




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

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MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL

 **Mrs POOLE** (Mundingburra—LNP) (12.34 pm): Over the past couple of days there has been a lot of discussion from both sides of the House, and I wish to add the voice of the Mundingburra electorate. I have some numbers for the House. Behind each and every one of these numbers is a real person. The first number is 289,657—that is, 289,657 victims of crime in Queensland during the last calendar year, the most in all the states across our nation. That is 289,657 victims who had their homes broken into or their cars stolen in Queensland in 2023. We have heard the opposition talk endlessly about the experts and their opinions about how the new laws will not work and they will do more damage. I challenge those experts to get out of their air-conditioned offices and go and speak to each and every one of those 289,657 victims in Queensland. I will back the word of the victims every single day.

The next number I have for the House is 199. There has been a 199 per cent increase in unlawful use of motor vehicles—stolen cars—in the Mundingburra electorate and across the Greater Townsville area since the former Labor government weakened the Youth Justice Act 10 years ago. Then there is the number 150: a 150 per cent increase in unlawful entries—break and enters, enter with intent, burglary—across the Mundingburra electorate and the Greater Townsville area since the former Labor government weakened the Youth Justice Act.

The number 287 is the 287 per cent increase in robbery offences in the Mundingburra electorate and Greater Townsville area since the former Labor government weakened the Youth Justice Act. Next is 1,945, which is 1,945 motor vehicles stolen in the Mundingburra electorate and the Greater Townsville area in 2023. That is, on average, five vehicles every single day in Townsville. That is 1,945 victims who no longer have a car to get to work or to take their children to school, to sport or to dance. Sadly, some of those victims are still paying off those vehicles—vehicles that are sitting burnt out on the side of the road or that have been driven into the Ross River.

The numbers 11 and 12 are the ages of the two boys who set off on their bikes on a Sunday afternoon 18 months ago with their fishing gear and headed down to the Ross River to do some fishing. They were held up on the way by a group of young offenders, threatened with a knife held to one of the boy's throats and had their bikes stolen. The numbers 13, 14, 15 are the ages of the young offenders who robbed the two boys at knifepoint. Let me remind members that robbery has increased 287 per cent in the Mundingburra electorate and the Greater Townsville area since the former Labor government weakened the Youth Justice Act. It has taken 18 months for those two young boys to get the confidence to ride their bikes again, albeit only up and down their street.

The number 19 is the age of a lady who was on her way to the first of the two jobs that she has to work to afford to live. She was confronted by a stolen vehicle coming at her head-on, at speed and on the wrong side of the road. They only missed her because of her swift responses in taking evasive action. They took no evasive action. The numbers 86 and 88 are the ages of an elderly couple who were followed home by youth offenders driving a stolen car. The offenders waited up the road until the

elderly couple had parked their car inside their garage. They then snuck inside the home, stole the keys and subsequently stole the car. Sadly, this is a regular occurrence in Townsville. The trauma, the anger and the fear in the Townsville community and across Queensland is real.

I stand proud to outline the LNP's multipronged approach to community safety. We have allocated \$100 million for gold standard early intervention programs and prevention initiatives. We will remove detention as a last resort. A hardcore group of recidivist property offenders are holding our community to ransom and thumbing their noses at the community, the police and the judicial system. The \$175 million Stay on Track program will provide 12 months post-detention rehabilitation support for our young people—12 months, not just the 72-hour intensive support plan that they get now, if they are lucky. We are putting the rights of the victims before the rights of the offenders. We are introducing consequences for actions and Adult Crime, Adult Time. All will be delivered by Christmas.

Townsville was the first city to call out the youth crime crisis. It is at the epicentre of the youth crime crisis. The city is being held to ransom by a group of untouchables created by the former Labor government when they watered down the Youth Justice Act. Not only have we seen an increase in offending rates; the type of offending has also escalated. Once upon a time it was stealing a packet of chewing gum or a sausage roll from the local shop or service station. Now, it is carjackings, home invasions with weapons—

Mr Stevens: Machetes.

Mrs POOLE:—machetes and they are doing it in groups. That is happening because there are no consequences for actions. Through this landmark legislation, the Crisafulli LNP government will be introducing consequences for actions. We have a community that is too frightened to leave their homes. They are barricading themselves in their homes. They are too scared to go to the shops or to drive at night. Children are too scared to sleep in their own beds in case the bad men come back. That is all because of the youth crime crisis created by the former Labor government.

With 28 years of service to the Townsville community as a proud member of the Queensland Police Service, I have seen firsthand the frustrations of our police officers on the front line who have to deal with a repeat juvenile offender crisis. Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their homes, their workplaces and out in their communities, but they do not. Queenslanders have asked for tough laws and, on 26th October, they gave the Crisafulli LNP government a clear mandate to deliver tough laws that deal with hardcore recidivist offenders and also offer significant investments in early intervention and rehabilitation programs. Only a Crisafulli LNP government, through the Making Queensland Safer laws, will deliver safety where you live and deliver the fresh start that the community of Mundingburra and the Queensland people voted for. I commend this bill to the House.