




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2021

YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICE CONDITIONS) AMENDMENT REGULATION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (5.46 pm): I oppose the disallowance motion. I remind all members, as was mentioned in the second reading speech, about the use of terminology and how certain terminology may be offensive. We have just heard the member for Maiwar using offensive language. First Nations people find the words 'tracking' and 'trackers' offensive. I will repeat for the House: the member for Maiwar would have heard that during the second reading debate yet he has used those offensive words in this debate right now. But what else would we expect from the Greens? They always go hunting the headline but give no thought at all to the consequences. Let us interrogate what this disallowance motion means.

What does this disallowance motion mean for young people currently fitted and potentially to be fitted with an electronic monitoring device? Without that device those young people may actually end up in custody. In moving this disallowance motion the Greens seek the headline but they do not think through the consequences. The position of the Greens is that they would prefer those young people to be in custody rather than out with strict supervision, with parents and carers and other supports, and engaging in services. That is the position—

Mr Berkman interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Maiwar, cease all interjections, please.

Mr RYAN: The member for Maiwar has moved a disallowance motion that, if successful, would potentially lead to more young people in custody. By moving this disallowance motion they show that the position of the Greens party is more kids in jail. Look at what they do, not what they say. Again, the Greens party is chasing the headline without thinking of the consequences. This is a complex issue. You cannot chase the simple loud headline without thinking through the consequences. I can give the Greens a headline. If this disallowance motion were successful the headline would be 'The Greens party wants more kids in jail'. That would be the headline.

It is almost like the twilight zone here because we hear LNP members opposite say that they want more kids on electronic monitoring devices. Let us think through the consequence there as well. The consequence would be more kids on electronic monitoring devices and fewer youth offenders in custody.

This is a complex issue and it requires a variety of responses and an integrated system. That is what the government has done in putting in a suite of options which not only support community safety but also support efforts to rehabilitate young offenders. As part of the suite of reforms that was introduced earlier this year, there was a toughening up of bail laws. Those bail laws, we are told by both

the department of youth justice and the Queensland Police Service, are having their desired effect. More serious recidivist offenders are being held more accountable for their actions, and that is leading to less offending in the community as a result.

We also saw, as a result of our reforms, the introduction of a trial of electronic monitoring devices—a limited trial, because we want to see how effective it is. We want to make sure that we get it right. We want to do it in a measured way. We want to do it in a way which supports the rehabilitation of young people. We have been very sensible about how we have brought in this trial. We have been very measured. We have ensured that there are significant wraparound services and conditional bail programs and have boosted resources in the department of youth justice and the Queensland Police Service to ensure we have a responsible supervision regime around those young people. In addition, we have had suitability reports to ensure that only in the most appropriate circumstances are those young people subjected to electronic monitoring devices.

It is early days. The trial will be subject to a review by former police commissioner Bob Atkinson, as well as a further review, to make sure it is effective and is delivering the desired outcome, which is enhancing community safety and supporting the rehabilitation of young people. At the end of the day, this government will always take strong action when it comes to protecting the community, to keep the community safe. Young people and adult offenders will be accountable for their actions. This government will always take those steps.

As I said, part of the reforms that we introduced were around tightening bail laws for youth offenders and a reverse presumption. The police have told us that that is having its desired effect. In fact, the police have recently said that there are about 100 extra young people who are in custody today compared to last year as a result of the stricter laws.

We will continue to ensure that our laws are appropriate. We will continue to ensure that there is a strict supervision regime for young people who are released on bail which may, in some instances, include electronic monitoring, and we will also ensure that our youth justice services and our Police Service are adequately resourced to promote community safety and hold young offenders to account.

I will come back to where I started—that is, people need to think through the consequences of what they are proposing. The Greens have proposed something which is irresponsible and will have adverse consequences. They need to look at the consequences rather than shoot for the headline. In this instance, what they are proposing would have an adverse impact on community safety. More importantly for the Greens, it will have the very opposite effect of what they have been saying they are seeking to achieve. I encourage all members to oppose this disallowance motion. It is irresponsible, it does not think through the consequences and it quite clearly puts the headline ahead of community safety and young offenders.