




Speech By
Bryson Head

MEMBER FOR CALLIDE

Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2025

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

 **Mr HEAD** (Callide—LNP) (7.45 pm): Every Queenslander deserves to feel safe in their own home. The LNP believes that. What is telling are the actions of Labor over the years, which suggest that they well and truly do not. As promised, the Crisafulli government enacted the first instalment of the Making Queensland Safer Laws in December last year. At that time we made it clear it was the first step of many in a long journey.

This legislation is yet another step in delivering Adult Crime, Adult Time and tackling Labor's youth crime crisis. Over the last 10 years Queenslanders saw, time and again, the former Labor government weaken the Youth Justice Act, resulting in a youth crime crisis and a generation of hardcore repeat youth offenders. ABS data from 2023-24 shows that Queenslanders saw a 98 per cent increase in offences by young people in the previous decade.

While the former Labor government turned a blind eye and gave misleading information about the extent of the youth crime crisis, the Crisafulli government, in contrast, have enlisted the Expert Legal Panel. Its focus is prioritising community safety, strengthening outcomes for victims and building community confidence in the justice system. This panel's work and advice remains ongoing. It will continue to review youth crime data and statistics, engage in stakeholder and sector service consultation, analyse current legislation and reference harm indexes.

From the advice provided by this panel, as promised, we have now made further amendments to the Making Queensland Safer Laws to include an additional 20 offences, including attempted offences, that can now attract adult penalties. Meanwhile, we have seen many games played by those opposite, who continue to bury their heads in the sand as to how they failed Queenslanders.

Mr Crandon: They're in denial.

Mr HEAD: I take that interjection—they are absolutely in denial. The impact to victims of crime is long-lasting and life-changing. As a result, the Crisafulli government will continue to take a tough stance on youth crime to restore community safety and reduce the number of victims of crime. The Community Justice Action Group speaks in favour of these changes, extending its gratitude for the—

... progressive decision to adopt adult penalties for adult crimes within the youth justice framework.

...

It signals a real commitment to balancing accountability, rehabilitation and community safety, cornerstones of effective justice reform.

As mentioned by the Attorney-General in this House previously, we have given the judiciary the tools to impose sentences that meet community expectations. The Attorney-General, who I might add is doing an excellent job, recently shared quotes from a magistrate sentencing a youth offender who said—

... having more consequences is really what is meant by holding you to account ...

Another, in relation to our laws, said—

You have provided me opportunity to send a very clear message to those children ...

We have seen news headlines like that in the *Cairns Post*, which has also been mentioned by the Attorney-General previously—‘New laws catch teenage thief out’. The article was about a young offender involved in 50 stolen car offences, and to quote the magistrate who is now able to see the youth criminal’s history—

There is ... a level of immaturity in your offending because you think you can do what you please, because you have not been subject to the adult sentencing world ...

These laws change that. The *Townsville Bulletin* reported on a teenage ram raider who lost his appeal as the judge backed in these new laws. It is encouraging to see the green shoots emerging since the LNP came to power and since the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws were introduced.

We know there is a lot more work to do. We make no apology for putting the rights of victims before the rights of offenders. There is still a lot more work to do, but we will continue to strengthen these youth crime laws after a decade of Labor’s youth crime crisis. People deserve to feel safe in their own homes and it should be the utmost priority of government to deliver that. That is what the new LNP government, under Premier David Crisafulli, is doing. I commend the bill to the House.