



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**


**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 July 2020

**MOTION**

**Youth Crime**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.21 pm): I rise to speak against this motion. When I first read this motion I thought that this is their last arrow—a law and order moral panic. Those opposite have no other credible policy options left with just 12 weeks before voting opens. They have abandoned the field on jobs. They have outlined no coherent or proven policies to get Queensland back into work.

They have given up on a decent policy on the Queensland economy. The only economic policy they had was to open the borders—get the economy going by letting Victorians flood into Queensland. Some 64 times the Leader of the Opposition trumpeted her only economic policy—open the borders. When this moral panic arrow falls short they will have nothing. They will go to the election without anything to offer the people of Queensland except their own lack of judgement.

I reflect on what we have done in my communities over 20 years in terms of the issue of youth justice. We know that the only way to resolve these issues is through years and years of hard work within the community—a range of in-depth, integrated, labour intensive and time intensive programs. We have to build up trust between local families and state agencies. Most importantly, we have to listen to the community and provide solutions that are driven by the community.

The Queensland Youth Partnership Initiative has delivered school holiday activities and support services at North Lakes to curb antisocial behaviour and reduce crime. Minister Farmer and I visited this program at North Lakes. We saw how it is based on a local partnership.

**Ms Farmer:** Great program.

**Mr WHITING:** I thank the minister for that. It highlighted the partnership between the local YMCA, the Westfield shopping centre and the council. Another program that works is the Community Youth Response program. The program targets the highest risk offenders, bringing together after-hours services, providing intensive supervision and providing an alternative education bridging program. Other locally based programs that work are restorative justice conferencing and the Transition 2 Success program.

The figures speak for themselves in terms of the Transition 2 Success program. Of participants who completed a course, 75 per cent did not offend within six months and 67 per cent did not offend within 12 months. All of these programs and community based partnerships that work intensively with young people in the Moreton Bay area are having a positive effect. We have seen a 23 per cent decrease in the number of 10- to 17-year-old offenders. What we are now left with in the Moreton Bay area are hardcore repeat offenders.

Compare this to the LNP policies on youth justice which are just woeful. This is the last arrow in their quiver and it can be knocked down with just a couple of minutes research. Take for example what the member for Everton said on ABC Radio on Friday. He said that they would be monitoring young people on bail 24 hours a day. We are already doing that. We have introduced 24/7 co-responder strike

teams. As part of these teams, police and youth justice workers are on the road together. They are already on the ground across the Moreton Bay area targeting antisocial and criminal behaviour. Over 340 young people across the state have been supported by co-responder teams since May.

Let us quickly look at the LNP proposal for boot camps. I remind people what the 2014-15 Auditor-General's report said the last time the LNP brought in the boot camp program. The report said the cost—

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** Sixteen million dollars. I take that interjection. The report said it was originally \$7.4 million, but clearly other things were discovered. The member for Kawana made his own decisions on who was awarded contracts and without documentation. The Fraser Coast boot camp went to the 10th ranked and most expensive offer. The North Queensland boot camp was allowed to have a 15 per cent profit margin. They received an extra \$875,000 in payments. They received additional security staffing from the state to work on their enterprise and \$240,000 to upgrade a private residence.

What was the recidivism rate? It went through the roof. This is the kind of mess that the LNP would create with their boot camps proposal and their youth justice proposal. They only seek to generate problems not solutions.

*(Time expired)*