




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2024

MOTION

Crime Statistics

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (4.56 pm): I move—

That this House notes:

- (a) In the decade since the Palaszczuk and Miles Labor governments came to power, 53 of 55 crime categories and victim numbers have increased, costing Queenslanders their lives, livelihoods, and hitting their hip pockets through higher insurance premiums and security measures.
- (b) Increases have included:
- Townsville robberies up 287 per cent and stolen cars up 103 per cent;
 - Bundaberg stolen cars up 282 per cent;
 - Rockhampton stolen cars 226 per cent;
 - Gold Coast stolen cars up 60 per cent;
 - Brisbane stolen cars up 150 per cent;
 - Mackay stolen cars up 149 per cent;
 - Cairns stolen cars up 73 per cent;
 - Sunshine coast stolen cars up 100 per cent;
 - Hervey Bay stolen cars up 260 per cent; and
 - Maryborough stolen cars up 282 per cent.
- (c) These increases follow the watering down of laws by the state government.

And calls on the government to put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders.

There is a famous quote that I am sure everyone here has heard. They might have heard it from their parents or parents like me have said it to our kids: 'Actions speak louder than words'. According to Siri, it is a famous quote. It is attributed to Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain and Shakespeare and there is even some reference to it in the Bible: 'History will judge you more by your actions than your words'.

That is why my ears pricked up on 15 February in this place when the Premier was answering a question without notice from the Leader of the Opposition and he said, 'As I have said over and over again, this is a government that is tough on crime.' I would suggest that the actions of this Premier, this police minister and this government do not bode well with that comment. In fact, they are probably in stark contrast to it because we know that in 2015 the top priority of this government when it came to power was to water down the Youth Justice Act. They reinstated detention as a last resort; they closed the Childrens Court; they scrapped early intervention and rehabilitation boot camps; and they scrapped the LNP's breach-of-bail offence—but they did so proudly and pleasingly at the time. The attorney-general at the time, who is the Attorney-General again now, Minister D'Ath, said that the former LNP government was too tough on crime and quoted academics who all agreed—

Evidence clearly shows that increasing the severity of punishment does not reduce offending nor does it reduce reoffending.

Minister Farmer, who was the youth justice minister at the time, said—

We repealed this offence (breach of bail) in 2016 because the evidence is clear that harsher penalties do not work to reduce youth offending and they do not make our communities safer.

How does that now sit with this government, which comes in here often talking tough on crime?

We saw today, as is listed in the motion, a dire list of statistics that show that since that time crime across Queensland has exploded. There is a crime crisis across Queensland. There has been an increase in 53 of the 55 crime categories in communities right across Queensland. Bundaberg and Maryborough saw the most dramatic increases in unlawful use of motor vehicle, or car theft, offences, with both regions experiencing a 282 per cent rise. In Brisbane, residents reported 2,851 more car thefts in 2023-24 compared to 2015-16—a 120 per cent increase—while the Gold Coast reported an extra 1,077. Break-ins also increased by 45 per cent statewide, mostly in Townsville, where offences doubled, from 2,075 to 4,119—a 99 per cent increase—between mid-2015 and 2024. Townsville and Rockhampton recorded excessive 287 per cent and 216 per cent rises in robbery offences.

The next comment that the Premier made was in relation to police numbers. He said—

We have delivered hundreds more police and there are even more on the way—a massive number. There are 600 recruits undergoing intensive training now, with another 1,800 applicants in the pipeline.

Those on this side of the chamber, communities across Queensland and our police know that this Premier and this government are being misleading when it comes to police numbers and crime figures. We know that it is not a media beat-up. We know that behind every statistic is a victim of crime. Once you have been touched by crime, you are never the same.

What the Premier did not go on to talk about was that, of the 1,800 applicants, we know that less than 50 per cent of applicants are often not suitable or not found suitable to become a recruit and start a career in the police force. It was also in contradiction to what the commissioner told us at estimates just recently when he admitted that the government's 1,450 extra police 'boots on the ground' promise from the last election would not be met.

This government and this minister have a history of misleading our police and communities across Queensland when it comes to crime and police numbers. This minister and this government in 2017 promised 535 extra police and by 2020 they were over 100 short of that commitment. In 2020 they promised 1,450 extra police. We now know from estimates that we currently have 1,147 fewer police than the minister promised.

Leading up to the next election, any promise from this minister and this government that they will increase boots on the ground across Queensland is not worth the paper it is written on. Only the LNP will provide our police with the resources and the Making Queensland Safer Laws they need to keep us safe. We will restore consequences for action and enact Adult Crime, Adult Time.

(Time expired)