




Speech By
Hon. Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICES) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (Minister for Finance, Trade, Employment and Training) (4.51 pm): I rise to speak to the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025. I thank my colleague the member for Currumbin, Laura Gerber, for her incredible work in this area and again congratulate her on her election in the by-election, which I was instrumental in.

Mrs Gerber interjected.

Ms BATES: Exactly. I take that interjection.

The purpose of this bill is to extend the trial of electronic devices for one year to ensure a meaningful and comprehensive evaluation can be conducted and to fix another of Labor's failures—their youth crime crisis. The electronic monitoring trial has had a long and complicated history from its introduction for a two-year trial in 2021. The initial trial was absolutely abysmal. It failed to capture enough youth offenders for an evaluation to even be completed. In the first year of the trial's operation, only five youth offenders had an electronic monitoring order imposed as a condition of their bail. The LNP warned the former Labor government of this from the start. It would be remiss of me not to mention the member for Glass House—yet again—who raised the LNP's concerns in the committee hearing at the time, basically saying, 'How can you actually have meaningful data to base your decisions on if you do not have anybody in the cohort to count?' The LNP government is now fixing yet another one of Labor's failures.

Labor, of course, did not heed the warning of their own review in 2021. The trial failed to even confirm whether these electronic monitoring devices were effective in deterring offending behaviour because not enough offenders were ordered to wear them. These electronic devices were a condition of bail and yet people were not even wearing them. Members can imagine what the residents of Mudgeeraba thought about that. We finally had youth offenders in court. They were told to wear one of these devices and they did not put it on or could not be bothered putting it on. It was all too hard for Labor so that was the end of it.

Due to this failure, in 2023 the former Labor government had to extend their own trial for another two years because they did not have enough people to count. By extending the trial, the Crisafulli government is going to provide an opportunity to collect, analyse and review all of the data to inform how electronic monitoring conditions for youth offenders can be utilised to make sure that we keep our communities safe.

The Crisafulli government is committed to restoring safety in our communities and reducing victims of crime. By extending this electronic monitoring trial and allowing time to meaningfully and comprehensively review it, we are prioritising community safety first. It means that the courts will continue to have the option to make an electronic monitoring condition for youth offenders in our community. It will hopefully continue to help ease the pressure on our local police resources. I know how under the pump my police are at Mudgeeraba, Robina and Nerang. There are not enough of them. They are absolutely exhausted. They are very glad to see the back of the former Labor government.

The LNP wants to see this meaningful and comprehensive evaluation happen. The Crisafulli government will conduct a thorough review because we have seen the potential of electronic monitoring to reduce reoffending. We have seen from overseas that high-risk DV offenders should be fitted with these devices to make sure that women feel safe in the community. Electronic monitoring also provides offenders with an opportunity to re-engage with education or employment and improve community safety when it is applied correctly. This comprehensive review will inform government decisions about electronic monitoring for youth offenders. We make no apologies for doing what needs to be done to improve community safety and reduce victims of crime in this state.

I am so pleased to be part of a Crisafulli LNP government that is doing exactly what we said we would do before the election. The first tranche of our Making Queensland Safer Laws have already passed this place and the second tranche were introduced today. We will continue to listen to the experts on any future changes needed to continue to combat Queensland's youth crime crisis. We will be relentless in strengthening Queensland's laws, ensuring that the rights of victims of crime are put before the rights of juvenile criminals.

It is obvious that 10 years of weakened laws and dithering on strategies to actually address these issues under the former Labor government will not be fixed overnight, but we are making progress. After a decade of neglect, the Crisafulli LNP government is ensuring that there are finally consequences for actions in Queensland, and we will continue to work tirelessly to address crime across this state.