




Speech By  
**Hon. Laura Gerber**  
**MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN**

---

Record of Proceedings, 10 December 2025

## **YOUTH JUSTICE (ELECTRONIC MONITORING) AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Introduction**

 **Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.49 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Youth Justice Regulation 2016 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Education, Arts and Communities Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025 [1982](#).

*Tabled paper:* Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025, explanatory notes [1983](#).

*Tabled paper:* Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025, statement of compatibility with human rights [1984](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Youth Justice (Electronic Monitoring) Amendment Bill 2025. This bill represents a further step in the Crisafulli government's unwavering commitment to restoring safety where Queenslanders live, putting the rights of victims first and delivering the consequences and accountability Queenslanders expect from our youth justice system.

Today the Crisafulli government is introducing some of the strongest youth bail monitoring laws in the country. We always said that we would continue to strengthen Queensland's youth crime laws and that there would be further changes to the Youth Justice Act, and that is exactly what we are delivering. This is about reducing reoffending and making Queensland safer.

This bill will give courts the power to order an electronic monitoring device on any youth given bail. It removes Labor's legislative limitations that hamstrung the courts and meant only a small cohort of youth offenders were able to be electronically monitored, and it makes electronic monitoring permanent and statewide. We are giving courts the power they need to impose a GPS monitoring device on any youth given bail—that is, any youth aged 10 to 17 years old—including first-time youth offenders who are released on bail by the courts. Let me be very clear: if a youth offender poses an unacceptable risk to community safety, they should be remanded in custody. Where the courts have made the decision to grant a youth bail, this bill allows the courts to also order that that youth wear an electronic monitoring device, where appropriate.

These changes are guided by our government's commitment to fewer victims of crime, safer communities and a youth justice system that delivers consequences for actions. We are a government that listens to Queenslanders, and Queenslanders have been very clear with us: they want stronger protections from youth criminals, they want offenders to be held accountable and they want a justice system that puts victims first. We are listening to Queenslanders, and that is why we are delivering these tough new youth bail monitoring laws.

To understand the significance of the reforms we are introducing today, it is important to acknowledge the system we inherited. For almost a decade, Labor systematically weakened our youth crime laws, made detention a last resort, abolished breach of bail as an offence, and closed the

Childrens Court to victims, their families and the media. The decisions Labor made had real-world consequences. They meant courts were constrained, consequences for actions were missing from the youth justice system and victims and their families were left feeling unseen and unprotected.

The consequences of Labor's weak-on-crime laws and soft approach to youth offenders were brought into devastating clarity time and time again. Queenslanders will never forget the tragic loss of Matthew Field, Kate Leadbetter and their unborn son, Miles, on 26 January 2021. They were killed by a youth offender with an extensive rap sheet in a stolen car while he was on bail. Labor's weak bail laws allowed this. That tragedy shook Queensland, and in the weeks and months that followed Queenslanders called for stronger laws to ensure there were real consequences for actions for youth who continued to offend, real protections for communities and real action to prevent repeat offenders.

Labor's response was a heavily constrained trial of electronic monitoring for youth on bail, with a framework they designed to be so narrow and so restrictive that hardly any youth were ordered to wear an electronic monitoring device. In fact, in the first year of Labor's electronic monitoring trial only four youth offenders in the entire state were made to wear a GPS tracker. There were two in Townsville, one in Brisbane North and one in Logan—that was it. Labor's own interim evaluation in 2022 called out this failure, labelling the trial 'limited' and 'restrictive' and, because of this, failed to confirm the effectiveness of electronic monitoring because so few youth were ordered to wear one. This has been reiterated in the *Evaluation of the electronic monitoring trial: final report*, and I table that report.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Youth Justice and Victim Support: Report titled 'Evaluation of the Electronic Monitoring Trial: Final Report', 9 October 2025 [1985](#).

The independent evaluation described Labor's trial as deliberately narrow in design and found that when Labor's trial was commenced there was a 'lack of appropriate training and resources' and that Youth Justice staff 'received insufficient information about breaches and alerts'. The 2025 evaluation report also identified that Labor's trial was so rushed that it did not allow for the time needed to 'identify many workflows or processes' or work through issues to make it work.

The previous Labor government set electronic monitoring up to fail. In four years, Labor tinkered around the edges of the legislation with no meaningful intention to make it work, and they never made it permanent. Labor do not believe in strong youth crime laws and they do not believe in electronic monitoring. Even as community concern intensified, and even as frontline police publicly called for electronic monitoring reform, labelling it a 'very, very powerful tool' for supervising youth on bail, Labor still did not fix the underlying issues. Instead, Queenslanders were left with legislation that was kept in trial mode and never set up to succeed.

