



Speech By  
**Jonty Bush**


**MEMBER FOR COOPER**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 August 2022

## MOTION

### Hervey Bay, Youth Crime

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak against the original motion and I will be supporting the minister's amendment. Firstly, I do not actually disagree with some of the member for Burdekin's statements in his motion. I do agree that the impact of crime on individuals, home owners, parents, businesses and communities is absolutely devastating. Victims of crime often are left feeling violated, they feel angry, they feel anxious and they have a heightened sense of victimisation. That is why I find the approach of the LNP, in taking advantage of that very valid fear around community safety, to be completely irresponsible.

I am also surprised by this motion from the member for Burdekin. The member has just sat with us during the estimates process where we scrutinised the expenditure in the areas of police, corrective services and emergency services. What we heard in estimates is that this year's budget for the Queensland Police Service exceeds \$3 billion for the first time ever.

I will touch on police numbers in a moment, but I want to highlight that the Commissioner of Police is on the record having committed to a minimum of an extra 150 police officers for every region. Further, the Queensland Police Service has increased its vehicle fleet by 129 vehicles since 2019-20, with a further increase of 50 vehicles expected for this financial year.

We are seeing not only the increased numbers but also the shift in policing approaches in the regions and in the suburbs in areas like Ashgrove, Barton and Paddington, which do unfortunately have crime episodes—like all cities and like all suburbs—and we are seeing real responsiveness from police.

I have to commend particularly our new Inspector Corey Allen in my electorate. Corey will be known to many people who work not only in police but also community services. If you speak to Corey, you will quickly understand that you cannot simply arrest your way out of crime. Reducing crime takes a holistic approach and it takes a community approach.

There is a lot that cohesive and informed communities can do to build their community safety capacity—which is why I cannot defend the actions of the LNP who come into town with the intended purpose to add to a community's fears. For the record, I do appreciate their role in opposition is to gather and highlight the gaps and issues, but to do that in a way that generates fear and then to simply decamp without putting any kind of supports in place, particularly for those in community who are victims of crime, is deplorable.

Let me again put on record my admiration and respect for members of the Queensland Police Service. The work they do is incredibly challenging. While I appreciate that the LNP think that with this motion and their continued focus on law and order they are hurting the government, what they are really doing is impacting on the morale of officers and they are making the role of attracting and retaining staff even harder.

All Queenslanders deserve to be safe in their homes and in their communities. We have heard in estimates from the minister how Queensland has received the biggest boost in police numbers in 30 years. Despite nationwide workforce shortages, the government's commitment to deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel by the year 2025 remains on track. More than 1,000 new police officers have graduated from Queensland's two police academies since 1 July 2020 and the commissioner is determined to attract more people to this career.

On a final note I will say this: I wish the LNP would approach the issue of domestic and family violence or sexual violence against women with the same enthusiasm in the same way as they do on youth crime. Each sitting week since I have been elected they come in here and move a motion in relation to youth crime. They travel around the state talking about youth crime. Reducing youth crime and reducing the number of young offenders ought to be a priority, absolutely, but for context there are 372 repeat youth offenders in Queensland—many of whom are quite vulnerable in their own right. Compare that to the 28,500 DVOs that were taken out last year in Queensland.

I would love to see the LNP conduct a town hall event with the perpetrators of domestic and family violence. I would love to see them as leaders in their communities talk directly to perpetrators to call out violence, to not condone their behaviours and to condemn the violence. A member of the LNP spoke to me recently about how we could potentially make it more difficult for victims to take out DVOs. Jesus, take the wheel! This is why I will not be supporting the member for Burdekin's motion.