



Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**


**MEMBER FOR HILL**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 March 2021

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Hill Electorate, Youth Crime**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.43 pm): I rise to speak to the House about the impact that youth crime is having in my electorate. Due to constant public feedback, in February I launched a petition titled Stop Youth Crime. It was tabled in the parliament this week. In only a few short weeks the petition attracted close to 5,000 signatures, which shows how big an issue this is not only in my electorate but also in Far North Queensland. Everyone in this House would agree that youth crime, particularly in regional Queensland, is out of control. Local police will tell you that there is a core group of repeat offenders. These youth understand the law, their rights, and they know that police are powerless to do anything to stop them. If they are arrested, they are back on the streets the next day committing the same crime they were originally arrested for.

I know that there are many arguments against tougher laws for youth offenders—they come from bad backgrounds or circumstances—however, it is very clear when you watch videos of these kids stealing cars or their behaviour in courts that they know exactly what they are doing. Try putting that argument to a mum of three who had her car stolen and trashed, and now she cannot get to work or take her kids to school because she cannot afford to get another car; or a business owner who had his business broken into numerous times and can no longer afford insurance. The bleeding hearts will tell you they are only kids, but these kids also know right from wrong. You can call it tough love, but we need stronger laws to act as a deterrent.

My petition, among other things, calls for the following to be considered: trialling a third option for courts in the form of relocation sentencing as a deterrent and to facilitate the rehabilitation of offenders—relocation sentencing is designed to send them out to remote locations and teach them values and skills to help break the crime cycle; ensure that courts are adequately resourced so that young offenders are dealt with expeditiously so the delay in the judicial process is not used as a reason for them to be granted bail; repeal item 18 of schedule 1, Charter of Youth Justice, in the Youth Justice Act 1992 which provides that—

A child should be detained in custody for an offence, whether on arrest, remand or sentence, only as a last resort and for the least time that is justified in the circumstances.

My electorate is very passionate about this issue, and I believe that it is very important to raise this in the House.