




Speech By
Hon. Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Child Protection

 **Hon. DG PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (9.56 am): Labor has failed our most vulnerable—our children—and in doing that they have failed all Queenslanders. Those opposite created the youth crime crisis and then denied it existed. They oversaw the declining child safety system and did nothing to fix it. As the Premier articulated earlier, in December 2015 there were 650 children living in residential care and almost a decade later that number has exploded to more than 2,200, including 116 children aged five and under. They are young Queenslanders who do not have a parent or guardian willing or able to care for them. Labor has failed them.

Overwhelmingly, we see children in care end up in the youth justice system. The latest data shows that in Queensland there are 388 serious repeat offenders aged between 10 and 17 years, with 111 of those subjected to a child protection order and living in out-of-home care. The statistics show serious repeat offenders are responsible for the majority of youth crime. Those serious repeat offenders are the product of Labor's weak laws and a crumbling child safety system. This has not happened overnight. The child safety system in Queensland is in crisis.

In my maiden speech I said—

We all think that victims should be our priority over criminals. We all think that where children are not being afforded love and protection from their own families they should be protected by the state, but we need to think harder, do better at developing and implementing policies that achieve those undisputed ideals.

The Crisafulli government is committed to doing better, protecting our children and breaking the cycle of crime. I thank the minister for her tireless work uncovering critical system failures leading to the commission of inquiry into the child safety system.

The front page of this morning's paper reveals the depth of the problem that the state now faces. While Labor devoted its energies to repealing our breach of bail provisions and rejecting our attempts to reintroduce them, it was helping create a generation of untouchables—repeat offenders for whom there were no consequences for actions. We are committed to breaking the cycle of crime that Labor fostered. I am amazed that ministers of the former government who remain in this House and who had responsibility for the welfare of children, such as the member for Waterford and the member for Bulimba, sat idly by while our children and Queenslanders suffered. That approach is completely contrary to what this government believes. Reform is vital and we have demonstrated that we are prepared to change laws and processes to ensure community safety and the protection of our most vulnerable Queenslanders remain our top priorities.