




Speech By
Ariana Doolan

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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

 **Miss DOOLAN** (Pumicestone—LNP) (6.16 pm): I rise to speak in strong support of the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025. This legislation is a direct response to what Queenslanders have been calling for. It will ensure that serious crimes committed by youth offenders are treated with the seriousness they deserve and that the rights of victims and the safety of the community are placed first.

During the 2024 state election, I listened carefully to residents across the Pumicestone electorate, from Bribie Island to Ningi, from Beachmere to Caboolture, and one message echoed time and again: people no longer felt safe in their homes. They were locking their doors in broad daylight, installing security systems and keeping protective sprays beside their beds. Some told me they no longer go out at night. Others had been victims themselves. This is not how Queenslanders should have to live. This is not how residents of Pumicestone should have to live.

The truth is the crisis we face today did not happen overnight. It is the result of nearly a decade of weakened laws under the former Labor government. The decision to remove breach of bail as an offence, to make detention as a last resort even for violent youth offenders and to prioritise the rights of offenders over those victims has left communities across the state vulnerable. Under Labor, more than 46,000 proven offences were committed by young people last year alone. That represents a 12 per cent increase in just 12 months and is nearly double what it was a decade ago.

People in Pumicestone and across Queensland have had enough. That is why the Crisafulli government was elected with a clear mandate to act, and that is exactly what we are doing. This bill expands on the first tranche of reforms we introduced in December 2024. It adds 20 new serious offences to the list that attract adult penalties. These include offences such as rape, attempted murder, kidnapping, sexual assault, arson, torture, trafficking in dangerous drugs and deliberately endangering police or damaging emergency vehicles while driving. The inclusion of these offences has not been made lightly. An independent expert legal panel, made up of experienced professionals, law enforcement and victim advocacy representatives, has carefully considered each offence based on the harm it causes, the risks to the community and the seriousness of the behaviour involved.

These amendments are not about punishing children indiscriminately. They are about restoring balance. They ensure that where a young person commits a crime that has devastating consequences the court has the authority to impose a sentence that reflects the gravity of the offence. The aim is accountability, not vengeance. The aim is community safety.

The bill also introduces a small but important change to the Youth Justice Act, allowing registered victims to nominate someone else to receive sensitive information on their behalf. This respects the needs of victims who may find it difficult to receive triggering updates but who still want to be informed through a trusted support person. A technical amendment is also included to ensure the act is consistent following the repeal of section 378 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act.

This government understands that prevention is just as important as enforcement. Alongside these tougher laws, we have begun rolling out early intervention initiatives to help young people find a better path. The first round of Kickstarter grants has closed, and programs like Staying on Track and Regional Reset are progressing. These efforts aim to address the root causes of youth offending and reduce the number of future victims. Make no mistake: for those who commit serious and violent crimes, there must be consequences. This bill ensures that courts are no longer constrained, that the community's expectations are met and that young people who commit adult crimes can face adult penalties.

In Pumicestone, I have heard stories from locals whose lives have been turned upside down—people who have had their homes broken into while they were sleeping, young families whose cars have been stolen from their driveways, and local businesses who feel they have become targets. It is a sad reality that too many in our community know this experience firsthand. While we are beginning to see encouraging signs across the state, with robbery down more than 15 per cent, unlawful entry down 11 per cent and stolen vehicles down over eight per cent compared to this time last year, we know there is more work to do. This change will not happen overnight, but this bill is another step towards making Queensland safer.

Victims deserve to be heard. They deserve justice. They deserve a system that puts their rights and safety at the forefront. With this bill, we take another important step in repairing the damage caused by a decade of neglect and in restoring confidence in our justice system. I commend the bill to the House.