



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**


**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2022

**MOTION**

**Cairns, Youth Crime**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.25 pm): Very rarely have I been called silent. Those who know me know that. The more I listen to what is happening here, the more it reminds me of that famous quote by Eleanor Roosevelt: 'Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.' I have a speech that I would like to talk about.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members, I appreciate there is a great deal of feeling with regards to this motion before the House, but I cannot hear the member for Cairns, which in itself is unusual. I ask that if members wish to make a contribution they rise to their feet and speak. Apart from that, I ask that interjections be kept to a minimum.

**Mr HEALY:** I rise to speak in support of the Attorney-General's proposed amendments. Before I do, I want to touch on a crime protest recently held in Cairns. I was not notified until a couple of days before. I rang the person who was organising it, and this is a person who is known to me and somebody I have had in the office. It might come as a surprise that they are not actually a constituent of mine. They live in the seat of Mulgrave, but I am always happy to sit down and talk to people who have issues. I am more than happy to have those discussions.

What I did find interesting was that on that Friday afternoon I received a call from a person who owned a business next door. They said to me that the member for Burdekin was arguing with the person who had organised the protest because he had not allowed him to have a speech. The protest group had turned up. They had these lovely big banners—I do not know who paid for them but they looked very nice—and they were all there. When the member for Burdekin was not allowed to have his speech, they had a barney in the street. This is a crime issue. With those sorts of skills, he should be the deputy leader. It was an absolute joke and I spoke to a lot of those people and they walked away embarrassed.

We recognise we have significant challenges, but the inability of that mob over there to present any real solutions or even reflect a basic understanding of the complex issues highlights the fact that they do not have any plan at all and they are happy to sit on the sideline and throw stones. I meet with constituents in my electorate on this matter and I remind them that this government is absolutely committed and we work with the police and Child Safety. There has literally been \$517 million spent since 2015. We have had a terrible period, but the police tell me now that February's numbers are looking a lot better and we are working towards this.

I think it is important that we recognise that in the absence of children being loved, cared for, nurtured and raised in an environment of respect and understanding, where they are exposed to substance abuse, sexual assault and violence, where they are safer on the streets at night than in their own homes, there will always be a need for intervention and there will always be a need for child safety, and we continue to resource these areas and we resource them well.

We are also expanding police numbers, as we heard from the Minister for Police. We are continuing to expand our youth detention centre; we have had an increase in beds by 33 per cent. We know that we need to be hard on the causes of crime. This is the bit that those on the other side just do not get. They cannot articulate it. If you think throwing people in detention and locking them up will be the solution, you are wrong. The people of Queensland listened to some of your ridiculous ideas in the closing weeks of the election campaign and rejected any concept of reality that you think you had. The people said no to some of your ideas.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HEALY:** They said no. They said absolutely no!

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr HEALY:** Through Transition 2 Success, which is a program that is helping young people into jobs, training and back to school, there has been a 77 per cent reduction in offending. Through restorative justice conferencing we have seen a 67 per cent reduction in offending. It is absolutely fundamental that we stick with these programs and continue the work. In the absence of any facts and any figures, I find it remarkable that those opposite are here to entertain themselves on what is an enormously challenging issue.