




Speech By  
**Bryson Head**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 December 2024

**MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL**

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (4.16 pm): I am proud to rise in this House as part of a fresh, united LNP team that has the right plan for Queensland. The Making Queensland Safer Bill is a key commitment our government brought to the election. As promised, these laws—which put the rights of victims ahead of the rights of offenders—will be passed by Christmas. The aim of this landmark bill is to restore community safety in Queensland and turn the tide on the youth crime crisis. I am proud to be part of a government that listens to Queenslanders' concerns, acts accordingly and cracks down on serious repeat youth offenders.

After a decade of living with Labor's failures and a generation of untouchables created under Labor's watch, Queenslanders have had enough and voted for change. I note the member for Cairns could not seem to say he would fully support this legislation. His speech very much suggested he was opposed to the whole lot. He suggested we should seek community support and listen to the community before we bring laws into this place. Maybe the member for Cairns missed it, but this was a key election commitment that we spoke about for a very long time. We brought it to the election, and the people of Queensland very much offered their support for these strong laws. Maybe the member for Cairns missed that memo.

The people of Callide and Central Queensland, the Wide Bay-Burnett and the Western Downs have all also said enough is enough and supported the LNP with strong crime policies that are focused on the rights of victims. I appreciate the many people across Callide who have come to me since I became their local member and shared their frustrations and concerns under Labor's crime crisis. During the campaign, Labor tried to criticise our Adult Crime, Adult Time policy for apparently not having enough detail. Now they criticise us by saying that 52 pages is too much legislation, so what is it? I do not know what the opposition are really going on about. They say one thing one day and another thing the next. Labor are divided. They do not know where to turn. They have one faction that cannot fathom the idea of personal responsibility and another faction that thinks crime is a media beat-up. They are grasping at straws, trying to find a way through seemingly with blindfolds on. Maybe that is why we are hearing so many conflicting speeches from the opposition.

What did Labor try to do to deal with their division? Yesterday they tried to move amendments to force the LNP to break our promise, which was to ensure these changes are law by Christmas. That is right: this is an opposition that is trying to pick stories out of thin air, criticising us for breaking promises at the same time as trying to get the LNP to break election promises.

This bill includes amendments to the Youth Justice Act 1992 and introduces our Adult Crime, Adult Time policy across 13 offence categories including murder, manslaughter, unlawful striking causing death, grievous bodily harm, acts intended to cause grievous bodily harm, wounding, serious assault, home and business break-ins, robbery, burglary, dangerous operation of a vehicle and unlawful entry or possession of a vehicle for committing an indictable offence. These are not child crimes. These crimes are incredibly serious in nature. Many Queenslanders know all too well how it feels to be a victim of crime. We have far too many victims of crime here in Queensland.

Labor members have been trying to say that we have not listened to those on the front line, experts, victim groups and Queenslanders. How wrong they are. We have six former frontline police officers, a former prosecutor, small business owners and victims of crime representing the LNP in this parliament. I commend the member for Capalaba for standing up for what is right and delivering one of the hardest and most moving maiden speeches this chamber has likely ever heard. I certainly hope no other member has to deliver a speech like that. The further comments he just made on this bill show that he is a real voice for victims. With his voice in this chamber, Queenslanders know that their future will be brighter under a Crisafulli LNP government.

Our former police officers have spoken and will continue to speak to this legislation, and they have worked hard, in conjunction with our ministers, to develop this legislation. Our government is serious about listening to Queenslanders and our frontline staff. The Queensland Police Union's submission to the committee on this bill noted—

The QPU commends the Government on having the courage of its convictions to elevate the human rights of the victims of crime above those who cause the most harm in our community. For too long under Queensland's human rights legislation the rights of victims have yielded to the rights of offenders.

Many members in this parliament know this all too well from their experiences in listening to their constituents. Too many people in the electorate of Callide know all too well how it feels to have the rights of victims behind the rights of offenders. It seems that Labor cannot accept that we should be putting the rights of victims ahead of the rights of offenders.

Removing the principle of detention as a last resort was another key election commitment, and today we deliver on that commitment. Let us not forget Labor's bungled and desperate attempt to suggest that they did this only months ago. They walked in here with cameras rolling and said that they were removing this principle; however, there was one key detail. What did it say in the explanatory notes for that change? That is right: that this amendment was not intended to change the law. They said they were changing the law, but the explanatory notes for that so-called change explicitly said that it was not intended to change the law.

Our legislation amends the Youth Justice Act to remove detention as a last resort and remove the principle that a non-custodial order is better than detention. That is right: we are getting rid of it. We are not being tricky with words; we are removing it. Evidently, Labor's laws have added to the youth crime crisis that Queenslanders had to endure under the previous government. This bill is evidence that the LNP have listened to Queenslanders, and by removing these principles we can begin to restore community safety in Queensland.

A birthday should not mean that a criminal rap sheet as long as a cricket pitch gets torn up. This bill amends section 148 of the Youth Justice Act to provide details of a person's child criminal history—including police cautions, restorative justice agreements and contraventions of a supervised release order—so they are visible to the court when sentencing an adult or child for an offence. The court, of course, can determine what weight to give this information. This then carries for five years, better equipping courts to appropriately sentence the worst of the worst offenders. To enhance transparency, these amendments will also include allowing media to cover proceedings in the Childrens Court and allowing the victims, their family or representatives to be present during court proceedings.

We are also strengthening policy to assist with the transferring of 18-year-olds from youth detention centres or watch houses to adult correctional centres. The new requirement will be that an individual must be transferred within one month of turning 18. The Queensland Police Union stated in their submission that they support the policy outlined in the bill for transferring these offenders to adult custody and for the process to be automatic and efficient.

A new principle will be added to the charter of youth justice to recognise the impact of offending on the victim. The elevation of this principle will mean the court must have primary regard for this when considering sentencing of a youth offender. Too many times we have heard that victims and their families are left traumatised and scared in their own homes. These tough amendments complement the LNP's plan to establish our gold standard early intervention programs, as we committed to.

As we have heard, the Crisafulli government is also making significant investment in these early intervention programs and initiatives in an endeavour to turn the tide on youth crime. We know it is a complex problem, and that is why we brought an incredibly complex plan to the election. We will continue to work harder for Queenslanders to reduce the number of victims in this state. These changes are such a priority that we included them in our 100-day plan and now we are delivering them for Queensland in the first couple of months. This bill is the first step towards turning the crime crisis around and making Queensland a safe place to live again. The LNP will always be tough on crime. Queenslanders deserve it. Victims deserve it. I commend the bill to the House.