



Speech By  
**Jason Hunt**


**MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA**

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Record of Proceedings, 6 March 2024

**LEGAL AFFAIRS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Mr HUNT** (Caloundra—ALP) (2.26 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the committee report on the victims of crime inquiry. I thank my fellow committee members and the secretariat. I note the contribution of the member for Currumbin, who just punctuated one of the points I am about to make. The committee's task was to inquire into and report to the Legislative Assembly on the support provided to victims of crime and to identify if there are areas where improvements could be made. To this end, the committee left no stone unturned in a comprehensive and consultative process.

To get information out to the public about the victims of crime inquiry, 360 stakeholder groups were emailed, inviting them to make submissions. The committee subscriber list, which is over 1,000 strong, was also emailed to advise of the inquiry. Ninety organisations, the names of which were provided to the secretariat by no less an entity than the Queensland Police Service, were emailed or called directly. Those are the organisations to which the QPS send victims of crime referrals in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Ipswich, Logan and the Gold Coast. More than 175 journalists and media outlets were contacted directly, and the secretariat utilised their own social media platform to promote the inquiry.

As a consequence of this, the committee made no less than 18 recommendations. These crucial recommendations touch on subjects such as expanding the victims' charter of rights and stronger support for victims throughout the committal hearings process. The committee recommended—

That the Queensland Government, in line with recommendation 9 of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce *Hear her voice, Report two: Women and girls' experiences of the criminal justice system* and in consultation with people with lived experience, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and service and legal system stakeholders, develop a pilot victim advocate service to support victims of crime to navigate through the criminal justice system.

The committee also recommended better trauma informed training across all aspects of the public sector that interact with victims and improvements in online material to help victims negotiate their way through the systemic requirements, which can be difficult at the best of times but more trying in the aftermath of a crime. This is crucial because several stakeholders commented on the difficulty for a victim navigating the current system and on the lack of integrated services for victims as they move through the criminal justice system. Submitters were also keen that the financial assistance to victims of crime be urgently reassessed and now, of course, this government has done exactly that.

In one of my earliest contributions for 2024, can I take a moment to reflect on how fortunate our committee is to include in its number the member for Cooper. Her contributions on crime last year and this year have been absolute quality. The 2009 Young Australian of the Year website states—

Queenslander Jonty Bush showed inspirational courage and strength after senseless violence brought tragedy to her family.

Our member for Cooper has pioneered the successful One Punch Can Kill education campaign which was adopted by the Queensland government in 2007. She also lobbied successfully for a review of murder and manslaughter laws in Queensland. Very few people in this House and, indeed, very few people in Queensland have more credibility when it comes to supporting victims of crime than the member for Cooper.

With genuine sadness, I contrast that with the contributions of LNP members on this subject during the inquiry—not a trace of genuine empathy and not one shred of genuine desire about real support for victims of crime. It is my sincerely held belief that far too many members of the LNP in this chamber do not care about victims of crime unless it comes with political leverage. Instead, they seem more intent on exploiting victims of crime as a disposable tool. They consistently approached this inquiry as a cynical exercise in political manipulation. Mercifully, this government is far more interested in the victims than breathless theatrics. The appointment of a Victims' Commissioner will go a long way to addressing the multiple concerns raised by submitters.

To close, I speak briefly of the role of the media. The media plays an important role in society in the distribution of information so that people are aware of what is happening in their community. Witnesses stated that the media publicly reported on a victim before family members were made aware of key information, adding to the trauma and stress experienced by the family. This must be the subject of further discussions. I am proud to be a member of a government that is taking these matters seriously and not being politically expedient.