




Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**

**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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**YOUTH JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I do so because there are good elements of this bill and it would be wrong of the LNP not to support those good elements. I will start by listing a couple of those elements that I think are a step in the right direction. The sharing of information between government bodies is a tick. Body worn cameras is a good, open, transparent step forward, as is bringing children before court in a more timely fashion. These are elements of the bill that are worth supporting. I will not support a return to the weak-on-crime approach that we have seen, which will again make it easier for young people to be granted bail. Those opposite can dress up that approach any way they like. It is an admission that they have lost the battle in watch houses and they have lost the will to do the right thing by communities.

In a fortnight we will be going back to Townsville and parliament will sit in that great city in the north and there will be people who will, rightly, hold this government to account for the changes it is putting forward. This government is waving the white flag and saying, 'It's all too difficult.' How can government members look somebody in the eye and tell them that their rights are not as important as the right of that criminal who has reoffended? I know that, because my house was broken into by somebody who was out on bail. It is not a good feeling.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Those opposite can laugh and they can dress up the approach as being kind. They can make flippant comments about me, but it is not a good feeling and it is a feeling that many of my friends have experienced. When I see changes to the bail laws—

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I will take that interjection from the least popular member of all, the member for Thuringowa.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order!

**Mr Pegg:** He managed to be re-elected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Elected with less than one-third of the vote.

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I have called order and I have stood in my place and people have continued to ignore me. Member for Capalaba, you are warned.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Elected with less than one-third of the primary vote.

**Mr HARPER:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

**Mr HARPER:** Relevance. What has my election result got to do with the debate?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I shall take some advice.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I will continue to warn members and I will ask members to leave the chamber. Silence while I am taking advice. Member for Broadwater, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I remember when changes were made to the Youth Justice Act to make it stronger. When I hear those opposite criticising the former attorney-general, I ask them to reflect on a couple of those changes that were made.

**Mr Harper:** Helicopter rides from Brisbane.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Again, that very popular member for Thuringowa is interjecting. When the former attorney-general put forward those changes to the Youth Justice Act, they worked and they were well regarded.

I recall when the government reversed those changes. I want to talk about two in particular: the removal of breach of bail as an offence and detention as a last resort. I remember having a conversation with the then editor of the *Townsville Bulletin* in which I said, 'This will be a lightning rod for this community when they see what happens—the return of youth crime.' And so it was.

What should be happening in this place is twofold: firstly, those opposite should accept what the Leader of the Opposition has put forward—that is, a solution about the detention of children. No-one wants to see them caged like animals. No-one wants to see them in watch houses. No-one wants to see them suffer the things that our shadow Attorney-General spoke about in his opening remarks. No-one wants that. It is not good for kids. It is not good for the future of our system. It does not do anyone any justice. To suggest that the only solution is to not incarcerate people who are doing the wrong thing is an absolute cop-out. Those opposite cannot come into this place and say that the answer to youth crime is to make it easier for somebody to skip out on bail. That is an out-and-out cop-out.

We will not be supporting clause 10 of this bill. We will be moving amendments and those opposite should take heed because if those amendments are not agreed to there will be an uproar in the community because they see this for what it is. This is using a very tragic situation, which is the fate of children in watch houses—which contrary to what we have heard is still happening—as a way of making things easier for young criminals. If members think that these criminals do not know how to get around the law, they are kidding themselves. They know the law. If they know that being out and breaching their bail conditions sees them get a little pat on the head and an apple pie they will continue to do it. You have to be firm. That does not give you the right to lock them up like caged animals, but it does give you the right to use detention where it is necessary, where it is an opportunity to instil some discipline and where it keeps the community safe.

I will finish my contribution by saying there are some excellent steps forward in this bill and that is why we will be supporting it, but the amendments that will be moved by the shadow Attorney-General will make or break the success of this. To set a ceiling of 72 hours will ensure that the objectives that those opposite are nobly trying to achieve can be achieved. It sets a definitive time line that is strong and that should be followed. Above all, the restoration of breach of bail as an offence must occur. If it does not occur it will undermine everything that our hardworking police and those people working in the youth justice space are trying to do. We must have punishment as well as rehabilitation. Without those two elements what those opposite are trying to achieve will count for nothing and this piece of legislation will go down as another turning point in not achieving what we need to—that is, making these regional communities safer places for families.