




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023. From the get-go I say that there is nothing to be gained by any Queenslander playing a game that is politics of fear. I do not think that anybody in Queensland benefits from the types of contributions I have heard throughout the debate.

I commend the member for Cairns on his contribution. I concur with everything he had to say. We have had many a discussion on this topic. It is through action and through the prongs of this bill that things will continue to improve and we will see change. It goes so much further than just what is in this bill.

Our society has changed so much compared to what it was like for the generation before us. Growing up I do not think anybody in this chamber—maybe with the exception of the member for Bonney and the member for Gaven—would have even known what a mobile phone was let alone Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and so on. It is a complex environment for young people. There is an old proverb that it takes a village to raise a child. I wonder if maybe as times have changed we have lost a bit of that thinking. There is something that every one of us in here can do and everybody in our community can contribute to see change and to tackle this issue.

This bill looks at three aspects of targeting serious repeat youth offenders. I believe the changes in this legislation will absolutely help in that space. The first is tackling the complex causes of youth crime. That builds on what I have just said. There has been generational change for young people. The causes of youth crime are complex. We only need to look at the mental health statistics to know that mental health is generational as well. When we have children being raised in families where those complex issues exist it is, as the member for Cairns said, a tough gig and a tough space.

We can all contribute positively to try to see change. Respectful relationships and the way we conduct ourselves is important. We are the role models for our communities. I remind everybody in this chamber that it is our responsibility to model the sorts of behaviour that we want to see in our communities.

In terms of investing in community safety, we have already made significant investment in programs and it continues to be built upon. In the Redlands there are quite a few things that our community is doing both in terms of service provision and a volunteering capacity and space.

I give a shout-out to our YMCA Vocational School. They are fantastic in a challenging space. They have a community hub. Chris is community coordinator. He is doing an absolutely stellar job. They have the hub open as an after school youth drop-in space. They are engaging with young people at the skate parks—I had a go and I can tell members that I am not very good on a skate board. They have a recording studio in the vocational school that is free for young people to come in and use. They have getting creative programs. They have all sorts of things that engage young people. That is important. It is incumbent upon all levels of government to look at strategies around how we can engage our young people. They are doing a fantastic job.

Our Volunteers in Policing—I am not sure I have heard anybody else mention them—in the Redlands are an absolutely incredible group of people. Frank, Paul, Ngaire and rest of the team are coordinated by our community liaison officers, Brendan Winslow and Chris Hebblesworth. They are doing a fantastic job. They are at their stand at every local event talking to the community. They do letterbox drops. They do safety checks and all of that great work in the prevention space. I give a huge shout-out to them. I am proud to be able to call them friends. Over the last few years I have been able to spend a lot of time with them and they are doing a terrific job. All of our police have a really tough job. I thank them all.

I will finish by touching on the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. In my area that has been a significant program for young people. At the last graduation Erin shared her story of the program. She said, 'Courage, persistence, structure, honesty and support—five key ingredients that have laid the foundation of our future through the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.' She went on to talk very deeply. She said—

To Running Wild, I would like to personally thank our supervisors, Sheridan and Rose. A key piece that was missing in my life was structure and discipline and that is exactly what Rose brought to the table. She made sure things got done and no-one was ever idle. Rose was always encouraging and cool.

For our young people structure, boundaries and parameters are important things. That is a big parenting piece. There are so many aspects to the complexities of youth crime. The parenting piece is big. If members go to their P&Cs they will know that it is the regulars who show up. How do we engage more of our families in those school communities so we strengthen our communities?

In terms of Skilling Queenslanders for Work and Erin's story, she has been able to take that experience forward and her future is looking very bright. She attributes that to all of the support she got with Skilling Queenslanders for Work. That is what the Palaszczuk government will do every day of the week. We will invest in programs that help support our young people and see stronger and better communities. I commend this bill to the House.