




Speech By  
**Hon. Ann Leahy**

**MEMBER FOR WARREGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 April 2025

### **YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICES) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (8.41 pm): First of all, I want to thank the minister and member for Currumbin for the work she has done. I know that she works particularly hard in this area, ensuring she is there to support victims but also ensuring those people who are perpetrators are actually brought to justice. I really want to thank her for the great work she does. She has seen firsthand what happens in our judicial system. Working as a prosecutor has given her the experience to see exactly what happens when laws do not work as well as they should and when governments are soft on crime.

The Crisafulli government is restoring safety for Queenslanders in this bill. The LNP are committed to ensuring the safety of our local communities—communities like some in my electorate that have been ravaged for years by a crime crisis that Labor created when they watered down the youth crime laws in 2015-16. We have seen a generation of youth offenders coming through who know absolutely no consequences for actions, and I have seen them in my electorate over the last 10 years. They start off with minor things and then they escalate. They learn about the system and they continue. We saw a situation whereby youth offenders were breaking in with machetes and threatening grandmothers in their homes in the middle of the night. That is what happens when you are soft on crime.

I do not know how many cars we have seen stolen in communities in my electorate. I have seen youth offenders who have stolen cars five and six times. Under Labor they were just let back out on the street again. Our police were entirely frustrated by the weak laws and the weak Labor government that let crime run wild in this state. It meant Queenslanders were locking their doors and their windows in fear of criminals. I know the stories about people who had to wait with a hammer and actually stop people from climbing in their windows. There is another story about that in my electorate as well. People would have to defend themselves as they would see the fingers coming over the windowsills when youths were trying to break into their homes. It is really disconcerting for those people and those home owners.

We know all about it. Queenslanders knew all about it and they spoke very clearly last year at the state election. They knew that Labor would do nothing and they made sure there was change. They voted for change. I want to thank the member for Currumbin for the work she is doing. When I came into this House and mentioned these things, the members opposite would say that somehow we were making up all these stories. I hope that we—and Queenslanders—have absolutely put that myth from Labor to bed with the election result.

The bill is part of the process of strengthening our overall philosophy to keep Queenslanders safe with the Making Queensland Safer Laws. The bill has one thing in mind, and that is reducing the number of victims of crime. In making an effort to extend this electronic monitoring trial, we are putting the community and community safety first. An all-encompassing review of the trial is necessary, and the Crisafulli government is delivering for Queenslanders. In practical terms, it means that the courts will continue to have an option to keep our communities safe. It means that they will be able to make an

electronic monitoring condition for youth offenders in our community. It means that we can ease the pressure on our local police resources and it means that Labor's youth crime crisis will not be left to run wild throughout the state as it has for the last 10 years under the Labor government.

Throughout my electorate, our police go well above and beyond. I had conversations with many of them and they were very frustrated with Labor's soft-on-crime laws. They were very frustrated that it was like a revolving door for them. They would pick up these youth offenders but they would be back out the next day. They felt like they were trying to do their job with one hand tied behind their back. Throughout Queensland the police do a lot to keep us safe, and I want to make mention of those police who are on the front line of our disasters across Queensland. I know there are quite a number of them in the community of Thargomindah at the moment. They have been doing a tremendous job pretty much around the clock. They are there for us when we need them during those times. They do a tremendous job, particularly in those smaller communities. I know that in places like Adavale they have done an amazing job keeping the community calm and informed. This bill helps enable them to continue their good work. By extending the trial period, we are ensuring proper work can get done. It means there will be a full and meaningful evaluation of the program. Labor were letting this trial expire at the end of the month. They were just not committed. Their heart certainly was not in doing the work to keep the community safe.

Putting the safety of Queensland second is simply not good enough for us. By extending the trial we are helping to keep Queenslanders safe. Electronic monitoring has the potential to reduce reoffending when it is applied. When applied correctly, it can give offenders the opportunities they need to re-engage, particularly with education and employment opportunities, which we know is the best way to prevent recidivism. We know that education is an absolute key to preventing recidivism. This bill does just that. It has that goal. We want our young Queenslanders to have opportunities for positive outcomes. We know that young people are less likely to reoffend with systems like this and we make sure there are consequences for their actions.

This full review will inform the Crisafulli government's decisions about electronic monitoring for youth offenders. We are doing what needs to be done to improve community safety and reduce the number of victims of crime in this state. The initial trial was a total failure. The initial trial failed to capture enough youth offenders for an evaluation to be completed. I commend the minister on the legislation she has brought forward and how she has handled this matter. She is there fixing up Labor's mess. We are addressing the crime crisis that Labor created over the last 10 years. By extending this trial, we can complete a real review in a calm and considered manner that Queenslanders can have confidence in. I support the bill.