



Speech By  
**Daniel Purdie**


**MEMBER FOR NINDERRY**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 October 2023

**MOTION**

**Townsville, Youth Crime**

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.31 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Burdekin. I am also happy to talk about some of the points contained in the amendment moved by the police minister, particularly (e), which notes ‘the strong advocacy of all government members for stronger laws for community safety’. I want to point out something that the member for Whitsunday has highlighted before. I am honoured to follow the member for Thuringowa, who is on the record in this place as championing the watered-down youth justice laws that were introduced by this government back in 2015-16. They might want to come in here and do a tough-on-crime pantomime, but you cannot rewrite history because it is recorded in *Hansard*. In 2015-16 we know that it was the top priority of this government when they were elected to water down youth justice laws in this state—to impose a social experiment on this state—and we are now suffering the consequences of that. Back on 21 April 2023 the now Attorney-General, who was the then attorney-general, said in this place—

Evidence clearly shows that increasing the severity of punishment does not reduce offending ...

...

This bill reflects evidence on what works to reduce youth offending. The government has listened to academic, legal and community sector stakeholders who have been open in their opposition to the 2014 reforms—

—of the LNP. On 17 June 2016 the then attorney-general said—

The former government’s amendments were not evidence based. The bills before the House today reflect the research and evidence on what actually supports a reduction in youth offending, with a longstanding body of national and international evidence showing that increasing the severity of the punishment is a blunt and ineffective tool when it comes to reducing recidivism ...

On 3 November 2016 the then attorney-general said—

... the Palaszczuk government is a progressive government with a strong reform agenda. We listen to the people: to experts, to stakeholders and to our departments.

I want to know who these experts are. Who are the experts this government constantly relied upon when watering down these laws? The Premier came in here yesterday and talked about listening to Queenslanders. The member for Townsville just mentioned accountability and listening to Queenslanders, but history shows that the only experts they are listening to—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Member, you will either read from that document or table it.

**Mr PURDIE:** It is just a quote from *Hansard*. I am happy to table it.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, undated, from a speech made by the member for Ninderry, Mr Dan Purdie MP [1760](#).

The evidence shows that, citing experts, this government overtly watered down the laws. We know that at that time all crime indicators were pointing to downward trends. The Childrens Court report at that time was showing a reduction in youth offending, and now we see unequivocal evidence not only in the stats which we have heard about earlier today across Queensland—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member, I will just give you guidance again. Documents are to be read from or tabled, not held up and waved around the chamber as you just did.

**Mr PURDIE:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Across Queensland unlawful use of a motor vehicle has doubled since 2014-15; assaults have almost tripled. More alarmingly, in Townsville unlawful use of a motor vehicle is up 119 per cent—almost 14 cars a day are being stolen—and assaults have nearly tripled. The stats are alarming. We have heard some personal stories today. We all know the horrific stories we have heard like those of the Beasleys, the Beaumonts, the Lovells, the Fields—and the list goes on.

I recently heard something which really tells the story of how these watered-down laws tipped the balance of power in favour of young offenders on the street. Last month in Mundingburra, in Townsville, in the suburb of Idalia—which I understand is a beautiful, relatively new master planned community full of aspirational first home buyers, Queenslanders who are working hard to get ahead and improve their lot in life—a house was broken into and the car keys were stolen, as is happening 14 times a day in Townsville. A young offender stole the car. The next afternoon that family was in their front yard talking to the neighbours, as we often see in communities across Queensland—probably telling them about the crime that happened last night—when the young offenders in that stolen car drove slowly up and down past the house where they had stolen the car—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, can you give the House assurances that this matter is not sub judice?

**Mr PURDIE:** I understand the police did not attend because they told the informant when they rang that there was nothing they could do because juveniles were driving the car.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will just take some advice; resume your seat. Member, I am not satisfied with that explanation. Can you assure the House that there are no charges laid in this matter?

**Mr PURDIE:** The police did not attend.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is not what I asked you. Can you assure the House that there were no charges laid in this matter?

**Mr PURDIE:** The reliable information I have received is that no-one was arrested for that offence, so no-one is before the court.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** You have the call.

**Mr PURDIE:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Not only were they driving past the house where they stole the car; they were using the electronic remote of the garage door to open and close the door of the house to intimidate that family. When they rang the police they were told, 'If they're juveniles, we're sorry, there's not much we can do.' Fast forward to today, we have the Minister for Main Roads—who has had that portfolio for three terms of government but still cannot get his head around it—giving Ian Leavers, the president of the police union advice, evidence from experts who say that reduced laws do not reduce crime. It is only the LNP that has the priorities to ensure a safe future for Queenslanders across this state.