




Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

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YOUTH JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.30 pm): I was disappointed by that contribution. I listened earlier to the member for Cooper when she asserted that some on the opposite side were not taking these difficult and tough issues seriously or looking through the real consequences and having tough conversations with the public, and that instead they were fearmongering and playing politics. I thought the member for Cooper had perhaps overstated that, but after the truly embarrassing rant that was put forward by the member for Everton I fear she did not put her case strongly enough. I have totally reversed my view by just one speech. These are tough and serious issues where we are taking children and young adults and incarcerating them.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr POWER: The member for Mermaid Beach is exactly right that where a person has been hurt these are tough and serious issues. Where property has been taken these are tough and serious issues. What we need to do in this place—as the member for Cooper exhorted us to do—is take these issues seriously, look at the tough sides and have the tough conversations.

That is what the three members in Townsville did because there is an issue in Townsville and those members all addressed that very seriously. They have also had those tough conversations about how we address this to get to the goals and how sometimes the decisions that seem reactionary and easy and make for cheap politics are not the answers. I have to say that the people of Townsville know this. They are smart. They will not be fooled. The LNP at the last election made it all about those issues, and all of the members around that area had to have tough conversations and explain the position they were in and where they were going to reduce youth crime. Am I correct?

Mr Harper: You are spot on.

Mr POWER: In an election where the LNP made it all about crime, those three members gained greater confidence from their communities and the LNP vote went backwards. They went backwards because people recognise that the performance from the member for Everton is cheap politics and it is not helping victims or reducing the incidence of crime, and that is what is so disappointing about it.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr POWER: I did not know that. The member for Everton had a big swing against him too.

I want to speak about a particular aspect of the bill. One of the great frustrations in my area is the problem of dangerous and uncontrolled driving which creates noise and danger on our streets. The hooning problem is one which the Logan police work hard on. They are very passionate about it, and now I am pleased that in this bill we are giving them another tool to fight hooning on the Logan streets.

Dangerous and reckless driving is completely irresponsible. We know it causes harm to people in Logan. This bill amends the current legislation to introduce a new offence, applicable if the owner of a vehicle fails to comply with a requirement to provide a statutory declaration in relation to a type 1

vehicle related offences notice. The bill strengthens the already existing evasion offence notice scheme to all type 1 related offences. These are: dangerous operation of a motor vehicle; careless driving of a motor vehicle; organising, promoting or taking part in a race between vehicles, speed trials or speed record attempts; or wilfully starting or driving a motor vehicle in a way that makes unnecessary noise or smoke. Whenever that is happening, we know that presents danger. The owner has 14 days to do that and can face significant fines—up to 100 penalty points, which is currently \$13,345—for failing to comply.

This will work really well in Logan with the state government funded camera control centre at the Logan City Council, as well as other initiatives which the community and the police use. It will work in conjunction with the high-tech anti-hooping camera technology already utilised by police, and it will complement the suite of anti-hooping strategies and programs that the fantastic Logan police are already engaged in.

I want to recognise the hardworking police officers. I notice there is a lot of dismissal from some on the other side about the work that the police are doing. The police officers at Logan Village-Yarrabilba, Jimboomba, Browns Plains and Crestmead and the senior officers who oversee the Logan district are working hard on these issues. I think they have a deeper appreciation of the fact that these are long-term issues and that it is about engaging early with young offenders who are beginning to get on the path to serious offences as well as setting consequences and boundaries. The police have had increases in their funding and they also have new resources—such as QLITE devices for greater efficiency; body worn cameras for frontline officers to protect both the officer and the public and provide invaluable evidence; and the new X26P model tasers. I have no idea what the difference is but I am going to find out from our police.

Mrs McMahon interjected.

Mr POWER: They are a good bit of kit, I am told. They also have new vehicles.

The other point is that they are part of a team. I heard criticism earlier attacking our police and saying they only worked in a silo. From my experience of the Logan police—but also from debates about the Townsville police, and I know the member for Cairns has said this about the Cairns police—this could not be further from the truth. Our police are passionate about working with housing, youth and family services, child services and residential care. They are actually utilising and involving those groups to ensure we get better outcomes and that we intervene early with young people before they get into serious offences.

In our society, we must think of justice as justice for all—to be treated justly, to live in a just society that respects the person and a person's property. A good family sets this up from day one, with strong boundaries and consequences, incentives and goals for a child. They provide safety, security and certainty that allows a child to develop. Some children have all of these things but still—often through the wrong group of friends and the use of alcohol and drugs—become those repeat offenders. Most who offend though do not have the strong family boundaries or the security and certainty that a child needs. We know that some of the offences those children and near adults commit are very serious. Our communities suffer as a result, and this government takes this very seriously. We want there to be legal boundaries and consequences, but we also want to prevent these damaging offences from occurring in the first place. The focus of this bill is on hardcore, repeat youth offenders—the 10 per cent who account for almost half of all youth offending and who often commit more serious acts that hurt our community.

The new laws will ensure that the young offender must, before they can be granted bail, show real evidence to the court—and, through the court, the community—of why they are not a risk of reoffending when they have been charged with serious indictable offences when on bail. We take this serious step—and it is a serious step—of creating this reverse onus for the defendant to prove to the court because it is telling young repeat offenders that we are serious about them taking responsibility for their actions. It gives the courts power to seek assurances from parents and guardians that they will assist them to comply with their bail obligations when considering the granting of bail. The bill puts firmly in legislation that when a young offender commits an offence while on bail the court will consider that an aggravating factor and sentence them accordingly.

I asked the police minister about the rate of total recorded crime in the Logan district from 1 July to 31 March 2021 and was told that they have seen some decreases overall. I also note that when I asked about offences against the person—and they are obviously very important—the statistics are not as positive. They are different statistics. We know one crime is too many and our entire justice team in Logan—from our police, social services, sports clubs, blue light discos, the PCYC, our courts—will continue to fight to make Logan a safe place, a place of justice.

I also want to say that I really appreciate the police minister's office, because for some time I have been taking the community forward in terms of seeing stronger laws. I want to emphasise to the Logan community what a big step it is to reverse the onus of proof on hooning. I know that we can, therefore, take these laws forward. It is a great tool for our police. It will make an enormous difference. I commend the bill to the House.