



Speech By  
**Amanda Camm**


**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2022

**MOTION**

**Cairns, Youth Crime**

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.31 pm): I remind the member for Barron River, the member for Cook and the member for Cairns—if he prefers the member for ‘Cahns’, I can pronounce it that way too—that the member for Burdekin met with constituents, met with regional community members, sponsored petitions, listened to the concerns of victims of crime, listened to former child protection staff, listened to youth justice workers, listened to youth advocates and, most importantly, listened to residents and business owners who every single day are walking the streets of Cairns in fear and returning to their homes in fear—fear that their businesses and livelihoods will be disrupted.

It must be great for the members for Townsville, Thuringowa and Mundingburra to learn that Cairns—and I was there last week—has now surpassed Townsville when it comes to vehicle theft. It is quite incredible that, despite the policies that the Attorney and the Minister for Police tout and the millions of dollars spent—it is really working!—we are seeing significant increases in crime in North Queensland. One thing we know is that the members representing the Cairns and Townsville regions are united in one way: silence on behalf of their communities.

**Mr HARPER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I take personal offence. Hardly silent! I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, member! I had not recognised you or given you the call. In future, do not rise to your feet and start talking. Seek the call or let us know that you have a point of order. Do you have a point of order?

**Mr HARPER:** I do, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I apologise. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member has taken personal offence and asks you to withdraw.

**Ms CAMM:** I withdraw. In light of the amendment moved to the motion, I would like to highlight the Attorney’s record when it comes to community safety—their version of always acting decisively, the significant investment in youth justice programs et cetera. I refer to some real responses that I received on my recent visit to Cairns. Under the watch of Child Safety, a 14-year-old child died. Under the care of this state government, a juvenile died. What a proud record this government has! Two youths, aged 14 and 15, waited three months to be approved by Child Safety for bedding, for housing, for mobile phones and even for food vouchers—and we wonder why children are committing crimes under this state government! The state government’s policies and the delivery of child safety are working so fantastically! For the record, that was sarcasm.

Child Safety are making promises to young people and not keeping them. It is the child safety system that is fundamentally failing these children. The minister flew in for a morning and flew out after making an announcement. I spent the day engaging with those who have formerly worked in Child Safety and who are consistently having to step in because Child Safety and Youth Justice are

inconsistently attending court and inconsistently supporting young people. When young girls and boys are residing together in residential placements resulting in a 14-year-old girl becoming pregnant, this state government is doing nothing but facilitating intergenerational cycles of crime and of marginalisation. The members who represent that community should hang their heads in shame.

It is the abuse, the violence and the sexual assault that the member for Cairns just highlighted that is being facilitated by the structural, systemic failings of this Labor government—the failings of this government to adequately implement best practice principles in a practical way. The Carmody inquiry recommendations demonstrated the lip-service paid by this minister and that the government is failing our First Nations people and our next generation of First Nations children.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana and member for McConnel, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms CAMM:** Under this government's failed policy we have seen nothing but an increase in crime, an increase in the number of children in the child safety system and an increase in the number of youth in the youth justice system. It is this government that is failing when it comes to ensuring public safety for the people in the community of Cairns. It is this government and its lack of policy, its lack of implementation and the lack of leadership by the minister that continuously fails the people of North Queensland. I am proud to stand next to the member for Burdekin because it is we who have to travel to North Queensland to hear from that community.