



Speech By  
**Dale Last**


**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 February 2022

## ADJOURNMENT

### Cairns and Mareeba, Youth Crime

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.00 pm): Twice in the last two weeks I have visited Cairns as well as the neighbouring community of Mareeba in response to calls from residents and business owners in those communities about the youth crime issues and the fact that they are not being heard. These communities are having their hearts and souls ripped out. In Cairns last Friday at a crime rally, I told the residents and business owners who turned up that I would take their voice to the Queensland parliament, that I would stand up in here this week and outline their concerns, speak on their behalf and demand that the Premier, the police minister and the youth justice minister go to Cairns and do something about the crime problem that exists in that community. Where was the member for Cairns last Friday at the crime rally? He said, 'My days are organised two to three weeks ahead.' He was a no-show. I think that is an absolute disgrace.

The member for Cook moving her office to Cairns and the member for Cairns not even bothering to turn up at a crime rally in that community speaks volumes about just how interested they are in that community to address what has become an epidemic. Is it any wonder they are saying enough is enough? Is it any wonder they are launching a petition, which I was pleased to sponsor on behalf of the Cairns community, calling for a full and open inquiry into Far North Queensland child safety and youth justice issues, to review the youth justice laws, to look at the department of child safety, but, more importantly, to act as a forum for victims of crime to have their voices heard? In all of this it is the victims who are not being heard and it is the victims who are suffering.

Mareeba is a community under siege. The graffiti and the vandalism down the main street of Mareeba has to be seen to be believed. Cairns business owners who have been the subject of multiple break and enters and residents who have had their vehicles stolen have said, 'No more!' Mrs Carswell at that rally was exactly right when she said—

We should not be afraid to go to sleep at night in our own home. It's time for this government to act on youth crime and to act on that fear.

I could not agree more with Mrs Carswell. The time has come for action. We need a commitment from this government to go to those communities, to go to North Queensland—to Cairns, to Mareeba, to Townsville—and do something about this youth crime epidemic.

*(Time expired)*