



Speech By  
**Samuel O'Connor**


**MEMBER FOR BONNEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 February 2019

## ADJOURNMENT

### Harbour Town, Police Beat

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (6.00 pm): I rise tonight to present the government with an offer too good to refuse. We could have a shopfront Police Beat at Harbour Town for a rent of just \$1!

**Mr McDonald:** One dollar?

**Mr O'CONNOR:** One dollar! I am hopeful the police minister can find that in his budget for the Gold Coast—just \$1. On top of providing the shopfront, the centre will even help set it up. Here is that commitment from the major shopping centre in writing, which I table.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 8 February 2019, from Centre Manager, Harbour Town, Mr Gary Webb, to the member for Bonney, Mr Sam O'Connor MP, regarding Harbour Town Gold Coast Police Beat [293](#).

Crime is a big problem in my community. Our police do a fantastic job, but there are not enough of them and that makes it difficult for locals to talk to them. Every day people tell me they have called up the local coppers to report an issue, only for it to be bumped down the queue by more serious concerns. Harbour Town is a major precinct in my electorate. It is a defining feature. It brings people from around the globe. It is Australia's first outlet centre and one of the largest, with over 55,000 square metres and over 240 shops. Nearly 10 million people go through it a year, and 42 per cent of them are tourists. It is both a tourism hub and a favourite for locals with shopping, entertainment and food.

With all of those people comes a lot of crime. The police are called on regularly not just within its boundaries but in the suburbs surrounding it. In the last year there were over 500 offences committed within Harbour Town and its direct surrounds. Only last month there were shots fired in the car park. I would add, Mr Speaker, that that car park can be a scary place on your late-night Macca's run. There currently is a Police Beat in Biggera Waters on Ocean Street. I think that it makes sense to shift this Police Beat to Harbour Town and convert it into a shopfront using the savings.

Harbour Town is a hub for the community, and that is the sort of place where you want police. They should be easily accessible, and having it in a shopping centre gives people better access to report crime and talk to officers. A more visible presence would also serve as a strong deterrent to crime. I have written to the assistant commissioner to ask him to consider the proposal, and I hope that by bringing it to the attention of this House it will help to make it a reality. Our police resources are stretched thin, so we need to use them in the best way possible. We are offering a position that places a Police Beat right where it needs to be which could offer potential savings to the Queensland Police Service. This is a deal that is too good to refuse, and I urge the minister and the Queensland Police Service to jump at this opportunity to help improve safety in my local community.