




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR HILL

Record of Proceedings, 10 October 2023

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Youth Crime

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.38 pm): The state government has largely ignored victims impacted by youth crime in this state. Victims of crime have been forgotten in the debate about the pandemic that is youth crime. However, recently these victims have fought back. Recently the KAP stood alongside those victims at rallies in Cairns and Brisbane. They sent a very clear message to the Premier: fix it or get out. I have heard the stories of those who have had their homes broken into, who have been assaulted and whose cars have been stolen.

I know firsthand how that feels after my car was stolen in the early hours of Monday morning this week in Atherton, but I am just one of 2,000 every year whose cars have been stolen in North Queensland alone. While it has not been found, I have received constant messages that it has been spotted at various locations driving recklessly. The car has signs on both sides, so it is obvious that whoever took it wants to get caught. They are not scared of the current penalties for stealing a car and do not care about detention. I thank God nobody has been hurt or killed, which we all know has happened far too often across this state. That is what average Queenslanders are facing every day. Whether a home is broken into or a car stolen, it is an invasion of privacy that disrupts lives and erodes our sense of security.

How do we fix it? A bloke by the name of Albert Einstein once said that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results. The state government is not listening otherwise it would stop building detention centres. The recent announcement of a \$250 million youth watch house to be built at Wacol is nothing more than a bandaid solution that will not address the core issues.

Relocation sentencing has been receiving widespread support as an alternative to watch houses and detention centres and it can be delivered for a fraction of the cost. For \$250 million we could build multiple relocation facilities in remote areas of Queensland and provide real opportunities to rehabilitate youth criminals and reduce reoffending. It is a ground up rethink of youth detention that delivers on what many Queenslanders demand (1) it is remote; (2) it is mandatory; (3) it is for a fixed term; and (4) it includes intensive rehabilitation.

We need to get these kids away from detention centres, which are nothing more than universities for crime. We know the statistic: 95 per cent of the youths who go to Cleveland Youth Detention Centre reoffend within 12 months of release. I will say that again: 95 per cent of the youths who go to Cleveland Youth Detention Centre reoffend within 12 months of release. They are committing crimes to get back into the detention centres. There must be something wrong with the juvenile justice system if youths are committing crimes to get in there.

Relocation sentencing would give magistrates the power to send youths to remote locations where they could be taught values and skills such as driving, how to build cattle yards and how to operate front-end loaders and graders, along with other proven workable programs. The KAP's relocation sentencing policy should be implemented as a real alternative to help bring this crime crisis to an end. Youths could be given an opportunity to have a life and a purpose, and not just aspire to be the best criminals they can be by the time they reach adulthood while making everyone else's life a misery.