




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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

 **Mr BAROUNIS** (Maryborough—LNP) (9.40 pm): I rise today to speak in strong support of the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025. I can confidently say, this legislation could not be happening at a better time than right here, right now. Queenslanders have had enough. For too long they have lived under the shadow of weak, misguided laws that failed to hold youth offenders to account. Under the previous Labor government, we witnessed a systemic dismantling of the Youth Justice Act—amendments that prioritised the rights of offenders over the rights of victims. These changes included: making detention a last resort in sentencing; abolishing breach of bail as an offence; and placing the wellbeing of offenders ahead of the safety of everyday Queenslanders. In my electorate, residents did not feel like offenders were the ones detained. Instead, they felt like they were—forced to lock themselves in their homes and in their businesses, scared of being broken into. That is not justice; that is fear, and that is not fair at all. The result of Labor's soft-on-crime approach was a youth crime crisis of epic proportions—a generation of repeat hardcore offenders who openly declared, 'I know my rights'—but what rights did victims have? Where was their protection? Where was their peace of mind?

It was not until 26 October 2024 that this began to change. That was the day the new LNP Crisafulli government got to work, immediately shifting the focus from protecting offenders to protecting victims. The first phase of Adult Crime, Adult Time laws were introduced swiftly and now, only months later, we are delivering the second phase of this vital reform. This government is serious about protecting Queenslanders. We are focused, we are committed and we are restoring justice. Under Labor, the statistics were shocking. In the 2023-24 financial year there were 289,657 victims of youth crime in Queensland. That is 289,657 Queenslanders whose lives were disrupted, who were assaulted, whose homes were broken into and whose cars were stolen. While Labor stood in this place and told Queenslanders that youth crime was decreasing, the truth was the opposite. They knew it, and Queenslanders felt it.

Let me tell you about Sydney and his family, proud residents of Maryborough. Sydney is a car enthusiast, a generous community-minded man who opened his home to local youths with an interest in mechanics. He showed them how to restore old vehicles, even took them for rides in one of his cars. But these young people were not there to learn; they were scouting, taking advantage of a good man's generosity. In January 2024, under the cover of night, they stole one of Sydney's cherished vehicles. The car was recovered but no serious consequences followed. Just nine months later, they came back, broke into his home in the middle of the night, stole the same vehicle again, smashed through the gate and destroyed it. The car was written off and, to this day, Sydney cannot get it insured again. This is what victims were facing under the previous Labor government—no real consequences for repeat offenders, no peace of mind and no justice. But now, thanks to the Adult Crime, Adult Time reforms, there are consequences. Sydney, and families like his, can begin to have confidence again that the law

is on their side. In the lead-up to the election Premier David Crisafulli visited Sydney and promised that should the LNP form government this will change, and he delivered. Today Sydney knows that if these young criminals try it again they will not get a slap on the wrist, there will be a real punishment.

The impact of these reforms is already being felt. Under Labor, youth crime skyrocketed. In the 2023-24 financial year, the ABS reported: 46,100 finalised proven offences by young people—a 12 per cent increase on the previous year; a 51 per cent increase over five years; and a 98 per cent increase over the last decade. All of this happened under Labor but now, under this new government, we are seeing early signs of real change. Across Queensland from January to April 2025, compared to the same time the previous year, we have seen: an 8.45 per cent reduction in stolen cars; an 11.52 per cent reduction in unlawful entry; and a 15.47 per cent reduction in robberies. I am proud to report that in my own electorate of Maryborough we are seeing even stronger results: a 16.3 per cent reduction in stolen cars; and a 13.3 per cent reduction in unlawful entry. These are not just numbers—they are lives impacted, families feeling safer and communities regaining hope.

This bill, the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025, is already working. It is working not just in theory, not just on paper, but on the ground in towns like Maryborough and in communities right across Queensland. Yes, Adult Crime, Adult Time is working but we have more work to do. It will take a long time to fix Labor's 10 years of inaction. With continued legislative reform and community support, I believe Queensland can once again become a place where people feel safe in their homes, on their streets and in their lives. That is what the people of Queensland have asked for. This is what we promised and this is what we are delivering. I strongly commend the Making Queensland Safer (Adult Crime, Adult Time) Amendment Bill 2025 to the House. Thank you.