




Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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**YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICES) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.53 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025. I know that many members are making a genuine contribution to this debate, but I was just saying to the Treasurer and the member for Lockyer that some of the contributions from those opposite remind me of collective African trypanosomiasis which is transmitted by the tsetse fly. It is a parasitic protozoan disease. The reason I raise this is that it is almost like the Labor opposition here in Queensland have forgotten that there has been a Labor youth crime crisis that has been burning out of control right across Queensland and there are many measures that need to be put in place to deal with that and they have not done that.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Dr ROWAN:** I hear members opposite interjecting—those former ministers and members who failed Queensland in relation to the youth crime crisis which has burned out of control across Queensland. There are many measures that have been put in place that will continue to be put in place, and there will be more measures put in place as well to deal with not only youth crime but also recidivist offenders, prevention, rehabilitation and education—a comprehensive suite of strategies to deal with 10 years of failure by the Labor government here in Queensland.

Introduced on 20 February 2025 by the Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services, the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025 was subsequently referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for consideration. As articulated by the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee in its tabled report No. 6, the primary objective of this legislation is to extend for 12 months the expiry of section 52AA of the Youth Justice Act 1992. It is section 52AA of the Youth Justice Act which allows a court, in certain circumstances, to impose the use of an electronic monitoring device as a condition of bail for a child.

I note that, having received both written and oral briefings from the department of youth justice, written public submissions as well as evidence from stakeholders at a public hearing, the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee was satisfied that this legislation gives sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals and the institution of parliament as required by the Legislative Standards Act 1992. Further, the committee was satisfied that the bill is compatible with human rights as defined in the Human Rights Act 2019. Accordingly, the committee in its report made one recommendation—that is, that the bill be passed.

The Crisafulli Liberal National Party government's extension of the electronic monitoring trial for youth offenders demonstrates responsible and decisive action to ensure that Queensland has the necessary data to conduct a meaningful and comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of electronic monitoring as a condition of bail. That is a very important consideration in Queensland—that there is meaningful data and a meaningful evaluation with respect to electronic monitoring. The Crisafulli

LNP state government is having to act where the previous Labor state government failed time and again to properly implement a comprehensive electronic monitoring program, leaving Queenslanders vulnerable to the consequences of repeat youth offending.

Central to this legislation is the extension of the current trial of electronic monitoring as a bail condition for certain youth offenders by 12 months, setting a new expiry date to 30 April 2026. This extension is important as it will provide the necessary time for a detailed and thorough review—one that is grounded in evidence and not in political convenience. By way of background and with respect to the electronic monitoring framework, a youth offender must meet the following conditions to be granted bail with an electronic monitoring condition. The youth offender must: be at least 15 years old; be charged with a prescribed indictable offence; have been previously either found guilty of at least one indictable offence or charged with an unrelated prescribed indictable offence in the preceding 12 months; and consent to wearing the electronic monitoring device.

The Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government is determined to ensure that a meaningful and comprehensive evaluation of this initiative can take place, and to do that you have to ensure there is sufficient quantity and quality of data. It is what any good government would do, and for that the Crisafulli LNP state government makes no apologies. Unlike the former Labor state government's rushed changes and previous mistakes, the LNP state government is committed to conducting a thorough review because Queensland has already begun to see the potential of electronic monitoring when it is applied correctly. It has the ability to reduce reoffending, provide offenders with an opportunity to re-engage with education or employment and ultimately improve community safety.

It must be said that the electronic monitoring trial has had a long and complicated history which has been consistently marked by abysmal failures from the former Labor state government. When electronic monitoring was first introduced as a two-year trial in 2021, it was doomed from the outset due to the former Labor state government's poor design and implementation. It failed to capture enough youth offenders to even complete a meaningful evaluation. As was often the case during Labor's time in power, the Liberal National Party warned the former Labor government that their approach was inadequate, but in typical fashion the former Labor state government refused to listen.

