



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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YOUTH JUSTICE (ELECTRONIC MONITORING) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Miss DOOLAN** (Pumicestone—LNP) (5.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025. This bill is about restoring community safety, reducing reoffending and giving courts the tools they need to stop the revolving door of youth crime that has left too many Queenslanders feeling unsafe in their own homes.

This issue is not abstract in the Pumicestone electorate. It is real, it is daily and it is personal. Across Bribie Island, Caboolture, Beachmere and Donnybrook families tell me the same thing again and again: they are tired, they are anxious and they want to feel safe where they live. They lock their doors earlier, they hesitate before opening the garage and they worry when their kids walk to the bus stop. This bill responds directly to those concerns.

The former Labor government introduced electronic monitoring as a trial in 2021. It was narrow, restrictive and ultimately ineffective. In the first year only four youth offenders were placed on an electronic monitoring device—four. That is not a serious response to a youth crime crisis. Labor was warned from the outset that the cohort would be too small to evaluate the trial properly. They ignored these warnings. They extended the trial, tinkered around the edges and still failed to make it permanent, statewide or workable. The result was predictable: confusion on the ground, missed alerts, frontline workers left without clarity and communities left without confidence.

This government has done what Labor failed to do. We looked at the evidence, commissioned an independent evaluation and acted on the findings. That evaluation found that when a youth offender was wearing an electronic monitoring device they were 24 per cent less likely to reoffend. That is one in four fewer kids committing another crime while on bail. That is one in four fewer victims. The data is clear: youth wearing electronic monitoring devices completed their bail conditions at a rate of 72 per cent. They committed fewer offences involving victims. They were easier to monitor, easier to manage and more likely to comply, particularly when paired with proper bail support services. Importantly, the evaluation also told us something else: young people themselves said electronic monitoring changed their behaviour. They said it made them think twice. It reduced contact with peers who encouraged offending. It acted as a physical reminder that bail conditions mattered.

This bill takes those findings and turns them into action. It does four critical things. First, it makes electronic monitoring permanent by removing the sunset clause. Second, it makes electronic monitoring statewide so community safety does not depend on postcode. Third, it removes restrictive eligibility criteria, including age limits, so courts can apply this to where it is appropriate including for first-time offenders. Fourth, it simplifies the matters a court must consider, giving magistrates clarity and discretion rather than tying their hands.

Let me be very clear: this bill does not replace detention. If a youth offender should be in detention, they will be. This is about what happens when a court decides bail is appropriate. It ensures bail has meaning, it ensures compliance is monitored and it ensures breaches have consequences.

In Pumicestone we have seen what happens when bail conditions lack credibility. Communities in my electorate have raised concerns about the small group of repeat offenders cycling through arrest, bail and reoffending, sometimes within days. Small business owners on Bribie Island tell me how vandalism and theft affect not just their bottom line but their sense of security. Seniors across Pumicestone tell me they are frightened to live alone. This bill gives courts a middle ground between unsupervised bail and detention—a measured accountability tool that protects the community while giving young people a chance to comply.

Community safety and rehabilitation are not opposing goals. They are actually two sides of the same coin. That is why this government is backing these reforms with the largest investment in bail support services in a decade: \$44.3 million over four years. This is why we have invested \$75 million to save and expand youth co-responder teams statewide. That is why we are delivering \$90 million for specialised crime prevention and youth justice schools, so disengaged young people are not left on the streets but are re-engaged in education, training and employment. Because the evidence is clear electronic monitoring works best when paired with support, this bill ensures accountability but also ensures opportunity.

Victims must be at the centre of this debate. Too often the voices of victims are drowned out by ideology. However, victims in Pumicestone, like victims across Queensland, want balance. They want early intervention. They want rehabilitation, but they also want to know that the justice system takes their safety seriously. As one victim advocate told the committee, electronic monitoring is not punitive; it is preventative. It reduces the number of victims, it restores confidence in the system and it reassures communities that risks are being actively managed.

The Crisafulli government was elected with a clear mandate to take youth crime seriously and to restore safety where people live. We make no apology for delivering some of the strongest youth bail monitoring laws in the country. Already we are seeing results with a reduction in victims of crime across Queensland. With this bill, we will continue to head in the right direction. This legislation is firm, it is fair and it is evidence-based. For communities like Pumicestone, it is overdue. I commend the bill to the House.