



Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023

MOTION

Vehicle Theft

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (5.47 pm): I rise to speak to the amendment, and I do so because I know from personal experience just how hard our fantastic police work to protect our community. In my role as the member for Mount Ommaney and due to my proximity to the Wacol precinct I am very grateful to often be called on to represent the minister at police graduation ceremonies as well as Corrective Services, Community Corrections and Protective Services graduation ceremonies. I have done over 50 since I was elected. Our fantastic police are relentless in targeting those who wish to do harm to our community. My local police work proactively with our fantastic Neighbourhood Watch groups that have been long established to ensure a safe and harmonious community. The work that our local police do in educating residents is invaluable alongside our hardworking volunteers in policing and our Neighbourhood Watch volunteers and committee members.

I know how the police are proactively working to attract new recruits. In fact, the New Zealand recruitment campaign that is currently running has made international media. It has ruffled quite a few feathers across the ditch, but we make no apologies in this place for pulling out all the stops to recruit every single new officer that we can, international relations aside. As I said, it is a matter of great pride to me that I have been able to attend many of the graduation ceremonies for police officers at the Oxley police academy. The pride that I see on the faces of their family and friends at those ceremonies makes it clear to me that Queensland is incredibly lucky to have so many wonderful people who want to make our community as safe as it possibly can be. I note that there are an increasing number of CALD and multicultural background applicants to those positions, and in Multicultural Queensland Month I want to note that that is very welcomed and very important.

The Police Commissioner said that currently there are more than 400 recruits undergoing training at our police academies. The commissioner said that between now and the end of the year another 600 recruits will enter those academies. She also said that another 1,200 will enter the academies next year and another 1,200 the year after that. This is part of the biggest investment in police personnel in more than three decades. This investment by the government will deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel. The commissioner stated that that will mean 300 extra police officers for the Brisbane region. In anyone's language, that is more boots on the ground and more boots on the ground supports community safety. In addition, right now, thanks to additional government funding, police are conducting extreme high-visibility police patrols right across the state. They certainly are in my community. People are seeing more police, more often, right across Queensland. The commissioner said that these extreme high-visibility patrols are having a real impact disrupting and preventing crime.

I am sure we can all agree that any level of crime is unacceptable. For every crime there is a victim and the impacts can be traumatising and long-lasting. That is why this government is doing everything that it can to support community safety. That is why we have introduced the toughest youth justice laws in the nation. It is why the government has introduced a presumption against bail for repeat

young offenders and, for the first time in Queensland's history, made breach of bail an offence for young offenders under the Bail Act. It is why Queensland has the strongest anti-hooning laws in the nation, including a reversal of onus that means that the owner of a vehicle detected hooning must face the consequences unless they can prove that they were not driving the vehicle at that time. We have also increased the penalties for the unlawful use of a motor vehicle, and a trial of engine immobilisers is underway in various locations throughout Queensland.

Today the Police Commissioner unveiled a new rapid response task force. Teams of detectives and youth justice experts will, through intelligence, identify not only areas that are hotspots but also areas that could become hotspots. Under the police flying squad model, the task force guardian teams will deploy and saturate an area. This search capability will enhance the efforts of local police and youth justice teams. We are approaching community safety from all angles with tough laws, record investment in police, co-responder models that enforce but also offer early intervention and diversionary supports to break the cycle of offending. There are no simple solutions to these issues. That is why the government is doing everything we can.