




Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**

**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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### **STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.04 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. In reflecting on what we have heard in the last couple of days from the LNP, we have heard a lot of anecdote, we have heard a lot of opinion and we have heard a lot of hyperbole. There has been yelling and shrieking. It has frankly been embarrassing to watch. What I can say is that those opposite have offered nothing—all slogans, no solutions; all politics, no policies. They have said that they will bring in top class intervention programs. I ask my colleagues: how would we trust the LNP to bring in these programs? It has never seen an intervention program that it did not want to cut. What happened to all of the programs at the Barrett centre when it closed that? What happened to Skilling Queenslanders for Work when it was in government? It cut that program—demolished it—one of the best community capacity and employment programs in Australia. We have heard what it did to Project Booyah—absolutely gutted it when it was in power.

I also find it interesting that the member for Clayfield could talk about a drop in crime statistics when those opposite were in government at a time when they cut the crime statistician's office. How very interesting.

**Mr McCallum:** As well as frontline police.

**Mr WHITING:** As well as frontline police. Members of the LNP have said, 'We would audit these programs.' However, how would they measure the life skills that are built by these programs—that is, how they teach people to get up each day, brush their hair and go to work, how to speak to someone and shake their hand and look them in the eye, how you put your phone down when you are talking to someone? How can they measure when a young person builds that rapport with a new male role model in a program that they are doing? How can they audit that? They cannot audit that, and these are some of the most important skills that we see built in these programs. This shows that the LNP knows nothing about these programs. It is all slogans; it has no solutions.

I find it interesting that those opposite did not talk about the initiative to fast-track sentencing. We have heard that 80 per cent to 90 per cent of young people in detention are there on remand. They are waiting for their day in court. Most importantly, without that sentence we cannot help them do the programs and do the rehabilitation that they need to do. It is wasted time. We are putting \$9.8 million into initiatives to fast-track sentencing so we can have them working on themselves in the meantime.

Probably the most important part of this package to me is the non-legislative part—that is, all the intervention programs that will be funded, all those extra supportive services and those things that help these young people break the cycle of offending. To me personally these are the most important parts of the package, yet we hardly hear anything about these programs from the LNP. We should share the successes of these programs, and I refer to programs like PUSH! at Deception Bay where Younity is working with the local shopping centre to have a professional bike workshop there so that young people can work on a bike project and build that rapport with male role models. Then there is the co-responder

program that has already been operating for years in North Lakes at night-time. The YMCA, youth justice, child protection and police are working together on the streets at night to help the young people they meet there.

We know that the LNP is full of anecdotes about crime, but it hardly ever talks about the successes that we have through these programs. Those opposite should talk to the people doing these programs like I have and hear the success stories. Last week at Morayfield I was talking to a young man, 15 years old, who has been living in parks. The PCYC at Caboolture and Kurbingui Youth Development are helping him engage with education and that young man is looking to become an electrician in future years.

Queenslanders are sophisticated in their response to this issue. Even when those with the most hardline views hear about this community safety package, they understand we need to feel safe and they want that, but they also want us to invest more in these programs. That is exactly what we are doing. I am very proud of the total package that we are putting to Queenslanders and I support this bill.