




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Youth Crime

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (2.48 pm): Youth crime has never been worse in Queensland and under Labor it is getting worse. Almost a decade ago this Labor government made a conscious choice. They made a conscious choice to proudly and loudly water down our youth justice laws, and now towns like the normally peaceful border community of Goondiwindi are suffering under a youth crime crisis that was created by this Labor government almost a decade ago. They proudly and loudly watered down the youth justice laws and created a generation of young offenders—a generation of repeat offenders who know their rights exceed the rights of victims; Labor's generation of untouchables.

Youth thugs have terrorised Goondiwindi over the weekend, targeting motels and homes, stealing cars and torching them, and threatening locals with machetes. They have caused immense harm to local residents in the border town of Goondiwindi. I hear the Premier this morning trying to palm the problem off onto New South Wales, saying that these are border kids. These kids know that Queensland's laws are too weak to hold them. That is why they are coming over the border to terrorise our communities, to steal our cars and to threaten our local residents. They know that our police do not have the laws to hold them and they know that they are untouchable in Queensland.

Then there is the fact that under Labor we have fewer police on the beat. The Goondiwindi Police Station was meant to be resourced with 18 police officers. Today we can reveal as a result of a whistleblower that there were around nine police officers that week—working at half the capacity. With fewer police and weaker laws, how are our communities meant to be kept safe? This is the legacy of this Labor government after a decade in power.

In every major region across Queensland we have seen an increase in crime. In Bundaberg and Maryborough, stolen cars are up 282 per cent since 2015, since this Labor government came to power. In Hervey Bay, they are up 260 per cent since this Labor government came to power. In Rockhampton, they are up 226 per cent since Labor came to power. It is no different on the Gold Coast or in Brisbane. In Brisbane, unlawful entry is up 66 per cent. In Cairns, there is more than a 200 per cent increase in assaults since Labor came to power. Then there is robbery. In Hervey Bay, robbery is up 388 per cent. In Townsville, it is up 287 per cent. In Toowoomba, it is up 226 per cent. In Rockhampton, robbery is up 216 per cent since this Labor government came to power in 2015 and proudly and loudly watered down our youth justice laws.

The LNP, alongside Queenslanders in these communities, have been pleading for stronger laws, but this Labor government has refused. Our Making Queensland Safer Laws is the tough-on-crime approach that will keep these communities safe. They will keep border communities like the town of Goondiwindi safe. Labor's generation of untouchables will end under the LNP's Adult Crime, Adult Time. That is not all. At the other end of the spectrum, we will ensure we rehabilitate these youth. We will make sure that every single youth released from detention gets up to 12 months of intensive support so that we can turn the tide on Labor's generation of untouchables. We will rehabilitate these youths so that we can make communities safe again.

Queenslanders know that after a decade in power this Labor government has no plan to solve the youth crime crisis. They simply do not trust them to solve it because they removed detention as a last resort; they closed our courts to victims, their families and the media; they watered down our bail laws; and they refused to listen to Queensland communities that are calling for stronger laws—Adult Crime, Adult Time; the LNP's Staying on Track program; rehabilitation for youths. Nothing will change in Queensland until we change the government.

(Time expired)