



Speech By  
**Hon. Laura Gerber**


**MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2025

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Parole Board**

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.49 am): The Crisafulli government made a pledge—to make Queensland safer, to act with integrity, to be accountable and to be honest with Queenslanders. We made a promise to Queenslanders to restore stability, integrity and accountability to the Parole Board. I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering on that promise.

The Parole Board play a vital role in the criminal justice system and in maintaining community safety. They have an enormous responsibility to make sure their decisions keep our community safe and to ensure that the board has strong leadership. Under the two former Labor ministers, the Parole Board had none of this. We have appointed Michael Woodford as the new President of Parole Board Queensland and I am confident that Mr Woodford is uniquely qualified to lead the board. The Crisafulli government made a promise to restore stability, integrity and accountability to the Parole Board and that is exactly what we are doing.

The Parole Board's decisions have a direct impact on whether communities remain safe or are placed at risk. If a prisoner on parole in the community fails to comply with their parole order or presents a risk to community safety, it is the board's responsibility to make a decision on whether to leave them in the community or return them to prison. Queenslanders need to have faith in the parole system; they need to have trust that their safety is not being compromised. Today we will be introducing a bill that gives the Parole Board the power to make decisions that protect community safety.

It has come to light that, where a single Parole Board member makes a decision to keep a parolee in the community after being asked by Queensland Corrective Services to consider revoking that prisoner's parole because of the risk to community and returning them to custody, there is no safeguard in the legislation to protect the community. The requirement in the act that a full board convene to review the decision of a single Parole Board member to keep the community safe is not there. Labor put this safeguard in for prisoners when they introduced this legislation, but they fundamentally failed to give this safeguard to the community.

Today, I will be introducing a bill to correct that glaring failure. We will empower the board to review all decisions made by an individual board member, whether that be to suspend a prisoner's parole and return them back to corrections or to leave them in the community, to protect the community. We will ensure a full multidisciplinary board can review these decisions. Our new laws mean greater scrutiny, better decision-making and, more importantly, safer communities. The question for those in opposition is: will they support this legislation that cleans up their mess? Will the former minister for corrections, the member for Pine Rivers, support this legislation that corrects the glaring error in the Parole Board act and the glaring error in the Corrective Services Act, that fails to provide a safeguard to the community but provides that same safeguard to prisoners?