




Speech By
Hon. Di Farmer

MEMBER FOR BULIMBA

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023

MOTION

Vehicle Theft

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice) (5.58 pm): I rise to speak against the motion moved by members opposite. I make it clear that I am addressing the issue they raised of motor vehicle theft, but just because I am the youth justice minister does not mean that I am implying that every single one of those offences has been committed by a young person, which is what they would like to imply. Of course, they never let the facts get in the way of a good story.

Certainly, motor vehicle theft is a key concern. It is why, as part of our Strengthening Community Safety Bill, we introduced a specific offence of motor vehicle theft as an aggravated offence. The statistics are clear and we are clear on those numbers. In fact, I thank the opposition for supporting those laws. They always seem very embarrassed about that, but basically that is what they did. As I have said today, as of June 2023 there have been 681 charges containing one of the new unauthorised use of a motor vehicle circumstance of aggravation, with 96.4 per cent of offenders convicted. In terms of that particular offence of concern, we have certainly put deterrents in place.

We have put prevention measures in place. We talked about the engine immobiliser trial—\$10 million into an engine immobiliser subsidy, which is being used to supply up to 20,000 engine immobilisers for residents in Mount Isa, Cairns and Townsville. The specific offence that has been raised in this motion we are addressing in a practical way.

As I have said many times, solving crime and solving youth crime is complex. There is no one single solution. It is why we have introduced some of the harshest laws in the country. It is why we are building two new detention centres, which are therapeutic detention centres. It is why we are addressing the complex causes of youth crime. It is why we are listening to the voice of victims.

One of the big reasons I cannot, in any way possible, support this motion is that it contains an oxymoron. The very last bit talks about supporting the opposition's laws and strategies. What? They have none. Recently there was a great article in that wonderful paper the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. It states—

... the Opposition's answer to how it would solve the issue appears to largely be a grab-bag of tried approaches which they were campaigning on and implemented during the Newman Government era more than a decade ago.

The much-vaunted youth boot camp was later torn to shreds by both KPMG and the Auditor General in a report as being ineffective, making no difference to recidivism and were prone to enormous cost blowouts presided over by then Attorney-General Jarrod Bleijie, now the LNP's deputy leader.

... the LNP's approach of presenting reheated decade-old concepts is hardly inspiring and doesn't bode well for their electoral platform in 2024.

I table the article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, undated, titled 'Editorial: New direction' [1183](#).

I actually think the paper is being very generous, because all I have heard about their strategy is that they are calling on the whole of parliament to support three slogans and 13 words—13 words to solve one of the most complex issues you would probably imagine.

Today the police minister, the Attorney-General, the Police Commissioner, my director-general and a number of senior police met with Voice for Victims and heard some of their stories. They are stories that we have been hearing across the state. We know that victims need to be heard, and we are intent on doing that. For those opposite to say to people who have suffered the most intense trauma, 'We are going to solve the most traumatic thing you have experienced with 13 words'—how insulting and offensive! Then they talk about us softening some law. The opposition's breach of bail law was not even called that. In fact, people were more likely to reoffend under the opposition's law than they are now. Those opposite should give some credit and respect to victims and come up with some ideas and strategies. The member for Currumbin told me that she had hundreds of them. It turns out that she had sent them to the wrong address.

(Time expired)