



Speech By
Hon. Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 28 November 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Youth Crime, Legislation

 **Hon. DK FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity) (9.55 am): Today, the Crisafulli government will be taking a pivotal step in implementing the mandate from the people of Queensland to hold youth offenders accountable and put victims at the centre of the youth justice system. On 26 October, Queenslanders said they had had enough. They had had enough of wondering if their car would still be outside when they woke in the morning. They had had enough of listening to the tragic stories of Queenslanders whose lives had been changed forever by the actions of out-of-control teens. They had had enough of a soft-on-crime Labor government which, under this Leader of the Opposition, ignored their pleas to keep dangerous young offenders off the streets.

To be introduced after just 30 days in office, the Making Queensland Safer Bill will deliver a strong response to the youth crime crisis in Queensland. Key features of this bill include Adult Crime, Adult Time and removing the principle of detention as a last resort. The bill amends the Youth Justice Act to apply the same maximum, minimum and mandatory penalties to young offenders as currently apply to adults in relation to 13 of the most serious Criminal Code offences.

Significantly, and consistent with putting victims at the centre of youth justice proceedings, the bill will expand access to the Childrens Court. Right now, section 20 of the Childrens Court Act limits access to the Childrens Court for matters that do not proceed by way of indictment—for example, where the matter is heard by a magistrate. Unlike previous claims by those opposite, our government's amendments will unwaveringly support the rights of victims of crime and their families to access the court. We will remove the court's ability to exclude victims, the relatives or representatives of victims and deceased victims, persons with a proper interest in the proceedings and, of course, accredited media. The Crisafulli government is committed to protecting and promoting the rights of victims and ensuring they are at the centre of youth justice proceedings.

The bill will also amend the act to enable the admissibility of an adult's childhood criminal history for up to five years after the outcome for the last childhood offence. Our changes will also rewrite the sentencing provisions to ensure the impact of the crime on the victim is the primary consideration rather than being one of the numerous factors that the court must consider.

Since the moment I was sworn in as Attorney-General, the Minister for Youth Justice, the Premier and I have made it our top priority to get these laws ready to be introduced into parliament today. I have also been progressing other important election commitments that we made for our first 100 days in office. I have initiated a review into Labor's DNA debacle. I am working with the Crime and Corruption Commission to strengthen its reporting laws. Strengthening the CCC is something that is well overdue. Unlike the previous government, I have acted on this straightaway and, after just a month in office, I have already met with the chair of the CCC twice. We are well on our way to delivering the fresh start Queenslanders asked for.