Labor's own review of the 2021 trial was a dismal failure. It could not even confirm the effectiveness of electronic monitoring in deterring offending behaviour because not enough youth offenders were ordered to wear electronic monitoring devices as a condition of their bail. It was an embarrassing debacle, yet the former Labor state government persisted in its ineffective and illogical approach. As we know, by 2023, when it became irrefutable that Labor's first attempt was a failure, the former Labor government extended the trial for another two years and made what can only be described as minor, piecemeal changes. True to form, Labor's approach failed to make any meaningful impact.

Incredibly, in a rare public rebuke, the then police commissioner, Katarina Carroll, in February of last year actually called out Labor's failures, urging the former Labor state government to re-examine electronic monitoring for youth offenders, stating—

I do think electronic monitoring devices do need to be re-looked at ... We spend an extraordinary amount of time checking on youth offenders that are on bail. And that is only a point in time—whereas electronic monitoring devices are constant. We're not of the view that every child should have an electronic monitoring device—we're talking about ... serious offending.

...

We look at all the tools that we can have to make the community safer to make sure that we stop reoffending. These are one of the preventive measures. I've already spoken to the minister so that we revisit what is happening in this space.

In effect, the writing was on the wall, yet the former Labor state government, desperate to appear as if they were taking action, responded in August 2024 by amending the Youth Justice (Monitoring Device Conditions) Regulation. These changes by Labor added further trial locations and made adjustments to the parameters yet again. Importantly, the former Labor state government deliberately chose to alter the trial and expand the parameters, but did nothing to extend the timeline to ensure a full and proper evaluation. Expanding the parameters of the trial without extending the trial period meant that there was never going to be enough time for a meaningful and comprehensive evaluation. It was a deliberate oversight—one that put political expediency over public safety.

**Ms Grace:** Wrap it up.

**Dr ROWAN:** Again, when those members opposite interject, they fail to listen to their legacy, a legacy of harm that has been caused to Queenslanders, harm that has been caused by their youth crime crisis here in Queensland. Labor still does not accept the fact that Queenslanders judged them and judged them decisively at the last state election. That is why they continue to not listen to the evidence which happens there. In stark contrast, the Crisafulli LNP government is committed to restoring safety in our communities and reducing victims of crime—

**Ms Grace:** You can come back. Come on, wrap it up.

**Dr ROWAN:** I hear again the shadow minister saying, 'Wrap it up'—

**Ms Grace:** Yeah, come on. It's lunchtime. You can come back.

**Dr ROWAN:**—because the shadow minister does not want to hear the failure under the shadow minister—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Marr): Excuse me, members. It is my call. There is one minute and 46 seconds to go. Minister, you have the call.

**Dr ROWAN:** The shadow minister opposite is continuing to interject and wants to wrap it up because she does not want to have the changes here in Queensland when it comes to the youth crime crisis. I say to the member for McConnel: apologise to the people of Queensland. Apologise to those who have been the victims of crime here in Queensland, those who have been the victims of youth crime—youth crime created by the former Labor government. They are all sitting there opposite, all denying it. As I said in my earlier contribution, it is like having a collective case of African trypanosomiasis sleeping sickness which is infecting all of them right across there.

**Ms Grace:** Relevance!

**Dr ROWAN:** It is a real tragedy to see here—a once great Labor Party in Queensland, on the decline. They are complete deniers when it comes to all of the crime crisis—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I have made the decision to go to the end of the time on the clock. Please, if you could just give us the decency of getting there, or I will continue to stand up and make it longer.

**Dr ROWAN:** I was saying in relation to those Labor members opposite denying their own youth crime crisis here in Queensland, the Liberal National Party state government will continue to implement measures to clean up Labor's mess across the board, whether that is matters to do with this legislation or other measures also investing in prevention, rehabilitation and education programs. We know that is vitally important for community safety. As such this is important legislation—

**Ms Grace:** You haven't done any.

**Dr ROWAN:** I know the shadow minister, the member for McConnel, does not like to hear it, but the reality is this is Labor's youth crime crisis. We will clean it up. We will do that on behalf of Queenslanders. We will restore community safety. The Labor opposition has done nothing when it comes to trying to rebuild after their devastating election loss. We know they are in pain. We know they are hurting. We know they are divided—

**Ms GRACE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

**Dr ROWAN:**—and I commend the bill to the House.