



Speech By
Bree James

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 17 September 2025

MOTION

No Confidence in Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services

 **Ms JAMES** (Barron River—LNP) (6.17 pm): I rise to support the amendment moved by the member for Whitsunday. The member for Gladstone spent a lot of time talking about chicken, but I think the only chickens here are the Labor Party, who refused to do anything about youth crime for a decade. The vote of no confidence that we will talk about now is the vote of no confidence that Queenslanders gave the Labor Party when they showed Labor the door in '24.

It is no secret that crime is one of the biggest issues facing Far North Queensland, and those opposite said it was a media beat-up. Those opposite said, 'Let's make detention a last resort,' and now we have serious repeat youth offenders in our regions, especially in Far North Queensland. Crime impacts our region in Far North Queensland daily. Hardworking people have their cars stolen. Small businesses suffer countless acts of theft, vandalism and loss of business due to crime. Kids have their bikes stolen, their scooters stolen and their mobile phones stolen on their way to school. Women have their bags and their cars stolen while they are simply walking to their cars with their groceries.

Those opposite do not like talking about crime. Those opposite believe that youth crime was a media beat-up. Those opposite, including the member for Cairns, voted for detention to be a last resort. The member for Cairns could not even turn up to a youth crime crisis rally that was held in Cairns. Our community was hurting significantly after a husband and wife had the most horrific crime occur to them in the middle of the night. That still has our community hurting. Who turned up with me? The member for Mulgrave. Who turned up for me? The Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services. Who turned up for me and the community of Cairns? The Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety. Who turned up from that side? No-one.

The Far North community is hurting. My community loudly shares this pain and my community has been begging for things to change. These pleas fell on deaf ears with the previous Labor government. Unlike those opposite, our government is listening, acting and delivering and we have been doing so for the last 10 months. During my short 10 months in this chamber I have spoken many times about crime impacting Cairns. It is the biggest thing hurting our region. During the election we said we would put through the first tranche of Adult Crime, Adult Time before Christmas. We then put through the second tranche as well.

Last year the member for Cairns said he did not think we should be locking up kids. A decade ago he voted for detention to be a last resort, and that is why we have the crime crisis in Cairns and the crime epidemic. We are still a long way from getting this crime crisis under control. We will continue to support early intervention, rehabilitation and diversion programs, but not at the cost of community safety and not at the cost of justice for victims.

Those opposite would rather talk about staffing drama than talk about falling victim numbers because they cannot attack the results. It shows that, when the LNP are delivering reform, the opposition tries to distract with gossip. They are raising claims about staff turnover not because they care about staff—they seriously do not because they have ruined so many small businesses—but because they want to undermine someone who is getting real outcomes. If they cannot challenge the record, they try to challenge the person. Attacking someone's credibility is often the fallback.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members. The level of noise is too high—from all sides.

Ms JAMES: Attacking someone's credibility is often the fallback when you cannot attack their results. Before entering parliament the minister was a lawyer. She worked as a federal prosecutor. She has a strong understanding of legal, justice and safety issues. Her important role combines youth justice, victims' rights and corrective services, and she has one of the heaviest portfolios with high demands and high stakes. Her ministerial charter letter explicitly tasks her with delivering on restoring community safety, putting victims front and centre, ensuring early intervention and rehabilitation, and enacting laws that align with the community's expectations of consequences for actions and protecting our community.

This side of the chamber works every single day to restore safety for Queenslanders. Those opposite cannot challenge the record, so they are trying to challenge the person. That tells us we are well and truly on track. We have been doing lots. In Cairns I am really excited about the \$40 million youth justice schools we are introducing—one in Cairns and one in South-East Queensland. We have a \$560 million investment in new early intervention, crime prevention and rehabilitation programs. I cannot wait to see those delivered in Cairns.