




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

Record of Proceedings, 15 July 2020

MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House—

1. notes the LNP's policy to tackle juvenile crime in Queensland:
 - (a) introduce tougher laws and increased penalties to hold offenders accountable;
 - (b) require 24/7 monitoring of offenders on bail by Youth Justice, taking the pressure off police;
 - (c) three-strikes policy for repeat offenders;
 - (d) establish a community payback farm program with rehabilitation to break the cycle of reoffending;
 - (e) scrap Labor's failed youth bail houses; and
 - (f) introduce a justice reinvestment program for early intervention to reduce offending; and
2. calls on the Palaszczuk government to immediately implement the LNP's policy to tackle juvenile crime in Queensland.

The highest priority of any government is the safety and security of its citizens. On this most important priority, the Palaszczuk Labor government is an epic fail. Every Queenslander has the right to feel safe. Communities right across Queensland—from North Queensland and regional Queensland to South-East Queensland—are gripped by crime. Hardworking Queenslanders, families and retirees who have worked hard all their lives should not be prisoners in their own homes. Long before we were dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, Queensland was suffering from a youth crime epidemic and you do not need to be an epidemiologist to trace the source. There is a clear path. A litany of failures from this government has led directly to this epidemic and they do not have the ability, the capacity or the will to even flatten the curve.

It all started in June 2016 when they removed the bail offence for juvenile offenders and amended the Youth Justice Act to make detention a last resort. In September 2016, they transitioned 17-year-olds into the youth justice system and started moving 17-year-olds from adult prisons into youth detention facilities that were already at capacity. In 2019, thanks to *Four Corners*, we learned, unsurprisingly, that detention facilities could not cope and that juvenile offenders were being held in maximum security watch houses.

As a knee-jerk reaction to that, in September 2019 Labor introduced another bill, the priority of which was to remove further barriers to juvenile offenders getting bail. At that time I warned the government that that was transferring the problem from Youth Justice back onto the streets and onto our police. The thin blue line has never been thinner. Communities across Queensland have had a gutful and our hardworking police have had an absolute gutful. They are working tirelessly and are doing everything they can to keep our communities safe, but their hands are tied behind their backs thanks to this soft-on-crime Labor government that cuts them off at the knees at every turn.

That is why last week I was proud to stand with Deb Frecklington and announce our comprehensive plan to crack down on youth crime. Ours is a plan that covers the whole cycle of youth offending, with investment in early intervention to divert kids away from the justice system before they

enter into a life of crime. We will have tougher laws to empower our police to take back control of the streets and take action against juveniles who are breaching their bail. We will have 24/7 monitoring by the youth justice department of offenders who are on bail.

Our frontline police and rapid action patrol groups should be targeting organised crime, drug traffickers and paedophiles, not babysitting kids on bail as they are now. We will have mandatory detention for recidivist offenders who continually thumb their noses at the law, which is a harsh penalty that hopefully will act as a strong deterrent to stop the revolving door of youth crime. Our community payback farm program is designed to break the cycle of crime, to rehabilitate offenders and give them the skills they need to earn or learn. The people of Queensland know that only a Deb Frecklington led LNP government will unite people across Queensland in our fight against crime and help them, their families and their community recover from Labor's youth crime epidemic.