




Speech By
David Lee

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

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

 **Mr LEE** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (5.23 pm): I rise to speak to the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025. This is the second tranche of our Making Queensland Safer Laws, and it comes after a decade of Labor's crime crisis and chaos. The youth crime epidemic started when Labor systematically weakened the youth justice laws in 2015 by removing detention as a last resort and by abolishing breach of bail as an offence. Labor's youth crime recalcitrance has given rise to a generation of serious repeat offenders. A 2023 Queensland Audit Office report titled *Reducing serious youth crime* highlights a 64 per cent increase in the average daily number of repeat offenders from 2019 to 2023. In 2023, 55 per cent of all youth crime in Queensland was committed by serious repeat offenders.

In 2023, under Labor, there were nearly 300,000 victims of crime in Queensland. These are Queenslanders who have been victims of assault or had their homes broken into or their cars stolen—yet some former Queensland Labor members arrogantly mischaracterised the youth crime crisis as a 'media beat-up'. The *Crime report, Queensland, 2023-24* stated—

... the most prevalent age of offenders (not individuals) was 15 years, comprising 12,268 offenders proceeded against by police in 2023-24.

...

One in two offenders proceeded against for unlawful entry or unlawful use of motor vehicle offences in 2023-2024 was aged 10-17 years.

It should come as no surprise that Labor hastily retreated from their five-word slogan 'keeping us safe and strong' when my Hervey Bay community and Queenslanders no longer felt safe in their homes and businesses, yet Labor's far left-leaning defiant and obstinate refusal to prioritise the rights of victims over the rights of offenders remains entrenched. We are not afraid, on this side of the House, to stand up for the victims before the rights of offenders. This next stage of the Making Queensland Safer Laws continues to deliver on our election commitment to stem Labor's youth crime crisis and to restore community safety. This is just the beginning. It takes time to reverse Labor's youth crime crisis, but we remain resolutely committed to restoring safety where my Hervey Bay community and Queenslanders live and work.

On 13 December 2024, the Legislative Assembly passed the Making Queensland Safer Act 2024 and introduced the Adult Crime, Adult Time sentencing scheme into the Youth Justice Act. This is for 13 specified offences and the Making Queensland Safer Act changed the status of the eligible persons register to be an opt-out scheme for eligible victims to receive updates regarding a youth offender's custody movements. The Adult Crime, Adult Time sentencing scheme introduced by the Making Queensland Safer Act provides that young offenders convicted of prescribed offences are liable to be sentenced to the maximum, minimum and mandatory non-parole periods as adults for the same offence. This second tranche bill proposes to amend the Youth Justice Act 1992 to firstly include an

additional 20 offences to the Adult Crime, Adult Time sentencing scheme, as recommended by the Expert Legal Panel. This includes offences like stealing of a vehicle, arson, torture, deprivation of liberty, kidnapping, rape and attempted murder. An expert legal panel recommended these offences for consideration by the government be included in the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws. In assessing offences, the main aspects considered by the panel included: the seriousness of the offence; whether the offence involved the use of violence or was likely to create conditions in which serious harm was caused; and offences which might involve a risk of serious consequences to the victim or the community.

This important work is ongoing. This bill furthermore provides an option for victims on the eligible persons register to request that another person receive information on their behalf about the custody movements of a young offender and, finally, removes a reference to a repealed section of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000.

This bill inserts the proposed 20 offences into section 175A of the Youth Justice Act. Section 175A of the Youth Justice Act sets out the sentencing orders applicable to young offenders in relation to the prescribed significant offences to which adult penalties apply. This bill, as I said, provides an additional 20 new serious offences that will be added to the 13 existing serious offences set out in section 175A(1) which were originally introduced into the Making Queensland Safer Act.

Queensland Labor pontificates about the importance of evidence-based policy when there is overwhelming evidence that its weak youth justice laws were an abysmal failure. Just ask the victims of crime who have lost their loved ones. Queenslanders backed the Making Queensland Safer Laws after a decade of an inept Palaszczuk-Miles government that was more concerned about the rights of youth justice perpetrators than the victims of heinous crimes. The LNP is standing up for the rights of victims and is committed to making my Hervey Bay and Queensland communities safer.

The Queensland Victims' Commissioner has said—

Victims have told us clearly that they want accountability. They want the harm they have experienced to be recognised and prioritised in sentencing and they want assurances that their voices will be heard in courtrooms. This is their right.

On this side of the House we make no apology for standing up for the families of victims in my Fraser Coast community such as Michale Chandler, Kelsie Davies, Sheree Robertson, Scott Cabrie and the many other Queensland victims of Labor's weak youth justice laws.

The Crisafulli government is also committed to backing in our hardworking Queensland Police Service with the resources to enforce our Making Queensland Safer Laws. In just 200 days the Crisafulli government has increased our QPS front line by 240 personnel. Our QPS are under incredible pressure after Labor's incompetence saw the QPS front line disgracefully increased by only 175 officers over four years.

We are resolutely committed to breaking the cycle of youth crime through substantial investment in early intervention and rehabilitation programs. It beggars belief that the shadow attorney-general just this evening would naively suggest that more money has gone into Adult Crime, Adult Time advertising than into youth crime prevention. Tenders have now closed for our \$175 million Staying on Track program, \$50 million for Regional Reset and round 1 of the Kickstarter program, which is part of our \$100 million commitment. We are also committed to giving our children the best chance in life by restoring Labor's broken residential child safety system. That is why we announced a commission of inquiry into Queensland's broken child safety system. I commend the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill to the House.