




Speech By
Lachlan Millar

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

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TRANSPORT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.29 pm): I would also like to make a contribution on the inquiry into scrap metal theft. This is going to be a very hard issue to solve across Queensland and across the nation. We are starting to see more and more of these incidents happening right throughout Queensland. Whether it is in agriculture areas, industrial areas or areas where we get our electricity from, it is a really concerning issue at the moment.

One of the consequences of the cost-of-living crisis is that people are moving into this sort of trade to try to get by. One of the recommendations in this inquiry involved having more enforcement to try to control it, but that is an issue at the moment when we have a crime crisis right across Queensland. The resources of the police and others who do a fantastic job in enforcing this are limited. We have a cost-of-living crisis and a lack of police numbers and we are trying to solve this.

This issue has been going on for quite some time. Through this inquiry, we also learned about the sneakiness of the thefts and the way they go about it—to the point where they go into shopping centre car parks, jack up cars and take car parts from underneath the cars.

Mr King: The cat converters.

Mr MILLAR: Yes, the cat converters. They do it in such a brazen way, by actually dressing up in a mechanic's uniform with high-vis on, placing witch's hats out, jacking up the car and taking out the part which is valuable to their trade. The owner then comes back from shopping, jumps in the car and says, 'What the hell has happened to my car?'

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Sorry, member for Gregory, will you withdraw that unparliamentary language?

Mr MILLAR: I withdraw. It is a major issue for us to solve. I thank the committee and I certainly thank the former chair of the committee, Shane King, for his guidance and his contribution to his committee. The previous debate was about estimates. All I can say is that Shane was very generous to us—so thank you, member for Kurwongbah.

This is a very important issue. We have to make sure we have the resources. There has to be a clear national approach to this as well, because one of the frightening things we found out is that they do not just end up in scrap metal businesses here in Australia; a lot of it gets put in shipping containers and sent overseas to places like China. This is certainly an ongoing problem that we are facing here in Queensland. I hope we can find a way to bring these perpetrators into line and make sure this does not continue. As the chair mentioned before, they do not just use cash; they are getting into cryptocurrency and that is going to be harder and harder to track.

Finally, I was driving along Gympie Road the other day and I looked at this old house which had a corflute sign out the front. It was not a political corflute sign but perhaps a real estate sign that was turned around the other way, and written on it in nikko was 'buy scrap metal' and a phone number. You

could easily tell what it was; I was very suspicious of this place. I think we were going onto the Energex site that day and I just pointed out that they would go into the Energex site, strip the scrap metal away, visit this person's place and get the cryptocurrency, and that is how it continues.

Mr Perrett: And copper.

Mr MILLAR: And copper as well. I recommend this committee report to the House. I thank everyone who was on the committee.