




Speech By  
**Nikki Boyd**

**MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS**

---

Record of Proceedings, 12 December 2024

### **MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER BILL**

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (3.02 pm): I rise to speak on the Making Queensland Safer Bill—a bill that has intentionally been rushed through this parliament by this new government, to its detriment. The privilege of being here in this place to be a law-maker in this state is a huge responsibility—one that we should feel the weight of every day, one that we should take seriously. It is incumbent upon us to create the settings for this state that provide protections and reduce harm. While we may each have myriad views on exactly what the best adjustment of those settings are, this place—this institution—has built inherent protections to inform expert views and knowledge into the bills we debate.

Through this rushed process it has been highlighted that this bill contains danger, unintended consequence and error. Rather than giving this important bill the time and consideration it deserves, the LNP has rushed it through a committee process and, in doing so, has discarded the respected and informed expert opinions with hubris and arrogance. This LNP government is quickly shaping up as one that is hell-bent on denigrating process, proper process and democratic foundations to ram through its agenda—one that only wants to hear the voices of agreement or none at all. While listening to the debate I have heard the Attorney-General, ministers and indeed the backbench of the LNP respond to caution and alarm with the reply of, 'You've had 10 years.' My response to them is that so has the LNP. If this issue was the LNP's greatest concern—if this is the LNP's key issue—it could have come into this place at any time through those 10 years of opposition and introduced a private member's bill. At any time the LNP could have taken action. It could have provided the community with more than a four-word slogan. It could have allowed proper community conversation and a proper conversation in this place about its policy detail. It did not; it failed to act. It was a despondent opposition and now it is a crazed government.

The reason it did not do its job in this place—the reason it did not play a constructive role for Queenslanders in this place—in my opinion is twofold. The LNP had no intention of having any experts support its policy platform. It knows that that is non-existent, and why? Because it is bad policy—bad policy that will result in perverse outcomes. knowmore describes it as legislation that will harm victims and survivors and make the community less safe. It provides fewer victim protections, will create unsafe environments for our frontline staff and will result in more dangerous and disengaged offenders. The other reason that the LNP did not do a thing about it in this place was because it only ever wanted to use this issue as its own political plaything—to be provided with an opportunity to run a four-word slogan, to erect billboards across the state, to campaign for more seats to win an election. Its own police minister belled the cat when interviewed by the police union journal. He told us all that his job was to win more seats off the back of crime.

There is no mandate for this bill. I accept that there is community support for a four-word slogan—Adult Crime, Adult Time—but this bill goes further. It overreaches. It has been identified by stakeholders as dangerous legislation and this government does not plan to do a thing to make it better. This is the

basis on which the LNP will be measured. In a leaders debate during the election, the now Premier said that these laws had been drafted. Why were they not talked about? Why was there not an exposure draft? Why were stakeholders and the media not provided with this information?

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** I take that interjection from the member for Logan. The LNP Premier alone set the 'laws by Christmas' deadline and those opposite also set the parliamentary sitting schedule, knowing full well that there would only be two real days on consultation for their signature slogan and all of the other 52 pages of new policy that were not canvassed during a general election. If the LNP government cares so much about community safety, why is it treating expert stakeholders' legitimate concerns with such contempt? The Labor opposition even offered to be here for an additional sitting week this year to achieve the goal Premier Crisafulli committed to in order to allow for more submitters to have more time to be heard on this bill—a request that the LNP opposed. It voted it down.

This is legislation that goes far beyond what Queenslanders were sold at the ballot box this election. I am reminded of the quote to never mistake law for justice; justice is an ideal and the law is a tool. Of course our opposition supports tough action and strong laws. Fundamentally, a law is not strong if it does not achieve its objectives, if it leaves victims behind or it hurts them more. That is the identified consequence of this bill. One crime is one crime too many, and I want to acknowledge the people in this chamber and in my community who have been impacted by crime in all of its forms and I want to acknowledge the phenomenal job that our first responders do when responding to the impacts of crime. I want to acknowledge the phenomenal support groups and services that are there for our communities when they need them. I want to acknowledge the good humans in our corrective services space who deal with offenders and keep our communities safe every day. I want to acknowledge that during the election Queenslanders who voted based on community safety concerns voted on a four-word slogan when a complex issue was politicised for LNP gain.

My daughter is now five. Granted, she is five going on 15—joyous and stimulating in equal measure—but, according to her world view and plan, I am the boss of the house this year and next year it will be her turn. Our children need us to raise them in environments to meet their hierarchical needs, but the thing that I keep front of mind for my child is that I need to be her frontal lobe of her brain until it has developed enough to be able to make the kinds of decisions that she needs to be able to make informed choices—adult choices.

Ninety per cent of her brain right now, at five years of age, is developed. What is left? Heaps. Will she be able to run our home at 10 years of age? Under current bipartisan changes made in the nation's federal parliament she will not be able to run her own social media account at that age. Social media is deadly to her, but jail? Well, that is okay. Science informs me that her brain will be fully developed with this functioning at age 25, yet I know that she can be locked up at age 10, held to the same consequences as an adult under these changes. Under this legislation she could actually be treated more harshly.

Community safety is not a political issue; it is a community issue. Until we take the politics out of this and start using our frontal lobes in this discussion—for our communities, for our children, for a better debate—we will not see improvements in this space. I know that we need to make the kinds of changes that our communities want to see: real, positive reforms in this complex and challenging area. The submission of YFS Legal stated—

The inclusion of children as young as 10 years old under the 'Adult Crime, Adult Time' policy is deeply troubling. Scientific evidence shows that children at this age lack the developmental maturity and decision-making capacity of adults, necessitating different approaches to justice. As stated by the QLD Human Rights Commissioner, Scott McDougall, 'We're talking about children who still have their baby teeth.' Lowering the age to children as young as 10 is deeply worrying.

The challenges Queensland is facing are not isolated—not to our state and not to our nation; they are a challenge right around the world. In a rational debate it would even be highlighted more that the statistics right now are trending down, but this is not a rational debate. We should do everything that we can, everything that we know works when it comes to keeping our communities safe. Queenslanders did not vote for laws that put victims on trial. Queenslanders did not vote for laws to end restorative justice. That is exactly what this bill does. This bill goes further than what Queenslanders were sold at the ballot box, leaving open the question of credibility in the statement that the LNP has a mandate for this bill. No one political party could or should occupy the high moral ground on this topic. It is fraught to do so.