




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Child Protection, Law Reform; Health System

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.34 pm): There is nothing more evil than the killing of a child. As legislators we have to do everything in our power to protect our kids and lock away the animals who commit these heinous crimes. The safety of our kids should be the priority of every government. That is why the LNP has announced that, if we are elected at the next state election, we will introduce the toughest laws in the nation when it comes to dealing with child killers. Penalties need to meet community expectations, and the kinds of sentences we have seen lately certainly do not. If laws are not working it is the parliament's role to change them, and that is our role in this place.

Under the LNP's plan we will introduce a new offence of child manslaughter that will ensure similar crimes are punished with a mandatory 15-year jail penalty. We will also increase the minimum non-parole period for the murder of a child under 18 from 20 to 25 years.

We have all seen and read the tragic cases. What happened to Mason Jet Lee was absolutely appalling. As a mother it breaks my heart to think about what Mason suffered and the end of that poor little boy's life. The average sentence for child manslaughter in Queensland is just 6.8 years, compared to 8.5 years for adult manslaughter. I am proud to be part of a team that will always put community safety first. We need to send a message that killing a child will involve lengthy jail sentences so that we set a tougher deterrent. Today I am tabling a petition on behalf of Act for Mason—on behalf of the 38,030 who want tougher penalties for child killers after what happened to Mason.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding Act for Mason [1918](#).

Public outrage forced the review of the sentence handed down to William Andrew O'Sullivan after he pleaded guilty to the manslaughter of and cruelty against Mason Jet Lee. We also need to change the law, which is why the LNP under Deb Frecklington has announced the toughest penalties in Australia for child killers.

I also want to talk about a public health system that lurches from crisis to crisis. Even this week we have seen reports about legionella found at several Queensland hospitals and concerns raised about patient safety, and the Queensland obesity crisis shows no signs of stopping. This is at a time when the health minister has cut the budget this year for the preventative health branch of Queensland Health. Yet again we see the health minister floundering, seriously out of his depth, peddling his dog-ate-my-homework excuses. At the same time ambulance ramping is skyrocketing, emergency departments are overcrowded and elective surgery wait times are blowing out. Our hardworking nurses, doctors, midwives and paramedics need more help on the front line. They need a health minister who will stop wasting taxpayers' money renaming our hospitals. It is time for the Premier to show some leadership and sack her incompetent health minister. Our public health system is too important to risk with a bumbling fool who is seriously out of touch.