



Speech By  
**Laura Gerber**

**MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN**

---

Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2024


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee, Report**

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (8.46 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the estimates debate specifically on the issue of victim support. There were 289,657 victims of crime in Queensland last year. This is the highest in the nation and the reality is that those opposite do not want to acknowledge that number. They do not want to acknowledge the scale of the issue that they created when they watered down our laws, when they watered down our Youth Justice Act. They certainly do not want to accept that the number of victims of crime in this state is an indicator of whether or not their laws and policies on crime are working.

In fact, during estimates I asked the Attorney-General point blank whether she acknowledges that the number of victims of crime in Queensland is the true measure of effectiveness of this government's laws in relation to crime. The answer the Attorney-General gave proved that this government does not consider that the growing number of victims of crime in this state determines the effectiveness of their laws or policies. The minister refused to give me a direct answer to that question and instead danced around it telling me how many victims have been identified and how many victims have made Victim Assist applications. She was not willing to acknowledge at all that the metric that matters is the number of victims of crime in this state and that number is the highest it has ever been; it is the highest in the nation.

There were almost 300,000 victims of crime last year. That is higher than New South Wales and higher than Victoria, and that is despite the populations of those states being higher when compared to Queensland. It means there have been almost 300,000 Queenslanders who have suffered as a result of this state Labor government failing in their most fundamental responsibility as a government and that is to keep people safe from crime. Victims deserve more than lip-service and platitudes. Their needs and their voices deserve to be at the heart of the justice system, and the fact that victim numbers are rising should matter to this government. It should cause them to look at their laws and reassess whether they are working, but the Attorney-General has failed to do that and failed to acknowledge that during the estimates process.

During this estimates hearing we heard from the QFCC commissioner in relation to the rehabilitation of young offenders and stopping them reoffending and, in turn, leaving more victims of crime in their wake. The commissioner stated in the estimates process that what was clear to him was that the government's 72-hour plans, the government's program for releasing youths from detention, are not working, that youths are falling through the cracks and that the 72-hour plans are not enough.

The commissioner stated that, whilst there are many good people and programs in our youth justice portfolio, what has become clear is that three days of exit support means they are falling through the cracks and it is not working. The QFCC commissioner stated very clearly that he has recommended that the government should fund dedicated 12-month follow-through intensive case management for all young people who are leaving detention, and the LNP absolutely agrees. That is why we have announced our Staying on Track program—12 months worth of intensive rehabilitation support for every single youth leaving detention to break the cycle of reoffending and to stop the pipeline of youths becoming serious repeat offenders, because we know that 91 per cent of our youths released from detention reoffend. That is the statistic this government is ignoring and this government is failing to change that story. It is continuing along the path of its failed 72-hour plans.

Finally, I want to address an issue with the Victims' Commissioner. It has come to light that the Victims' Commissioner function of meeting victims when they make complaints in relation to their charter of rights is not being performed. In fact, I have been advised that it is not commencing until 2 September. For the last four months this government has been talking about the Victims' Commissioner and the charter of rights when in fact that function has not been performed by the Victims' Commissioner. It is clear that there is only one side of this House that will put the rights of victims before the rights of offenders. There is only one side of this House that will prioritise the rights of victims, and that is an LNP Crisafulli-led government.

*(Time expired)*