




Speech By
Nikki Boyd

MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2021

MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.16 pm): The motion today proposed by the LNP opposition is just another sensationalised political stunt—the type of cheap stunt that Queenslanders have grown tired of. Through the long, hard years of LNP opposition we have seen these cheap stunts pulled out by those opposite, be it in health or crime or whatever else. More often than not, the attacks by those opposite miss the mark entirely, landing inadvertent blows on the hardworking health professionals, child safety workers or police in our state.

Here in this moment we rewind right back to the couple of short, fleeting horror years when the LNP were on the government bench here in Queensland. It seems they simply cannot stop attacking public servants. They simply cannot help themselves. Public servants are always public enemy No. 1—well, maybe a close No. 2, right after a socialist or even a young person.

The LNP simply cannot help themselves when it comes to these cheap political stunts and attacks. That is why I support the minister's amended motion in respect of the complex and difficult issues facing our communities with our young people. Rather than political stunts, this Palaszczuk government is focused on tackling the big issues. These are tough, complex issues that require multi-agency approaches, and some of those approaches do not see immediate results. They take commitment. Our focus remains resolute to reduce crime, to keep our communities safe and to ensure young offenders are held to account for their actions.

Nowhere in Queensland is immune to recidivist youth offenders. They are an issue in my electorate, as they are in many others. Just a couple of weeks ago here in this place we passed additional measures to tackle the very small number of recidivist youth offenders in our communities and ensure more personal responsibility for those young people.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms BOYD: Despite the toxic, repeated rhetoric from those opposite—the ramblings that they are going on with right now—youth crime has dramatically fallen under the Palaszczuk government.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms BOYD: They do not like to hear it, Mr Speaker, but that is a fact.

Mr Minnikin: Enjoy your next trip to Townsville!

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Chatsworth is warned under the standing orders.

Ms BOYD: We have deployed a multifaceted approach to keeping our community safe and to assisting young people who have committed offences to change their story because community safety is paramount and community confidence in our youth justice system is essential. I would encourage those opposite to read *Working Together Changing the Story: Youth Justice Strategy 2019-2023*. It is our government's foundation policy direction for youth justice.

Young people who come into the youth justice system deserve an investment in their futures—an investment that helps them write a different story for themselves, for their families and for their communities. That is why we have invested in programs that will show them a different path and help them back into education, into training and into jobs such as our Transition 2 Success program, which does just that.

I see this program kicking goals every day in my electorate with organisations like the Youth Development Foundation, run by Jerry and the team. I love going to their Strathpine office and hearing firsthand stories about these young people from these young people who are rewriting their stories for themselves. T2S graduates have seen a 77 per cent reduction in offending. The LNP, regardless of the leader of the day, will always prefer a 'lock 'em up and throw away the key' approach, and this is where we differ. The LNP continually call for a breach of bail offence here in Queensland. Their finding of guilt while on bail, which is what the opposition now refer to as their breach of bail law, was in operation in Queensland throughout 2014 and 2016.

Mr Harper: Ninety per cent reoffended.

Ms BOYD: I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa: 90 per cent of those reoffended. It was a complete and utter failure. We repealed that offence because it simply did not reduce youth crime and could not be used to hold offenders to account. It rarely influenced the decision at the point of arrest or subsequent court appearances because the offence could not be used until after the finding of guilt, which could be weeks or even months after the second instance.

In 2015 the courts found that this ill-conceived legislation contradicted the Criminal Code rule against double punishment; therefore, even when a child was found guilty of a breach of bail offence they could not—I repeat: they could not—be given an additional penalty. Despite the proven ineffectiveness of this offence, the opposition continue to tout it as a solution to this very serious issue. As we hear time and time again, it is not proven to work. But like all—

(Time expired)