




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Record of Proceedings, 22 June 2022

MOTION

Youth Crime

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.50 pm): When I came into this place I signed an oath. It said—

I will well and truly serve the people of Queensland and faithfully perform the duties and responsibilities of a member of the Legislative Assembly to the best of my ability and according to law.

Trust my word on something that is important and if I make a mistake I take responsibility for it. For the community, trust in every member in this House is very important. But what do we see from the other side? We see that they will tell a story not only potentially in the lead-up to an election, like 'no new taxes', but also potentially in the lead-up to a piece of legislation. We have a police minister in this place who was busy telling the Pullen family about a piece of legislation, how it was going to change things and how they had fought for it, but they were used for a political stunt. He destroyed the trust they had placed in him by his actions. Trust and integrity are things that should mean something to every member of this House. If you sign a petition then you should stand by your word. If your word cannot be trusted and your signature cannot be trusted, what can the people of Queensland find in the members of the Labor Party that they can trust?

Let me refer to a couple of things that are included in the motion moved by the member for Burdekin, which I support. In my electorate, a 17-year-old boy was placed before the court. He was arrested in connection with the attempted armed robbery of an 89-year-old man from Middle Ridge. What happened? Shortly after, he was out on bail and he committed another string of offences. That 89-year-old man is not safe in his own home because of a 17-year-old at his door. What would have happened to that 17-year-old before the legislation was changed and 17-year-olds were incarcerated in a different facility to the one they go to now?

This government has a history of no plan, no organisation and no care. We have had 10-year-olds put in police watch houses and flown from Mount Isa, via Townsville, to Brisbane. People forget. They did not have any education. They did not have any proper food. They were eating takeaway. It was a nightmare. Why did that happen? It was because they took 17-year-olds out of the system that they were in and put them into another system, without building any facilities and with absolutely no plan. It was based just on an idea.

What has happened since 2016 when they got rid of breach of bail? In my own community, just on year-on-year statistics, unlawful use of a motor car offences are up by 84 per cent. Anybody who does not think that is a lot should look at their superannuation fund this year. Eighty-four per cent is a lot on any kind of increase. Unlawful entry offences—that is in your own home; your personal space is being invaded—are up by 74 per cent in my community. In my community, a 76-year-old woman was shopping in broad daylight. As she was in the car park she was attacked by two juveniles who dragged her out of her car and then drove off in it. Just this week juveniles were roaming around the community in a stolen car that they crashed, tragically killing one of their own.

We need to change the legislation. Breach of bail should be brought back. The government know it. They know that is what is lacking from the law but they cannot admit it because they have never been wrong in their lives! The statistics tell us that they are wrong, the petition tells us that they are wrong and the community of Queensland tells us that they are wrong. The member for Capalaba stood with his community and said that we need to make a change. We all know we need to make a change; just ask anybody. I challenge any of the ministers to come to Toowoomba and talk to the old people about crime. They are not just afraid of crime; they are terrified. They are spending thousands of dollars on insurance, CCTV and security screens. There are pitched battles being fought at people's front doors at three o'clock in the morning as 14-year-olds with weapons try to steal the keys to Mercedes Benz cars. This stuff is so confronting that it is like some kind of horror movie, yet we hear, 'If they agree, we'll put a tracker on them—but only if they agree.'

It is time that they are held accountable for their actions. It is time that we have fewer victims. One way to have fewer victims is to not let someone who has committed a crime straight back out to commit another crime. They talk about fewer offenders and that number going down, but I want to see fewer victims.

(Time expired)