




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth Justice

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.58 am): This government is a government that listens to the community and acts decisively. I can inform the House that the state government's plan to further crack down on recidivist youth offenders is moving ahead. This week we will introduce to the parliament legislation that will enable our suite of reforms to be enacted. Those reforms build on and extend the work that the government is already undertaking, particularly in the early intervention and prevention area.

In the past week the head of our Youth Crime Taskforce, Assistant Commissioner Cheryl Scanlon, has been travelling the state, meeting with key people and explaining how the reforms will work. It is important to note that these new measures will target youth offenders who repeatedly offend and put the community at risk. Under our comprehensive suite of reforms, the following measures will be implemented. There will be the ability for the courts to require the fitting of electronic monitoring devices as a condition of bail for recidivist high-risk offenders aged 16 and 17. We will trial this in three key hub locations across the state.

There will also be a presumption against bail inserted into the legislation for youth offenders arrested for committing further serious indictable offences whilst on bail, like dangerous operation of a motor vehicle and unlawful use of a motor vehicle.

Courts will also be empowered to seek assurances from parents and guardians and other responsible people that bail conditions must be complied with before an offender is released on bail. We will also strengthen existing bail laws to provide further guidance to the court by amending the Youth Justice Act to include a reference to the community being protected from recidivist youth offenders in the charter of youth justice principles. The government will also enshrine in legislation the principle that offending while on bail is an aggravating circumstance when the court is imposing a sentence to ensure that people feel the full force of the law.

In addition, to prevent crime, police will trial an enhanced ability to use metal-detecting wands to target knife crime in a trial on the Gold Coast. We will also change anti-hooning laws to strengthen those laws to hold the registered owner of a vehicle responsible, except where the vehicle is stolen or the owner can identify the driver of the vehicle. There will be a parliamentary inquiry which will examine the implementation of remote engine immobilisers—a very important topic that I know many in the community, including the Queensland Police Union, feel very passionately about.

As advised by the Queensland Police Service, the reality is that overall the number of unique youth offenders has gone down by 30 per cent in the last decade, and about 90 per cent of young offenders do not reoffend after their first interaction with police. That being said, any instance of criminal offending is entirely unacceptable, and that is why these changes are being introduced and are squarely

aimed at those serious repeat offenders—that 10 per cent of youth offenders who are frequently putting the community at risk. That is why we are making these changes to bail laws and other legislation changes. These 10 per cent of all youth offenders account for about 48 per cent of all youth crime. These offenders need to feel the consequences of their actions. It is this group we will target with all the force and resources at our disposal. We will always do what is necessary to enhance community safety and hold offenders to account for their actions.