




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2021

MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (5.30 pm): I rise to speak in support of the LNP motion. It is incredibly sad that what we have seen largely over many months is that the antisocial behaviour in the main street of Southport has degenerated to such a point now that we are seeing direct assaults and wilful damage. The member for Burdekin mentioned this, but the *Townsville Bulletin* is not the only newspaper that carries these stories on the front page. Just the other day we read the story with the headline 'Vigilante father'. The article stated—

A Gold Coast dad has been fined for attacking a boy with a wooden stake after a group of teens had stomped on his son's head.

The dad was fined \$500, with no conviction recorded, after he tried to help his boy, 15, who had been bullied and beaten up by the group.

The man cannot be named to protect his son's identity.

Magistrate Cameron McKenzie said he understood the reasons for the man's "vigilante-type conduct" but he "cannot put himself in that position".

The response to that article and what has happened has been incredible. I do not think it would be appropriate to read some of the text messages here given they contain some fairly unparliamentary language from some members of my community. It is sad that we are starting to see this sort of thing happen on an everyday basis.

Just a week ago I received a phone call from the principal of one of the many colleges in Southport. There are 28 colleges. Some of them have international students and a lot of them provide education services to Aussie kids as well. A group of young girls left this particular college and were on their way to Australia Fair Shopping Centre to get some lunch and they were set upon by a group of juveniles who threatened them and demanded that they hand over their handbags and cigarettes. They did not have any cigarettes. One of the group then proceeded to knock this beautiful young 17-year-old girl to the ground. They kicked her and they stomped her on the head as well and she ended up with significant injuries. I am pleased to say that the officer in charge at Southport Police Station got straight onto it and the particular individual on this occasion was arrested. We will wait with bated breath to see what happens once they get to court.

I received this text message the other day and I want to share it as well. It states—

... was just looking for a bit of guidance about these young juveniles that ... been hanging out near the Telstra building and harassing people. Apparently there's a group of 12 to 13 year-old kids ... should be in school have been spending quite a bit of time in Southport giving people grief. Just wondering if this is a matter for police or ... should try to get child safety involved?

We have been working through that with our community consultative committee. I received a text message from another person, which stated—

... we have a problem in front of the Telstra building and near the old ambulance station. Not homeless but groups of young people—

I will not say where they are from or talk about the full extent of the text message, but it continued by saying that they were hassling people. Also, some broke into their bar, graffitied the front of it and smashed the front window. Only a few days ago I had a call from Study Gold Coast because some young men urinated on the front balcony of their centre in Southport and took off with some of the furniture.

We need to do more. The Southport Police Station, like so many, is stretched. It is very frustrating for officers when they go out on patrol: they apprehend young people, they take them to court and then sadly these kids just get off scot-free so the cycle continues. We need to see tougher laws. We certainly need to see greater intervention, and I take the earlier comment from the Minister for Children and Youth Justice. I am pleased that Southport will have a youth foyer to provide some long-term accommodation for some of these young people, but we need a lot more done in this space.

(Time expired)