



Speech By  
**Dale Last**


**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 August 2022

**MOTION**

**Hervey Bay, Youth Crime**

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House recognises the devastating impacts of youth crime on the people of Hervey Bay and notes:

1. the terrible toll on business owners and their staff under siege from this crime wave;
2. the state government's failure to increase police numbers in the face of increasing crime and population growth;
3. the added burden on the community from the failing health system which has seen police across Queensland drafted in because of record ambulance ramping; and
4. money wasted on the Palaszczuk government's Wellcamp fiasco could have been better invested combating serious issues facing regional Queenslanders

And calls on the member for Hervey Bay to admit he has got it wrong on breach of bail, police numbers and ambulance ramping.

Many times I have stood in this place and talked about the juvenile crime epidemic that is gripping this state from Cairns and Townsville to the Gold Coast, Toowoomba and Rockhampton, to name a few. Tonight we can add another name to that list: Hervey Bay. The picturesque and idyllic town of Hervey Bay has joined that list and become crime central. Members may well ask: where is the member for Hervey Bay? He is MIA! He might be over there waving his hand but, as we will be reminding the community, very shortly I will outline what his contribution has been in this chamber and to the parliament on the crime wave that is gripping the Hervey Bay community. I want to share these words with the chamber—

It just breaks my heart so much. I'm a single mother just running a business to look after my son and put a plate on our table.

Those are the words of Daisy Owen, who owns a phone repair business in Hervey Bay. Sadly, Daisy is not the only resident who has had her heart ripped out by the escalating crime problem in that community.

To the end of July 2022, like a number of centres throughout the state, Hervey Bay saw increases in unlawful entry and unlawful use of a motor vehicle charges of 20 per cent and 81 per cent respectively. Under this Labor government, when crime increases in Hervey Bay the number of police officers is cut. That is right: in the period from the end of November 2021 to 22 April 2022, the approved strength for the Hervey Bay police division decreased to its lowest level in five years. Given that, the Hervey Bay community could expect uproar from their local member. They could expect their local member to be on his feet in this place, banging on the table and demanding more police officers and resources for his community. In his maiden speech in this place he said they would 'deliver the services and programs' that Hervey Bay needs. What have we heard from the member for Hervey Bay? Absolutely nothing! He has not stood up for his community.

Whilst delivering a reduction in services, can members believe that the member for Hervey Bay has uttered the word 'crime' only four times in this place, although not in relation to crime in his community. He has said it in reference to the Crime and Corruption Commission. How many times has he mentioned just the word 'crime' in this chamber? That is zero as well! Not once has the member for Hervey Bay stood in this chamber and talked about the crime epidemic that is gripping his community.

I have no doubt that shortly we are going to hear from the police minister about all of the additional police resources that he is putting in place in the state, including an extra 150 officers in the Hervey Bay region. We now know that their commitment to 1,450 extra officers is in tatters. We have gone from the commissioner being 'extraordinarily confident', at the estimates hearing on 14 December 2020, to the commissioner stating, 'We are doing everything we possibly can' to honour that commitment on 3 August this year. We know that that target for additional officers is now in tatters because attrition rates are through the roof. Is it any wonder that the numbers in Hervey Bay have been cut?

I visited Hervey Bay on 31 May this year. I met with residents and I met with business owners. I met with business owners who are sick and tired of having their shop windows kicked in night after night and their premises broken into. They are frustrated and they are angry. They are angry because they are not getting any support from their local member. Their local member is mute when it comes to talking about and addressing this issue in their community. They want to see a police vehicle available 24 hours a day in their local community. They do not want to have to rely on a police vehicle that is on call from Maryborough and does not arrive until after midnight.

The member for Hervey Bay might be mute in this place but I gave a commitment and I know the leader gave a commitment when he was there that we will be the voice for that community in this parliament. We will stand up for that community in this place. We will demand that those opposite provide the resources that the community needs in terms of policing numbers to ensure that they get this crime problem under control. We owe it people such as Daisy Owen and we owe it to the residents of Hervey Bay.