




Speech By
Amanda Camm

MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2021

**YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICE CONDITIONS) AMENDMENT
REGULATION**

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (6.25 pm): I rise to contribute to this debate and likewise will not be supporting the member for Maiwar's disallowance motion. As my colleague has already outlined, there is a public expectation in our community around safety. While I note some of the concerns that have been expressed by the member for Maiwar, what is missing is a tangible contribution around ideas that would in fact balance the public good and public safety as well as ensuring that young people are held to a high standing in line with expectations.

It is easy for the Greens to sit in this House and come up with great ideas and big spin about investing in social housing, but in the debate on the previous bill we heard the same party also talk about how we should shut down the mining industry that contributes an enormous amount of revenue to this House. It is just really confusing when ideas are put forward to look at one social policy, yet other ideas are put forward that would take away the funding that supports those ideas. It is quite confusing that a disallowance motion has been presented on one element of a trial that the LNP did support. We did not feel it went far enough. That was on the back of not just community consultation but the individual stories that each of our electorate officers hears every day. Every day across this state, no matter whether you are on the Gold Coast, Townsville, Cairns or my seat in the Whitsundays, we hear of wasted police resources when it comes to this repeat offending cohort. This is where we do agree with the government. We do understand that there is a group of repeat offenders.

In my community, only about 300 metres from my house recently there was an allegation of a young person who stabbed an innocent young woman. I will not speak more about that particular case because it is a matter that is before the courts, but there have been other stabbings in my community. The deputy mayor of Mackay's husband was almost stabbed to death by a young person, and if it were not for doctors and paramedics he would be dead. In line with community expectations and on behalf of the constituents I meet, quite frankly I do not care what age they are. If there is premeditation and they try to take a life, there are consequences for those actions. There are consequences, and our society expects there to be consequences for those actions.

What we are talking about here are GPS monitoring devices that are not only in the interests of the victims of crime but also in the perpetrator's interests to ensure that they know where they are, the people who care for them know where they are and, more importantly, the public resources that the taxpayers of this state fund are not being wasted. We need the GPS devices to enable police to know where they are so they can be monitored. I know that the opposition looks forward to seeing the results of that trial over the course of the coming months. In estimates I raised with the minister the fact that only one single device has been fitted, why that is the case and that we will be strongly monitoring that over the course of the future up until May next year when we see the independent evaluation of the trial.

I want to mention the crime rally that was held in the community of Mackay on Saturday. I note that there are members in this House who are very empathetic to young people, and I am the first to stand up and say that we need to invest in early intervention, we need to invest in wraparound services, we need to support families, we need to support Indigenous communities and we need to provide opportunities, but we need to do that in a way that recognises that there is a proportion of young people where it does not matter how much wraparound support they are provided with. These are the repeat offenders of high-risk and dangerous crime.

People across the community of Mackay came to that crime forum on Saturday, and I would like to acknowledge and thank the 30 people who attended. There were five speakers who shared their stories of being victims of crime—whether it was having their car stolen, which had an enormous impact on their lives; whether it was having their trailer stolen, when it was their only source of income as a mowing contractor; or whether it was having their home broken into and now their children are too scared to sleep in their own rooms because they are victims of crime and somebody has broken and entered and stolen from their house.

People across North Queensland and more broadly are fed up and tired and they want action. We will continue to advocate on their behalf to ensure that the government is held to account. The government needs to hold these offenders to account. We have seen an increase in car thefts in Townsville and other parts of our state, as the member for Burdekin outlined earlier. There is talk in this House that apparently things are improving. Members should tell that to the people who are calling our offices and saying that things are not improving. They are seeing repeat offending. They are seeing young people receive nothing more than a slap on the wrist, getting released and having a great time on the weekend doing the same thing.

I would like to thank the Queensland Police Service for the incredible job they do. However, when I see an increase in crime across our state in my portfolio of domestic and family violence and I see wasted police resources in trying to track down young people, we have to question where the investment is, where the resources are and how the state is managing the priorities to ensure people's lives are not put at risk any further. The resources need to be adequately managed in a way that meets community expectation.

I note the comments by the member for Maiwar about the Human Rights Commissioner. I have also read his statements around that. He also noted that the family and friends of those affected are angry and that protecting the rights of victims must be paramount in any response. I also note his concerns around GPS monitoring and that there is a disproportionate number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people who are represented. That is not good enough across the child protection services, in particular the number of children in this state's care. There is an overrepresentation and both sides of the House recognise that, and there is far more work to be done.

There are opportunities for young people. There are opportunities being delivered right now across North Queensland and regional Queensland by the dirty, large mining companies, as the Greens would have you believe. There is increased participation in Indigenous communities that provides economic development opportunities and delivers great outcomes for young people. There is great work being done by the North Queensland Cowboys. There is great work being done by myriad stakeholders. I encourage the Greens to get out of their inner-city suburbs and go out to rural and regional Queensland to see the great work that is being done to ensure that young people do not choose a life of crime but instead grab the opportunities available to them.

In regional and rural Queensland, we have to do it ourselves because there is a lack of government funding in our part of the world. I would like to highlight to the House that the youth referral service in my community of Mackay has not seen an increase in its core funding in over a decade. In fact, their service agreement does not even let them cross the river. The member for Mackay has sat in this House for many years and has not done one thing to advocate for young people in our region. I have raised with the minister that young people in Northern Beaches do not have access to a youth referral service. That is a suburb where we have many child protection houses and residential care services. The member for Mackay has never delivered to increase that funding for youth referral services in our region. That is about early intervention.

Government members interjected.

Ms CAMM: I must have hit a nerve. I look forward to seeing greater commitments from the minister in that space.