




Speech By
Hon. Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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MAKING QUEENSLAND SAFER (ADULT CRIME, ADULT TIME) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (8.31 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill. I want to thank the minister for her work on this legislation. She has a great depth of experience, being a former prosecutor. All Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their own home, as do the people of my electorate of Warrego. They are no different; they, too, wish to feel safe in their homes.

We should cast our minds back to what happened, starting 10 years ago, under the previous Labor governments. In 2015-16, the Labor government weakened the youth justice laws. Through a series of amendments, Labor made detention a last resort in sentencing, preferring that offenders be left in the community. If you look at the objectives of that legislation, you can see that quite clearly. Labor also abolished breach of bail as an offence and prioritised the rights of offenders over the rights of victims.

We all know what happened as a result of the last 10 years. Queensland ended up with a generation who knew no consequences for actions. Labor's weak laws left a legacy of a youth crime crisis, a crisis that has left families grieving for their deceased loved ones. One of those family members is in this chamber. Repeat youth offenders avoided justice, holding Queenslanders and their communities to hostage.

Last October, Queenslanders made their voices heard, demanding action on crime. The Making Queensland Safer laws are a foundation of the Crisafulli government's justice agenda. A key part of this is our commitment to Adult Crime, Adult Time, making youth offenders who commit serious adult crimes liable for the same penalties as adult offenders. We delivered our first tranche of these laws before Christmas, just like we said we would. We are now delivering the next tranche of these laws, including an additional 20 offences. Introducing these additional offences means we can take another step towards restoring community safety for Queenslanders.

I would like to share something that gets to the very heart of this bill. In my electorate of Warrego, I know too many victims of the youth crime crisis. One that stays in my mind involves a grandmother who suffered so much stress from a violent break and enter in her home that it seriously exacerbated her heart condition. Youth offenders broke into this grandmother's home under the cover of darkness, stole from her, trashed her property, doing all this while armed with machetes and threatening to kill her; doing this knowing that they would get away with these crimes under Labor's weak laws and under Labor's youth crime crisis. This grandmother has not recovered from the ordeal, nor has her family who love her dearly. They suffer almost daily from what happened on that evening.

It is a story I have heard too many times now, but those youths, despite being sentenced for an array of crimes, walked free under Labor's laws. That is what Labor's youth crime crisis has done to innocent families in my electorate.

The members on the other side of this House are still coming to grips with the mandate Queenslanders gave to the LNP Crisafulli government—a mandate to make Queensland safer. We in the LNP will restore safety to where we live, and we will do what we said we would.