




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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ADJOURNMENT

Traeger Electorate

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (7.25 pm): It is with regret that I rise to speak about a dark and negative issue affecting my electorate. I speak of the increase in criminal activity. There was an horrific assault a couple of weeks ago. A young male was accosted by two blokes from the Northern Territory. He is now in ICU. That was the third bashing we have seen in about three weeks.

It is unfortunately symptomatic of a growing problem in Mount Isa at the moment. We have been the sink hole for a lot of social problems in the Northern Territory, north-west and gulf areas. It is becoming very serious. There has been an influx of more people than normal coming in from the Northern Territory causing overcrowding and social problems.

The latest youth unemployment figures are 67 per cent. Our domestic violence rates are six times the state average. Our crime statistics are worse than that of Townsville and Cairns, which are very much publicised. It really pains me to say this. I do not like bringing this up publicly because it is the place where I live and love. There needs to be some action.

We have heard so much about Townsville having problems. We have heard a lot about the Townsville Stronger Communities Action Group. That is an effective measure which has seen an increase in police activity and resources. We also have Major General Stuart Smith's task force. There is all this attention in Townsville, but we seem to be forgotten out west where the problems are much more acute. Unfortunately, the incidents are becoming more violent which is a big problem.

We seem to be the pointy end of the alcohol bans in places like Mornington Island and the Northern Territory. We seem to be the sink hole for these problems and the first port of call. It makes it very hard. Townsville is getting all this attention and Cairns is too, which is good, but we need some attention out west. We need a response from the government. There must be resources provided. At least in the short term there needs to be an uplift in activity to try to stem the acute problem there right now.

We need something different or additional to what we have now to deal with these problems. Long-term problems can be dealt with with relocation sentencing. In the short term these problems need to be dealt with. Joel Pate from the Smoking Gun Cafe is a great young Mount Isa citizen who is trying to do his bit, but he is being continually targeted by criminals and young kids in the Pioneer area. It is a sad reflection of where we are. We are crying out for help from the government.