




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

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MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL

 **Ms MORTON** (Caloundra—LNP) (3.48 pm): I rise today to speak on this important and history-making bill. On 26 October Queenslanders were very clear. They voted for change and they voted for a fresh start, with the issue of youth crime being at the absolute forefront of their minds. We listened to the people of Queensland and I listened to the people of Caloundra. The number of people who have been impacted by youth offenders is significant and cannot be ignored. People have the right to feel safe in their own homes and in their own beds and feel like their families are safe.

People have had enough. I will say it again for the benefit of those on the other side: people have had enough. They are not willing to wait until after Christmas or February or June; they were fed up a long time ago. They were fed up with a government that refused to listen to this crisis. The Making Queensland Safer Bill is about putting the rights of victims in front of the rights of perpetrators. We have listened to the other side talk about rights a lot this week—the rights of the offenders.

Being a victim of crime is a traumatic experience for everyone. I spoke to one family in Caloundra who had three cars stolen, but the offenders also stole clothing and other personal belongs. It did not stop there. For weeks afterwards those youth offenders, who were repeat offenders known to police, sent photos to the teenage children of that family through social media and continued to terrorise them.

Another family with three young children asleep inside had a group of offenders ram their electric gate and their garage and disable the tracking device on their car, all in under two minutes. When the car was located the following day some 300 kilometres away, it was the responsibility of the victim to pick up their car and return it home. On top of that, they had to do a house and contents insurance claim and a car insurance claim for the gate, the car and the garage door. It was the cost, the inconvenience and the time-wasting burden that fell to the victim. Once again, those offenders were known to police.

A third family—these families were all within a 500-metre radius—experienced two cars being stolen. Upon reviewing the camera footage afterwards they could see the offenders enter their home not once and not twice but five times. The disrespect for victims is shameful. We all have hundreds of stories. We have stories in Caloundra of sports clubs being targeted, the clean-up being done by volunteers. Businesses incur the cost of this youth crime crisis, which is an extra cost they simply do not need, all whilst trying to make a living. I heard from one mum who, in broad daylight, had four youth offenders attack her front door with hammers while she was inside with her toddler.

We have heard the other side deny the youth crime crisis, deny the facts and ignore the reality. I have one message for them. I was outside my own home on a Saturday night. I walked back inside to find a man standing in my house whilst my children were asleep upstairs. He was not meant to be there. He was bigger than me; he was taller than me. He was standing inside my home. It turns out that this offender was 17 years and 11 months old and therefore he was dealt with by the juvenile system. Despite the fact that there were fingerprints, there was CCTV footage, he was known to police and he was a repeat offender, due to detention being a last resort he was basically free to keep reoffending. No-one can tell me that that offender did not know what he was doing.

The proposed laws are tough, but after weakening the laws for almost a decade the previous government has done nothing but watch the youth crime crisis get worse and worse. All of these victims have something in common. They have worked hard to have a roof over their heads. They love their home but no longer feel safe there. No-one has the right to take that away.

Our government is not proposing these new laws without addressing the reasons some kids fall into a life of crime. We are investing significantly in early intervention programs to give every young Queenslander the chance to succeed. We are setting up a generation to succeed. Accountability—from our Premier all the way down to the individual Queenslander—is exactly what this state is desperately crying out for. There is nothing wrong with every single one of us in this great state being responsible for our own actions.