




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 17 April 2024

MOTION

Crime, Media Reporting

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.57 pm): I move—

That this House:

- notes statements by:
 - the member for Nicklin that media reporting of crime was ‘scandalous’ and he ‘would prefer if elements that inform the public actually did their jobs’ in relation to the youth crime crisis;
 - the member for Capalaba that Queensland’s youth crime crisis is ‘a media beat up’;
 - the member for Bundaberg that ‘mass commercial media use trope terms ... to distort the truth.
- calls on the members for Nicklin, Capalaba and Bundaberg to cease blaming the media for their government’s own policy failures; and
- calls on the government to back the freedom of media to give crime victims a voice.

We are being let down by a state Labor government that does not care about victims of crime and that has given up on keeping our community safe and has gone so far as to suggest that the youth crime crisis ripping through our state is a media beat-up or a figment of the media’s imagination. To the Premier who giggled at journalists in response to a question about youth crime and to the entire government, which sits idly by and lets that ignorant, dismissive behaviour continue: shame on you!

Victims are going to the media and they are coming to the opposition to give them a voice because this state Labor government is not listening to them. Instead, this Premier has sent a very clear message: his government cares more about politics than people. He confirmed as much yesterday in question time when he admitted that Labor has vacated the field when it comes to youth crime. When it comes to putting our community’s safety first, they put politics before people. That is right; we all knew it. With his Freudian slip yesterday, the Premier confirmed it.

Let us be frank: if victims of crime were being taken care of, if they felt heard, if they felt respected, if they felt even an ounce of compassion from this state Labor government, they would not need to go to the media to tell their stories, they would not need to come to the opposition and this state Labor government would not need to try to silence the media or blame the media for the youth crime crisis ripping through our state which they created almost a decade ago by watering down our youth justice laws.

This government consistently denies that the experiences of Queenslanders are real, and the statements from the member for Nicklin, the member for Bundaberg and the member for Capalaba prove it. In response to a constituent about youth crime—or who looks to be a constituent from his Facebook page—the member for Nicklin said, ‘I think you know that I don’t determine the narrative.’ He goes on to say, ‘I am not going to comment on the drivers. It is beyond my control, and I would prefer it if elements that inform the public actually did their jobs and we would not have this conversation.’

It is not only the Premier who has vacated the field on youth crime; the member for Nicklin is admitting he has vacated the field on youth crime, saying he has no control over the drivers. The drivers of youth crime are the youth criminals who are running riot through our state and who have been allowed to terrorise our state as a result of weak laws because of this state Labor government. Let us turn to the next one. Let us turn to the member for Capalaba. Let us not forget that the member for Capalaba called this whole youth crime crisis a complete media beat-up. Last, but certainly not least, let us look at the member for Bundaberg. In an opinion piece to his own paper, he blamed the media for the language used for the youth crime crisis, saying mass commercial media use trope terms to distort the truth.

We know that victims of crime in this state are being left isolated, without help and without a voice because this state Labor government refuses to acknowledge the youth crime crisis that is ripping through this state. What is worse is that these three members, the Premier and the rest of the state Labor government, for that matter—all of them—are blaming the media for this crisis. They are saying that this is a media beat-up, that it is all because of the language used by the media. These victims would not need to go to the media if this state Labor government listened to them, but this state Labor government would rather silence the media. They would rather silence victims of crime and they would rather put politics before people because that is in their DNA. We know that victims of crime are going to organisations like Voice for Victims for help. Voice for Victims are standing up for victims of crime, but this state Labor government denies Voice for Victims. They blame Voice for Victims and say that they are part of the media beat-up. Nothing is going to change in this state until we show Labor the door in '24.

(Time expired)