




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MOTION

Cost of Living, Select Committee

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.23 pm): Let's talk about an aspect of this cost-of-living crisis that this state Labor government is refusing to acknowledge—that is, the youth crime crisis that is ripping through our state right now. It is contributing to the cost-of-living crisis right across Queensland in an extreme way: it is contributing thousands of dollars in increased insurance premiums for Queenslanders; thousands of dollars in increased insurance excess when making claims; thousands of dollars of uninsured damage to property that Queenslanders are having to pay; and thousands of dollars in time off work, having to arrange for repairs or recovering from injuries due to violent crimes because of the youth crime crisis ripping through this state under this state Labor government.

Queensland is facing this crisis in a profound way because of the neglect of this government. That is why we need to see the select committee established in the way moved by the shadow minister, and that is why we need to see it established now, not some time in the future. Our community members do not need talk. They do not need a Premier pretending to take action yet neglecting to take responsibility for what is in fact all of his responsibility. Youth crime is all him. He voted to water down the laws, and if he cannot recall what that should look like he should look at *Hansard*.

Every day we speak to victims who are struggling to not only emotionally recover from the crime committed against them but also financially recover. It is the cost of replacing what was lost, the cost of installing cameras and screens and taking measures to protect their property—and then the insurance bill comes. It is costing Queenslanders thousands and thousands of dollars and it is increasing insurance premiums for whole postcodes because of the youth crime that is ripping through that postcode. We have spoken to small and family businesses and individuals who are feeling this. It is great to see Yolonde Entsch for Cairns and Bree James for Barron River sitting in the gallery. I know that they are advocating fiercely for their communities. I know that they are talking to their communities every single day about the cost of living, about youth crime and about the cost of that youth crime to not just people and their families but also small and family businesses.

At every moment this state government tries to deny the fact that the youth crime crisis is contributing to the cost-of-living crisis. It tries to rewrite history. More recently the Premier has claimed that he just cannot recall events, so here is a recap for the Premier. In 2015 the Premier's government proudly started the process of watering down the Youth Justice Act. It put detention as a last resort in the Youth Justice Act and closed our Childrens Courts to victims and their families. In 2019 the Premier started the youth crime watch house scandal. Then in 2021 the Premier had to try to unwind the damage that caused with the watch house scandal by rewriting and overriding the Human Rights Act. In 2021 the Premier voted against our breach-of-bail amendment. Then in 2023 the Premier brought in our breach-of-bail amendment—word for word the LNP's amendment—as an offence.

The youth crime crisis is not a beat-up. The youth crime crisis is real to every single Queenslander. They are feeling it. They are feeling not just the emotional toll of youth crime and having to protect their homes and provide for their own safety and security—a job that this state government should be doing—but also the financial toll. Their insurance premiums are going up. I will table a news article from the ABC titled 'Insurance costs rise, regional Queenslanders say they're paying the price for youth crime'.

Hamish Burge's Toyota Hilux was stolen by a gang of youths—Mr Deputy Speaker, I assure the House that none of these matters are before the court—and his insurance has gone up \$1,000 a year, just because of moving to the postcode of Goondiwindi on the border. The car of another regional Queenslander—a Toowoomba resident—was stolen by a 12-year-old. She said that she was able to get her car back, but her insurance premium has gone up by \$800. Labor members may not think that is significant, but in a cost-of-living crisis that is huge and Queenslanders are suffering under it. This state Labor government needs to start acknowledging that the youth crime crisis is contributing to the cost-of-living crisis.