




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

Record of Proceedings, 13 October 2022

MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.40 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Currumbin. I am also happy to contribute to the amended motion moved by the police minister only a few minutes ago: paragraph (a), the record investment and action over successive years by the Palaszczuk government in community safety and youth justice measures. Let us have a look at their record. In 2015 the top priority of this government when they won office was to water down the legislation available to our police in the Youth Justice Act. They removed breach of bail as an offence and they reinstated detention as a last resort as the overarching principle in the Youth Justice Act. In 2016 they transferred 17-year-olds into the Youth Justice Act, essentially moving all 17-year-old prisoners out of adult jails into youth detention facilities.

Mr Watts: How many rooms did they build?

Mr PURDIE: That is exactly right. Not long after that, members will remember, there was the *Four Corners* expose that revealed that up to 90 young vulnerable offenders were being held in maximum security watch houses.

To alleviate that problem they watered down the Youth Justice Act again in 2019 to remove further barriers to young offenders getting bail. At that time we on this side said this would end in tears, all they were doing was transferring the problem from Youth Justice back out onto the street. Unfortunately, as we have heard from other speakers tonight and from the long list of tragedies outlined by the member for Currumbin, it has ended in tears. I understand why the police minister is begging for our policy. He is all at sea when it comes to youth crime and crime and keeping us safe.

As the member for Chatsworth said, the highest priority of any government is to keep their citizens safe. In fact, the top promise of this government at the last election was to keep Queenslanders safe. How are they going with that? How are they going with that in hospitals or in ambulance ramping and how are they going out on the streets and in homes across Queensland? It is not just the tragedy on Australia Day last year at Alexandra Hills when Matty, Kate and their unborn son, Miles, lost their lives, or more recently when Michael Warburton was allegedly run down by young offenders in a stolen car—and the list goes on. It is not just statistics. These crime figures we have been outlining and the litany of sad stories we are hearing are alarming. I am mindful that the Speaker is getting some advice from the Clerk at the moment. It is not just property offences: we are not just talking about unlawful uses, we are not just talking about break and enters, we are not just talking about carjackings, we are not just talking about people's businesses and their cars stolen; lives are being lost.

Another example of this government's overt soft-on-crime regime can be seen in the first sitting day of their second term, the first full sitting day in 2018, when they moved amendments in the Tow Truck Act to try to plug holes in the previous amendments in the Youth Justice Act which was seeing young 17-year-old offenders get off serious drink, drug and dangerous driving offences. We know that a vehicle in the hands of a young inexperienced driver, whether it is stolen or otherwise, is a weapon.

More often than not we are seeing these tragedies unfolding on our streets. On Monday of this week a magistrate in a local magistrates court, during an application for a restricted work licence for an offender who had previously been caught for drink driving, acknowledged the absurdity of legislation where he could not take that into account because the matter had been before the Childrens Court when the offender was 17 and those charges were dismissed. That was reported in the *Courier-Mail* on Saturday.

This government, time and time again, are not just overseeing a broken youth justice system. They broke the system and they have no idea how to fix it, which is why they are begging us for our policy. I am happy to talk about the minister's amended motion which talks about community safety more generally. They also watered down the laws available to police to rid this state of bikies. We now know that bikies are back and they are lawless. We saw a midday Monday public slaying of a bikie associate in a main street in Carindale. We have learnt since then that these bikies are using feeder clubs. They are recruiting young offenders into feeder clubs such as the 13 Kings which were involved in that public slaying, because the talent pool is deep.

This government has overseen a generation of young offenders who have had no consequences for actions. Now bikies are recruiting these young kids into feeder clubs like the 13 Kings to deal drugs and to commit murder. It is another example of this government's failure to keep people safe. The only way to keep people safe in Queensland is to change the government.