




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (4.10 pm): Over the past couple of years in this House I have given a lot of angry speeches about crime. I have given a lot of speeches calling on the government to listen. Time and time again, the city that the member for Toowoomba North and I represent has suffered because of the crime epidemic. Over the past 12 months, on a number of occasions, I have spoken emotionally in this House, as has the member for Toowoomba North. We have launched petitions, we have done videos and we have spoken to the media. However, time and time again my community has simply felt abandoned and not listened to.

Having listened to this debate I am not sure whether the government has walked in the footsteps of the victims of crime. Despite having listened to the contribution from the member for Bulimba I am not sure whether the government has actually acknowledged the fear, trepidation and uncertainty felt by many people around Queensland. My community has felt that terribly for the past 18 months. The member for Toowoomba North and I have spoken about it repeatedly. Things in Toowoomba finally reached a flashpoint with the death of Robert Brown. I submit to the House that it should never ever have come to that in my city. It should never have come to the death of Emma Lovell on her front lawn for the Premier to take this seriously. It should never ever have come to that.

Through legislative powers, the government has the opportunity to change and strengthen the law, properly resource the police and invest in early intervention and diversionary programs that could get repeat offenders off the streets. However, the Premier has not acted and the government has not listened. The Premier did not come to the crime forum in Toowoomba and the government did not listen. The people of Toowoomba have repeatedly asked for the Premier to listen and for the government to act. I table a picture of the 300 people who were at the crime forum in Toowoomba at which the Premier did not appear. The police minister came and the youth justice minister came. They doubled down on the breach of bail laws, which I will come back to later. The Premier was not there. The Premier did not listen and has taken too long to act.

Tabled paper: Photograph depicting community safety forum, Toowoomba [289](#).

I want to mention some of the victims of crime who have come to see me. I think of Andrew. His children who go to university or work in Brisbane no longer come home to their property in Toowoomba for the weekend because they have been targeted too often. I think of George who is a hardened bushie and truckie. He has been extraordinarily shaken up by the loss of two vehicles. I think of my mate Greg who has been repeatedly targeted. I think of Ken Cunliffe who, in his dismay at the state government's lack of action, formed a Toowoomba advocates group. I acknowledge Ken's advocacy. He pulled together key people of the city and victims of crime because he wanted their voices to be heard. He will continue to fight for that. I acknowledge Ken, Daniel, Sarah, Vicky, Ashley and Kate in that regard. In his frustration, Ken put together 28 stories of victims of crime from a single post on social media. I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Messages and emails re Toowoomba crime' [290](#).

A pensioner has written a poem about our city. Toowoomba has not been listened to for so long. Last year 700 cars were stolen. The poem says in part—

No longer are we feeling safe
in our homes, and on the street.
Break and enter is their aim
and stealing cars just a game.

...

The Government assures us
crime is under control.
The only people in control are
these murderous, callous thieves.
Premier, we the people of this state
expect you to intervene before
it is too late.
It already is too late, for some.

I know the member for Toowoomba North has experienced this as well. People have been overwhelmed by this. They feel unsafe in their homes. As the Leader of the Opposition said earlier, people are discussing whether they should leave their keys in the front door, put them on a table or hide them under the pillow. It should not come to that in Toowoomba let alone in Queensland. My frustration is that the government has taken too long to act and it has failed to listen.

That brings me to the law. Will it make any difference? Do they even believe in what they are proposing? Are we to seriously believe the media reports that say it was a PowerPoint presentation from the police minister that persuaded the government to adopt our policy on breach of bail?

Mr O'Connor: He had some good slides.

Mr JANETZKI: Is that how cabinet decisions are being made? I take the interjection. They had the PowerPoint slides and the presentation, but do they believe in it? We know that last June the Attorney-General said, 'It was not a disincentive.' The forum was held just a few days before they wound back their position and adopted our policy. Last year the youth justice minister said, 'We don't want something that didn't work.' Why should we believe that the government now believes in this? The last thing we need is more indecisiveness and indecision from the government, because that is all we have had. The member for Ninderry outlined the history of this government and the weakening of the laws. They put 17-year-olds into the youth justice system without a plan in the world. I remember at the time the Police Union chief said that more planning went into opening a new McDonald's store than the government had put into moving 17-year-olds into the youth justice system. Is that how the government operates? Are we to believe that this is how decisions are made in Queensland?

The member for Sandgate spoke about breach of bail when the day before he was still defending their former position. I feel a little sorry for the member for Sandgate. I feel a little sorry for the Attorney-General who is clearly now arguing for something she does not believe in. I feel sorry for the youth justice minister who is now arguing for something that they clearly do not believe in. In the same way that the Premier abandoned the Treasurer on the renters tax and the patients tax, she is now abandoning most of her ministers and their previously deeply held convictions. Is this how government is run and operated in Queensland in 2023?

I look at the law and I reflect on the contribution of our shadow police minister. He spoke about the principle of detention as a last resort. For the benefit of the House, I table the amendments to be moved by the shadow police minister.

Tabled paper: Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023, amendments to be moved by Mr Dale Last MP [291](#).

Tabled paper: Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023, explanatory notes to Mr Dale Last's amendments [292](#).

Tabled paper: Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Mr Dale Last's amendments [293](#).

There is so much more to do. We have a principle of detention as a last resort. We need to see consequences for actions and we need early intervention that actually works. We need early intervention and crime prevention programs. There are many in Toowoomba who are willing to work with the government to deliver on the commitment that they have made. The member for Bulimba had the most expensive interview in political history. At the height of the watch house crisis, the disastrous *Four Corners* interview revealed that children were being held in watch houses for days on end. That was called out by Amnesty International and many others. They are still there. Where is this government's plan? What do they believe in?

We want to see early intervention programs that work being adopted. I look forward to the Auditor-General making their findings, because we need it. We need money to be put to the right programs. Queenslanders cannot afford wasteful spending any longer. What does wasteful spending mean for Queenslanders? It means more debt, higher interest costs and fewer and declining services. Wasteful spending means higher taxes and a lower standard of living. That kind of outcome is the price that all Queenslanders pay for wasteful spending. More than ever, we need this government to spend the money in the right programs. There is no more time for indecision. The people of Queensland expect this government to act. They expect this House to act. For too long the people have paid the price for a government that is soft on crime and bereft of leadership on this issue.