The Crisafulli government will always put victims first, and our strong youth bail monitoring laws will do exactly that. The evaluation report found that the majority of youth on electronic monitoring successfully completed the conditions of their bail. That means these youths did not have their bail revoked and their electronic monitoring condition only ended because they were sentenced, had their charges dismissed or had their bail conditions varied. This is a critical finding. It demonstrates that when electronic monitoring is used and supported by services and programs youth are more likely to comply with the conditions set by the court. It also demonstrates the value of electronic monitoring in reducing reoffending. The evaluation found that reoffending rates were lower for youths on electronic monitoring when compared to youths who were not. In fact, it said that youth with an electronic monitoring device on were 24 per cent less likely to reoffend.

The evaluation also captured the views of some of the youth on electronic monitoring conditions. They said that they changed their behaviour because they knew that if they offended they would be detected immediately, that wearing the device reduced their contact with peers who encouraged or facilitated their offending and that the device served as a reminder of their bail conditions and the consequences of breaching them.

One youth offender from Brisbane with a long history of reoffending and multiple failed interventions spent four months on electronic monitoring. During that time they committed no further offences, breached no conditions of their bail and engaged more consistently with Youth Justice than they had in years. A 15-year-old on the Gold Coast who had repeatedly cycled through detention and continuous community orders showed the same pattern. While monitored on electronic monitoring they did not reoffend, they did not breach bail and they displayed remarkably improved engagement with support services. In Logan, a youth with a history of property, vehicle, domestic violence and violent offences complied fully during their period of electronic monitoring and committed no new offences, despite facing 14 charges at the time. These stories reflect the benefits electronic monitoring can have for community safety and to prevent youth from reoffending.

The evaluation also showed that when breaches occurred the GPS devices sent an alert to the authorities. However, because of the way Labor set up their trial, the report uncovered that these alerts

were sometimes missed, duplicated or delayed. Under Labor, no-one knew what was going on, and community safety suffered.

Putting to one side the fact that the evaluation report is critical of the operation of the electronic monitoring trial under Labor, the report clearly shows that electronic monitoring as a community safety tool when done properly does work. In fact, the evaluation is unequivocal in its finding that electronic monitoring can improve compliance with bail conditions, better inform operational responses to breaches and reduce reoffending, especially when partnered with wraparound supports—and that is exactly what this bill will do.

Firstly, the bill amends section 52AA of the Youth Justice Act, making electronic monitoring permanent by removing the expiry provision. Secondly, the bill removes the limitations set out under section 52AA and allows for the use of electronic monitoring for any youth offender right across the state. Under the previous Labor government's trial, courts were only able to order electronic monitoring in specific and restricted locations, but under this bill courts will be able to consider it as a condition of bail statewide.

To give effect to this, the bill amends the Youth Justice Regulation 2016 to remove part 2A—the geographical areas for monitoring device condition; and schedule 1AA—the geographical area for a child to live in. Instead, clause 4 of the bill inserts a new subsection which requires the youth justice chief executive to advise the court that there are: services necessary to support the effective operation of the device—that is, suitable network coverage where the youth lives; services suitable to support the youth's compliance with the condition—that is, bail support services; and services suitable to support the monitoring of the youth.

Thirdly, the bill removes the restrictive eligibility criteria that require the youth to be at least 15 years of age, to be charged with a prescribed indictable offence and to have been previously charged with a prescribed indictable offence or found guilty of an indictable offence. This bill removes that criteria and empowers the courts to make an electronic monitoring order for any youth, so long as they live in a location where it is feasible. This brings electronic monitoring in line with other bail conditions.

Finally, the bill simplifies the matters which a court must consider when determining whether an electronic monitoring device condition is appropriate. Currently, the courts must consider a range of matters, including: the youth's capacity to understand the condition; whether the youth is likely to comply with the condition; and if anyone has indicated a willingness to support the youth and notify the court of any changes in circumstances or breaches of the conditions. The bill removes these requirements and replaces them so that the courts will only have to consider the suitability assessment report prepared by the youth justice chief executive. As with other bail conditions, the court retains the power to consider any other matter that the court deems relevant.

This bill delivers tough, new youth bail monitoring laws. It is a further step in the Crisafulli government's unwavering commitment to restoring safety where Queenslanders live, putting the rights of victims first and delivering the consequences and accountability Queenslanders expect from our youth justice system. These reforms will give Queenslanders some of the strongest youth bail monitoring laws in the country, and they are all part of our plan to reduce reoffending and return safety to Queensland communities. I commend the bill to the House.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. LJ GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Youth Justice and Victim Support and Minister for Corrective Services) (4.02 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### **Referral to Education, Arts and Communities Committee**

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Education, Arts and Communities Committee.