 2016-17 increased under this soft-on-crime Labor government. When we drill down to individual offences, the numbers are scary and I can absolutely understand why local residents are concerned. When compared to the previous financial year on the Sunshine Coast alone, robbery is up 51 per cent, armed robbery is up 48.1 per cent, car theft and hooning is up 17.4 per cent, fraud is up 29.8 per cent, unlawful entry is up 0.9 per cent and assault is up a staggering 20.8 per cent.

Every day I hear another story from another fed up or frightened resident fearful of having their car broken into or their home burgled. My own next door neighbour recently had their home burgled whilst they slept. There is no worse feeling than realising someone has been in, or attempted to break into, your home. It is a total violation of privacy and security. It is not the Sunshine Coast that I grew up in. Residents deserve better than to live in fear in their own home because of this Labor government's soft-on-crime approach.

Remarkably, instead of providing more resources and getting serious about crime, what has the Palaszczuk Labor government decided to do? They have decided now is the right time to cut funding to Sunshine Coast Neighbourhood Watch groups and those across Queensland. There has been a massive 85 per cent cut to be exact, slashing funding for our Neighbourhood Watch groups from \$500,000 a year to just \$75,000 a year.

Under this Labor government, we have crime exploding, robbery up 51 per cent, armed robbery up 48 per cent and the Palaszczuk Labor government is targeting the very people in our community who play a major role in crime prevention and detection, and that is our wonderful Neighbourhood Watch groups. These wonderful community minded residents volunteer their time to make our community a safer place. They are a vital link between police and communities. We should be boosting their funding, not cutting it.

The Labor government wants to destroy Neighbourhood Watch groups. If Annastacia Palaszczuk were serious about reducing crime, she would immediately reintroduce the LNP's tough criminal gang laws, act on the ice epidemic and restore funding to our wonderful Queensland Police Service, who do a wonderful job, as well as our Neighbourhood Watch groups on the Sunshine Coast.