




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 21 February 2023

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth Crime

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (9.49 am): The Palaszczuk government's priority is to put community safety first. It drives everything we do. We are a government that is committed to giving our young people the very best chances in life through a good education, jobs, health care and the right support. Some children have not had strong role models to follow and even their parents let them down. It is a sad fact that some of them will make bad decisions and, when they do, the courts have to choose between detaining them and sentencing them in a way which keeps them out of detention while also dealing with the complex causes of their behaviour.

We need to continue to invest in the proven services which reduce reoffending and turn these children's lives around. While one crime is too many, we know that many young offenders can learn their lesson and get back on the right path. That is why, since 2015, we have invested \$800 million in early intervention which has lowered rates of reoffending. In the last year, we have had a seven per cent decline in young people with a proven offence and a three per cent reduction in the number of offences overall. However, if young people do not take the chance they have been given and become violent, hardened reoffenders, then putting community safety first means they need to be detained.

Let's talk about what is working and what more we need to do. We have invested in the frontline with more police, more patrols and stronger laws. Our presumption against bail laws are the toughest in the country. More serious repeat offenders are being held in custody and for longer. We have already increased capacity in youth detention centres by 33 per cent, from 230 beds in 2015 to 306 beds now, an increase of 76 beds. The tough new laws and increased investment announced yesterday follows careful consideration by the Palaszczuk government and are based on evidence and feedback from the community, police and other stakeholders.

We are doing more to assist Queenslanders with crime prevention and support victims, including funding vehicle immobilisers, security systems to improve home security for elderly Queenslanders and funding to provide better support and counselling for victims of crime, as well as an additional \$100 million to expand programs proven to make a difference at breaking the cycle, programs like the successful youth co-responder where teams of police and youth justice workers provide a rapid response to young people at risk of offending and young people on bail. Already successfully operating in many parts of Queensland, we are expanding this service into Toowoomba, Hervey Bay, Mount Isa, Ipswich and South Brisbane, and we will build two new youth detention centres. We will give the police and the courts the tools they tell us they need to keep people safe. They will have the resources, they will have the laws and, most importantly, they have this government's full support to keep our community safe.

