




Speech By
Patrick Weir

MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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ADJOURNMENT

Youth Crime

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (7.16 pm): This government is failing to protect Queensland from recidivist juvenile offenders. These kids—yes, most of them are kids, some as young as eight and nine—are wreaking havoc all over Queensland no matter the postcode. They think it is their God given right to steal cars, break and enter, assault people and destroy property, and this government thinks it is okay for that behaviour to continue without any repercussions. The Condamine office does not go one day without a phone call, an email or a letter stating people's disgust at the lack of punishment for these young criminal offenders. There are no consequences, there is no responsibility taken, there is no second thought given by these kids for the offences that they commit.

The police are at their wits' end. They catch the perpetrators only to watch them being released, some without any detention at all and no consequences for the crimes they have committed. I fully support the work of the police force, especially those officers in the Condamine electorate who are struggling with limited staff and resources and a lack of support to do their jobs. One constituent recently commented that he had three groups of police officers attend his residence after a home was broken into and the vehicle stolen. The initial officers in attendance, the forensic officers and the detectives all said that morale was at its lowest ebb and to please contact your local member of parliament.

Our judicial system is not working. The punishment is nothing and these young—some now hardened—criminals know the current laws cannot touch them. They know it is a catch-and-release program—the police catch them and the judge releases them—and then they go back out and about their primary business of ruining people's lives. The actions of these kids are causing great financial hardship and making residents feel unsafe in their own homes. It creates an uneasiness in communities and is making people very angry.

The accident near Oakey on Monday this week is a prime example of the sad end to a crime spree with four teenagers aboard. This could have been even worse if the driver had hit another vehicle and killed or maimed innocent occupants. At 8.30 on a Monday morning most of us would have expected these kids to be at school, but they were not. It is about time the government made these repeat offenders face adequate consequences for their actions. It is a small number of these offenders who are doing the crimes over and over and over again. We had a recent incident where one of these offenders was captured and released without bail with a history of 28 previous convictions. The law is failing innocent Queenslanders. It is time for the government to stand up and return breach of bail.