




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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**VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
BILL**

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (4.39 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. It is a pity that these payments are not indexed, because then we would not have to come into this place to increase the payments in line with inflation. We recognise that an increase is needed. There is more crime and more people are being affected by that crime. However, in terms of addressing crime and invoking the word 'crime' in this House in the context of what is going on in Queensland, I think it is pretty benign and underwhelming that we are debating this bill and not what should be discussed, which is real solutions to fixing crime. Of course you cannot argue against the bill. We want to compensate victims, especially victims of violent crime. However, this feels like we are putting the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. While no-one is going to argue against having the ambulance there, let's talk about fixing crime in the first place.

For seven years the KAP has been coming into this place to try to present a solution. An earlier speaker said that we need to look at every solution. The KAP keeps putting forward a solution, which is an alternative sentencing method. We want to see remote sentencing, where there is a legislative instrument for the magistrate to say, 'Buddy, this is the third time that we've seen you and we don't want to see you for another 12 months. You're not going to have a party in Cleveland with your cousins and your mates and the rest of your gang. You're going to a remote camp at Urandangi and we won't see you for 12 months. Good luck with that. There'll be only 10 or 20 of you there, not 100 or 150, so enjoy that. You'll learn some skills while you're out there. You'll actually learn something'—which has not been effective anywhere else. There is a solution.

When members say that we need to look at every solution, I hope that is true, but pardon me for thinking it is a bit insincere, because for seven years in this place we have been talking about that and it has not even been trialled. There are solutions. It is disappointing that we are talking about something that has an element of putting the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. It is as if we are coming in after the fact and saying, 'We're here to help,' but we only throw money at the issue. We would much prefer to spend our time debating how we can look to the start of the problem and fix it from there.

Another thing that I reflected on when looking at this bill is where we draw the line in terms of the threshold on violent crime and who is affected. Unless you are living with your head in the sand, we all know about it. We must all be experiencing an increased level of activity from constituents coming into our offices and saying, 'I've never seen anything like this.' Someone may say, 'My grandmother's been hit five times now because she always keeps cash around the house. We've put up all the screens but they keep hitting her house and terrorising her, and it's hell.' I hear nightmare stories from people who come into my office all the time and I assume all members are hearing similar stories. I have a family member down here who sleeps at her sister's house when her husband is away for a week because she is too scared to stay in her own house. I have heard that the residents of a Brisbane street are hiring security guards because they are scared to be at home. This is unprecedented. We have never heard such things before.

I am not interested in whose fault this is, whether it was this side of the House or that. Let's talk about some real new, fresh answers in this place and stop talking about what has been done. Sure, we have to help victims of crime, but we need to spend more time talking about alternative solutions and doing something fresh and different and offering that to the people of Queensland. We can do something bold. We have heard a thousand times that it must be evidence based. I am not sure how you ever do something new if there is no evidence. You have to run a pilot study or scheme to provide some evidence before you can do something. That is what we have heard about relocation sentencing in the past few years. For many years in this place we heard that the whole crime thing was a media beat-up, but no-one is able to say that anymore.

This is a good thing to do. It is nice to have more money for victims. However, can we please do something serious about reducing the incidence of crime? A couple of months ago, kids were terrorising Mount Isa. They stole a car and spent about eight to 10 hours smashing cars throughout the town. They ran through the schools, trying to run down kids. The level of violence keeps increasing, which is impacting the livability of our city. That has been happening in North Queensland for many years, but now the heat of it is starting to be felt here, which coincidentally is when the government starts acting upon it. We have been living with this for many years, it impacts us and we need it fixed.