




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.25 pm): I rise to support the bill. I want to make a few early remarks and to say that I am sure everyone in this House is concerned about the amount of crime out in the community. Unfortunately, it is not just a Queensland phenomenon; it is happening all over Australia. Post COVID a lot of issues have emerged that we never saw pre COVID. To an extent we have always had a certain amount of crime and governments have tried to manage it. Post COVID there have been unprecedented issues whether they be economic issues or relating to the availability of materials. An incredible number of post COVID issues have emerged. This is one of those issues that everybody is concerned about.

As the Premier said, we have listened to the community and this legislation is all about putting community safety first. I believe that the swag of changes in this bill deal with what everyone has said is a very complex issue. There is not only one solution to this issue and no-one should come into this House and argue otherwise. We are hearing from the other side that the solution is to do with detention as a last resort and that is going to solve all the problems. I remind those opposite that detention as a last resort also applies to adult crime; it is currently in the adult Criminal Code. So they want to take it out for young people but leave it in for adults. Do they for one second suggest in this House that adults not be treated in the same manner by the courts for a particular crime because the UN lists detention as a last resort? That is laughable. At the moment that is all they are hanging their hat on.

Now they have moved on to this provision which used to be the 'Mickey Mouse' breach of bail provision. Can I say for the first time this century we will be introducing breach of bail as an offence, the same as applies for adults. That is for the first time this century. It is a completely different thing to what they were arguing for previously. When Labor does it, we do it the right way. When they do it, it is nothing but stunts. We saw stunt after stunt. That is all it is. Only Labor can deliver what needs to be done to address the issues that the community is facing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order, members. I will wait for silence.

Ms GRACE: They do not like it when they hear the truth.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Look at them all squirming in their seats. They all get up and, like broken records, say the same rubbish over and over again.

When it is called out, they do not like it. I and others in this place will call it out. It is nothing more than a stunt. You remove detention as a last resort for youth but you do not remove it for adults? What nonsense! It is absolute nonsense. The breach of bail that we have is not the Mickey Mouse scheme that they tried to con Queenslanders with.

I commend the Economics and Governance Committee, under the chairmanship of the member for Logan, which did an excellent job on what is a complex issue. This bill aims to address serious repeat offenders. It looks at the issues of strengthening conditions of release and new declarations for

serious repeat offenders. There are a number of elements in this bill that will give tools to the courts. More importantly, we are tackling this complex issue by expanding intensive case management and allocating \$100 million of additional funds to assist the community to assist these young people.

As the Minister for Education, I am proud that we have a number of those programs in our schools at the moment such as wellbeing packages and disability resourcing models. We have other initiatives such as the Education Justice Initiative, 11 court liaison officers, our flexi spaces, our Link and Launch and our \$11 million Regional Youth Engagement Service. Our Queensland Pathways State College, with its six campuses in Mount Gravatt, Goodna, Coorparoo, Bundamba, Bracken Ridge and Townsville, is doing excellent work. In the early years, we are investing \$1 billion to get kids into kindy early so that we can give them the best start in life.

It was great to be in Townsville to see the Indigenous programs run in Kirwan State High School and in Townsville State High School. I thank Uncle Les Tanner and Aunty Rothana Baira, who have done an excellent job with their First Nations indigenous culture program. There are young offenders there dancing their hearts out and engaging in education. They are the programs that we will be supporting. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.