




Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2019

ADJOURNMENT

Condamine Electorate, Police Resources

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.10 pm): In recent months a number of family run businesses in the Condamine electorate have been left to pick up the pieces after criminals have run rampant through their establishments. The Biddeston Country Store was targeted by thieves twice in a month, leaving its owner to count his losses. Zimms Corner, a service station on the Warrego Highway at Kingsthorpe, was also raided by thieves before the demountable building from which they were operating their service station was deliberately set alight. The Gowrie One Stop Convenience Centre was forced to completely replace their shopfront after the store was rammed by a vehicle and their ATM ripped out through the front door. The Farmers Arms Tavern, which has stood as a cornerstone of history since 1863 at Cabarlah was the target of another senseless crime. The family run pub was broken into and, again, the ATM had a rope tied around it; it was connected to the tow ball of a ute, ripped from its fixings and dragged through the front doors, tearing a hole in the front of the building.

Crime is on the rise across the state and it does not help that our police stations are stressed to the limit with some understaffed and others ridiculously underresourced. The Oakey Police Station has seven police officers assigned to it. These officers are forced to operate with just one vehicle. This places a massive strain on the surrounding stations to come to their aid when multiple call-outs occur in and around the area. The Pittsworth Police Station has had just one permanent officer since 7 January, waiting for the position of officer in charge to be filled. The Cambooya Police Station has only one permanent officer. The community and I have been petitioning this government for a second permanent officer to be stationed there. This, again, creates a problem when that single officer is called out to an accident or an incident and there is a subsequent call for assistance. This void must then be filled by an officer from a surrounding station.

According to statistics from the myPolice website, in 2016 between January and May across the Darling Downs 612 unlawful entry crimes were recorded along with 143 unlawful use of motor vehicle crimes. Fast forward to 2019 and over the same number of months we see there were 863 unlawful entry crimes recorded and 292 unlawful use of motor vehicle crimes recorded. Residents should not feel unsafe in their own homes or worry about their vehicles being stolen. Small business in Condamine and the rest of Queensland should feel safe in their homes and businesses. We need our police stations and our officers to be properly resourced and staffed.