




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

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ADJOURNMENT

Mermaid Beach Electorate, Housing

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.13 pm): I rise to highlight the failing of the Palaszczuk government to address an issue that is causing great concern for the residents of Miami and North Burleigh in the Mermaid Beach electorate. The influx of troubled people with drug, alcohol and mental health conditions who are being placed in short-term accommodation in older Gold Coast motels, in an unsupervised and unsupported capacity, has led to the residents in those areas feeling threatened, intimidated and generally unsafe in an area that was previously a very desirable residential suburb. Following last year's election I wrote to Minister Enoch and basically received an attacking political response that in no way addresses the genuine concerns of the people of Miami, who have a right to feel ignored by this Palaszczuk Labor government.

We understand that troubled folk need care and attention, but to throw them into unsupervised and unsupported inappropriate accommodation because of a lack of proper alternatives provided by the Palaszczuk Labor government is a sad indictment of that government's housing policy. Local residents should not be inflicted with bad behaviour in their neighbourhood because the Palaszczuk Labor government cannot come up with a just and fair outcome for people who have lost their way in life. People who are not in control of their actions from time to time are susceptible to repeat offending when they are not supported in their personal endeavours to return to normal society.

The district police are well aware of the problems that those short-term inhabitants have created. They have increased their patrols to those areas in an effort to contain the issues. However, with the increased demand on police resources to man border closures and hotel quarantine duty, policing has become a case of satisfying those statewide health concerns first and other complaint issues are dealt with on a when-can-do basis.

This is a serious issue that the Palaszczuk government must address. I am circulating a petition in the Mermaid Beach electorate to enforce the depth of feeling that this irresponsible housing policy has had on a peaceful, desirable and harmonious residential area of the Gold Coast. The housing minister, Ms Enoch, must take charge of her portfolio policy and redirect those troubled persons into supervised and supported accommodation. The combination of those troubled people and the youth crime outbreak on the Gold Coast has left residents feeling abandoned, forgotten and disillusioned about why they cannot feel safe in their own homes. One young woman, whom I cannot name, is so terrified that young vandals will return to attack her after stealing her car keys from her bedside table that she lives in a constant state of fear and sleeplessness. That criminal behaviour has to be curtailed.

The police advise me that 50 or so hardened youth criminals who are creating the problem—and they are aware of those young thugs—must be locked away from law-abiding society until their behaviour can be corrected. The police are aware and are working tirelessly for the community, but it is not their responsibility. They should fix their policies.