




Speech By  
**Nigel Hutton**

**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 December 2024

**MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL**

 **Mr HUTTON** (Keppel—LNP) (12.19 am): I rise this morning to make a contribution and speak on the Making Queensland Safer Bill. In the midst of a cost-of-living crisis the businesses of Keppel are sick of paying the price for the chaos and crisis of crime in our community. The hardworking men and women of the Queensland Police Service in Keppel are sick of carrying the burden of enforcement only to witness the justice system put the rights of criminals before the rights of victims. The consequence is a generation of untouchables and a revolving door for repeat young offenders. The families of Keppel are sick of being made victims, with violation of their property, the stealing of their children's innocence and the theft of their right to feel safe in their homes. On 26 October we gave voice to those who have felt abandoned and let down. Our businesses are paying the price, our police are unfairly carrying the burden and our families have become victims who no longer feel safe in their homes.

The stories of my community drove me to run for parliament and they drive me to want change. The first is the story of Ross, a business owner who provides first jobs for local kids from our local high school, an independent grocer and a long-term local. Ross and his business have been repeat targets for theft and robbery. From the cost of replacing broken windows, opening late due to the need to clean up unnecessary destruction in his store through to the weekly cutting of losses of stock and the huge increase in cost related to his insurance and the security systems he has installed, Ross has had enough. The cost of the youth crime crisis means our local independent grocer has higher operating costs, which means less profit, which equates to fewer workers and higher prices for customers. In the midst of a cost-of-living crisis we are all paying the price for crime.

A Parkhurst local shared with me his admiration of our local police and his determination to vote for change at the last election because of his personal experience. This gentleman awoke one night to find young people in his home. He chased the offenders out his front door and down the street. One young fellow fell over and a note fell out of his pocket. The Parkhurst local did not catch the offender but did retrieve the note. It was a court notice from an appearance in the Rockhampton courthouse that same day. The home owner called the police and they diligently visited. They checked that he was okay, they collected evidence of fingerprints, and they got his security camera footage and the note. The hardworking men and women of the Queensland Police Service are doing the toughest of jobs in the toughest of circumstances. They recognised the offender and, in the words of the local, were ashen-faced and nearly defeated but promised they would once again charge the youth for the crimes he had committed. Unfortunately, this gentleman did not hold much faith that the justice system would give justice to either himself or our hardworking police.

I turn now to a family who awoke to start the day with the kids asleep and the husband and wife each setting about their preparations, each assuming the noise they could hear was actually the other pottering about their house. Unfortunately, that family had multiple young people in their home. Going from room to room, they collected their keys, their wallets and their phones—they were all gone. This family now lives in fear. The children have spent months sleeping in their parents' room. The wife jumps at every sound and she herself would say she constantly checks her myriad security cameras, the

devices and the locks on the doors. She does not want her husband to travel away for work, which is affecting their family's income and, ultimately, their lifestyle. The husband now lives with a misplaced guilt that he had not noticed what was going on and anger that his home had been invaded. Whenever he does travel for work, he frets each night because he knows his wife is awake at home. This family is paying the price for crime.

To feel safe in our home is a right that all Queenslanders should expect, yet the experience of so many in the communities of Keppel has been that their home no longer feels impenetrable, no longer feels safe, and that is not good enough. The LNP will deliver for Queensland because we promised to, and this government will keep its promise to Queenslanders. The people of Central Queensland and Keppel have just one wish for Christmas this year: to feel safe in their home. Now is the time for action. On behalf of the people of Keppel I offer my support and my vote to the Making Queensland Safer Bill.