




Speech By
Hon. Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.59 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Making Queensland Safer Laws. Before I start, I want to pay tribute to the member for Capalaba on his contribution, but, more particularly, on his first speech. His commitment to come into this place to tackle an issue that has touched his family and so many others in Queensland is a testament to his strength of character. As a family man, I say thank you to the member for Capalaba. He made it very clear that he was enjoying retirement. To come in here and work for a better Queensland is a very admirable thing, and I look forward to working with the member for Capalaba over the next four years and beyond to make Queensland better.

There is not one pocket of Queensland that has not been impacted by the scourge on society that is the youth crime crisis. We spent years in opposition watching as the former government let the crisis evolve and worsen, to the point that we have had tragic instances where mothers have been stabbed in their own homes and grandmothers killed at the local shopping centre. No-one in this place wants that to happen. I accept that all members in this place think that is abhorrent, but it is decisions and actions of the former government that have exacerbated those problems, and that is undeniable.

We had to watch this horror unfold and watch the former government put their hands up in defeat and let young criminals run this state. It ends today. It ends with the election of the Crisafulli government because we are committed to tackling this problem. Queenslanders made a choice at the election. They made a choice to vote in a government that will stand up for the rights of victims and prioritise them in all of our decisions. Sadly, we have too many victims of crime in Queensland.

I still remember—and I know that the police minister knows these people as well—hearing from some long-term locals in my electorate of Buderim, Gillian and Kerry Taylor. It was the morning after a parliamentary sitting that I heard that they had been the victims of a terrifying home invasion so I dropped in to see them. They told me the story.

They were sitting having dinner and settling in for the night when there was a knock at the front door. When they opened the door, three teenagers armed with knives pushed their way into Gillian and Kerry's home. It was their safe space, as all our homes are our safe space. They waved knives in their faces as a threat and demanded their car keys. Kerry bravely fought them off while Gillian phoned the police. Fortunately, in this instance, no-one was injured. The young offenders ran off before they were quickly picked up by the police a short distance away.

It turns out that they had stolen a car from somewhere in northern Brisbane and this was by no means their first offence. They were released from police custody the very next morning. They were released, while Gillian is living with the ongoing trauma and while Kerry is battling the trauma of having his home invaded by young thugs. Gillian tells me that she thinks about that terrifying moment every time she looks at her front door. It has changed their lives forever.

These are stories we do not even hear about in the media or in this place. We rightly hear about the worst of the youth offending in Queensland, but this has impacted Queenslanders everywhere. Gillian and Kerry did not get justice; they got a lifetime of trauma. They had to call their children and grandchildren to tell them what had occurred, impacting their children's and their grandchildren's lives as well, knowing that it can happen any quiet evening in your own home.

The Making Queensland Safer Laws are for people like Kerry and Gillian as well. It is for people who have spent their lives doing the right thing only to become victims of a senseless and violent crime at the hands of lawless teenagers. Kerry and Gillian told me that they wholeheartedly support our Making Queensland Safer Laws that will restore consequences for actions. We made a commitment to people like Kerry and Gillian and all Queenslanders to bring these laws to fruition before Christmas. Here we are honouring that commitment.

On the Sunshine Coast, the community I represent and where my children attend school, there have been 2,473 offences committed by youth offenders this year alone. Let us be honest, the Sunshine Coast is not among the areas where youth offending is at its worst in Queensland. Even on the Sunshine Coast, 12 young people have been listed as serious repeat offenders this year alone. Imagine the break-ins that could have been prevented, the cars that would not have been stolen and the families who would not be living with ongoing trauma and financial hardship if Labor had not weakened laws and if serious repeat offenders had been adequately dealt with in the courts.

Adult Crime, Adult Time will bring significant change by removing constraints in the Youth Justice Act on the maximum sentencing orders for serious offences like murder, grievous bodily harm, robbery and unlawful use of a motor vehicle. We are putting the rights of honest, hardworking Queenslanders before the rights of criminals.

I no longer want to hear about a tradie waking up and finding tools have been stolen from his ute. I do not want to hear about him losing days and weeks of work. I do not want to hear about a mum being woken up in the middle of night by young thugs rummaging through her drawers while her children sleep. I no longer want to hear about a family torn apart by violence.

I throw my full support behind the Crisafulli government's Making Queensland Safer Laws because Queenslanders deserve to be safe in their homes and in their community. Yes, we are getting tough on crime. It is what Queenslanders asked of us and it is what we are delivering. What we are also delivering is a pathway for kids to leave a life of crime and create a future for themselves.

There was very clearly overwhelming support in my community, in the lead-up to the election, in relation to our government's Adult Crime, Adult Time policy position, but I was—and I acknowledge this—contacted in relation to the need for early intervention as well. We are injecting serious funding into rehabilitation and early intervention programs as well as youth justice schools in the South-East and North Queensland. Our top priority is community safety and removing the serious repeat offenders. However, we acknowledge it is also important to offer offenders a way out and even more important to reach those young people before they commit their first crime. We can and we must do both.

The LNP made a commitment to Queenslanders and we are following through on that here today without delay. Queenslanders deserve to feel safe this Christmas and every single day. I know that these laws will do just that, which is why I strongly urge all members of this House to support these laws unequivocally.