




Speech By
James Martin

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

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STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.11 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. The bill strengthens Queensland's strong youth justice laws and introduces several new measures to keep the community safe. Community safety is a key priority of the Palaszczuk government and these new laws are a critical step in the right direction. We understand the impact that youth crime is having. We understand and have seen changes in the types of offences which are being committed on a national level. We share the community's concern about this and we are taking tougher action to further protect the community. Legislative changes in this bill will target serious repeat offenders, tackle the complex causes of youth crime and invest in community safety initiatives. Queensland already has some of Australia's strongest youth justice laws, but Queenslanders have called for changes to be made to target these serious repeat offenders.

Overall numbers of unique young offenders are declining, but there is a small cohort of offenders who require stronger responses. Figures show that about 17 per cent of young offenders commit 50 per cent of all crimes. To address this we will: introduce new laws to make breach of bail conditions an offence, as for adults; strengthen conditional release orders; increase penalties for stolen vehicles; expand the number of offences with a presumption against bail; take criminal history into account during sentencing; increase penalties for criminals who boast about crimes on social media; and introduce more severe penalties for violent crimes. Youth detention capacity will be increased with two new youth detention centres being built, a new youth crime task force will also be established, and there will be more extreme high-visibility patrols.

It is also very important to prevent young people from ending up in the criminal justice system in the first place, and Queensland's Youth Justice Strategy has a range of measures focused on early intervention with initiatives that support young people at risk to remain at school, connect them with local sporting activities and support their families with relevant counselling and other support services.

This bill will invest in and expand on programs such as the Stronger Communities initiative that divert young people away from the criminal justice system, programs which will work with young people and their families by connecting them to education and support services, including mental health and drug and alcohol treatment. The expansion of dedicated youth co-responder teams will also provide rapid response for young people at risk of offending, as well as young people on bail.

More than 40,000 engagements with young people have already been completed to ensure that they are accessing the right services, and a further investment of \$4 million will be made to On Country programs that provide culture-based rehabilitation for young First Nations people with supervision by On Country elders.

I would like to thank all of the hardworking frontline police officers on the beat protecting Queensland. This bill will provide additional funding to support more police resources and high-visibility patrols. \$15 million will be provided to assist seniors in improving their home security. There will be

further funding to subsidise the cost of fitting vehicle immobilisers to prevent car theft, and further funding to provide support for victims of violent property crime and increase counselling and community support services.

Keeping the community safe is one of my highest priorities and why I host my monthly Coffee with a Cop sessions at Sunnybank Hills Shoppingtown. Many different community members come along and they can chat with our police officers and also our fantastic multicultural community liaison officers. I would like to recognise the hard work of both the sworn officers and the liaison officers of Calamvale, Acacia Ridge and Mount Gravatt police stations. They do a fantastic job assisting our community, especially their crime prevention and safety unit.

This government has listened to the community and consulted with the experts. We are targeting serious repeat youth offenders, tackling the causes of youth crime and investing in community safety. I commend the bill to the House.