



Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**


**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2021

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Gold Coast, Youth Crime**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.26 pm): Since we last sat in this House of legislation, I have met with several parents of youths who have been, and continue to be, involved in serious crime sprees on the Gold Coast. These are good, loving, caring parents who are desperately frustrated at the behaviour of one of their children, while having well-behaved, normal brothers and sisters being unfairly affected by that sibling's atrocious behaviour. They are at their wit's end trying to combat the unacceptable behaviour of their child and they are crying out for help.

That help needs to come from the justice system that is charged with protecting the community from lawless behaviour. That justice system is directed by the laws that we make in this House. This House is the filter for community sentiment and direction. This House is filled with politicians who should understand and react to Queenslanders' concerns. This House is the font of knowledge of what is acceptable behaviour for our community and accordingly makes laws to see that those lawful standards are implemented by the judiciary. I am sick and tired of seeing half-baked magistrates with no, none, zilch community representation sending deliberately delinquent kids back out on to the street to repeat the crimes for which they have been charged and found guilty.

These parents are angry at the judicial system for failing their children. They are certain that this government's failure to put in place adequate laws for the judiciary to follow will lead to the death of their child in a stolen vehicle or, what is worse, the death of an innocent family caused by their child in an out-of-control stolen vehicle. These kids are as young as 13 and have no regard for parental direction or control. The parents themselves want them taken out of normal society and away from peer group gang pressure until their behaviour can be corrected.

On the Gold Coast we are talking about 30 known offenders, so it is not a lot of criminals that we are dealing with. Yes, they are criminals, and criminals, old or young, should be removed from communities. I have sponsored a petition to get this Labor government to do the right thing about these hardened criminal kids—a petition which their parents have signed. I urge Premier Palaszczuk to understand the heartache these kids are bringing to their families and which is about to explode as these criminal influences encourage more youth to join them.

The police are sick of the court's revolving doors for these repeat offenders, and I know they privately support a new law regime to give effect to the wonderful work they do in rounding up these errant teenagers and protecting communities from their wilful criminal behaviour. Ankle bracelets do not work; excursion visits to the courthouse do not work. We need them taken out of society until their ways have mended and their acknowledgement of right from wrong has matured.