




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICES) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BAROUNIS** (Maryborough—LNP) (5.07 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025—a crucial piece of legislation aimed at creating a more effective and rehabilitative approach to managing young offenders within our justice system. The primary objective of the bill is to expand the use of electronic monitoring devices for young offenders who are on parole, serving community-based sentences or released under supervision. It acknowledges that many young offenders have the potential to be rehabilitated, but that requires not only supervision but also appropriate support. That is where technology plays a critical role in ensuring compliance with court conditions.

Under the previous Labor government, a trial was conducted where only five youth offenders had electronic monitoring orders imposed in the first year, despite rising youth crime rates. After extending the trial for another two years, only 36 monitoring orders were issued but youth crime continued to rise. Clearly, there was a lack of commitment to reducing youth crime. However, under the Crisafulli LNP government we have seen a shift. Recent statistics show that youth crime is down, and the use of monitoring devices is proving effective in helping to prevent youth from committing further crimes while on bail. These positive trends indicate that we are heading in the right direction.

In my electorate of Maryborough, the community is still reeling from a tragic event two years ago when a 13-year-old stole a car and caused a collision that killed three innocent women and severely injured another one. Could this have been prevented? I would say yes. The punishment handed down left my community feeling that the justice system had failed to deliver a fair response to such a severe crime. This is exactly why the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025 is so important. It provides a more constructive, rehabilitative alternative to incarceration, giving young offenders the chance to remain in their communities where they can receive family support, education and other critical services while still being held accountable for their actions.

By using electronic monitoring, we can ensure public safety while giving young people a chance to reform outside the isolating environment of detention. This bill also offers an holistic approach by integrating critical support services alongside monitoring services. Young offenders will have access to mental health services, educational programs and family counselling services that are essential to rehabilitation. This ensures that young people not only comply with the conditions of their release but are also actively working to build a better future.

The bill provides greater flexibility for judges, allowing them to tailor sentences to the specific needs of each offender. Courts will be able to impose monitoring devices as part of a broader set of measures, ensuring a personalised response to youth crime rather than applying a one-size-fits-all solution. Clear guidelines will be established for the use of monitoring devices, ensuring they are used appropriately and with respect to the young person's rights. There will also be ongoing oversight to assess the effectiveness of these devices and ensure they are contributing to rehabilitation. For the broader community, this bill strikes an important balance between public safety and rehabilitation.

Long-term incarceration for young offenders does not always lead to positive outcomes. By keeping them under supervision with support services within their communities, we can reduce the risk of youth committing future crimes.

In conclusion, the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025 represents a progressive step towards a more balanced and rehabilitative youth justice system. It ensures accountability through electronic monitoring while integrating support services that provide young offenders with the tools they need to turn their lives around. I fully support this bill and believe it will make a significant difference in how we approach youth crime and rehabilitation. I commend the bill to the House.