




Speech By  
**Russell Field**

**MEMBER FOR CAPALABA**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 April 2025

**YOUTH JUSTICE (MONITORING DEVICES) AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr FIELD** (Capalaba—LNP) (12.22 pm): I rise to offer my wholehearted support for the Youth Justice (Monitoring Devices) Amendment Bill 2025. I commend the work of my fellow members of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee throughout our scrutiny of this bill. I will speak to the chamber as adults. I would also like to thank those stakeholders who made submissions on this important community proposal.

My support of this bill reaffirms this government's commitment to ending the generation of untouchable repeat offenders who were emboldened during the previous decade of chaos, crisis and watered-down laws from those opposite. The aim of this bill is straightforward: to extend the trial of electronic monitoring devices, EMDs, for young offenders for a further 12 months so that the effectiveness of this initiative can be properly evaluated.

The trials of EMDs on youth offenders to date have not been broad enough to give the department of youth justice a chance to actively evaluate the effectiveness of this program, with several different amendments being passed since the initial 2021 introduction of section 52AA to the Youth Justice Act. The LNP raised these concerns from the beginning, which went unheeded, and we saw an abysmal failure in those initial trials. We even saw the former police commissioner speak out about the abject failure of the trials, in an embarrassing incident for the former government, which prompted a further amendment in August 2024. However, there was never going to be enough time to evaluate the amendments of August 2024 as the trial was set to expire less than a year later.

We promised Queenslanders that we will do whatever it takes to turn the tide on Labor's youth crime crisis, and a genuine evaluation of the available resources is an integral part of that process. The Crisafulli government has been unequivocal that we would end the culture of fear and intimidation within the Public Service—and we are doing just that—by listening to the frank and fearless advice received from our public servants. The director-general and the department have been clear that this extension of the trial period will be sufficient and is necessary for them to provide the parliament with comprehensive advice.

EMDs can help reduce the burden on our QPS officers in conducting bail checks on youth offenders, as compliance is able to be monitored electronically via GPS. At a time when we are striving to turn the tide on Labor's youth crime crisis, we must give our police all the tools they need to do their jobs effectively, as well as bolster numbers of new recruits. I was delighted to see recently the largest graduating class of police officers in the state's history. I offer my profound gratitude to those who put their hands up to take on the job. I know what it is like to be part of a police family.

It has been encouraging to see that there are early indications that the implementation of EMDs applies downward pressure on the reoffending rate of young offenders, and I look forward to seeing the full findings upon completion of the trial period. It is important to bear in mind that throughout the trial EMDs are not operating as a standalone measure, but are working alongside the Crisafulli government's \$485 million investment into youth crime prevention and youth offender rehabilitation. This significant

investment is a cornerstone of our plan to tackle youth crime that Queenslanders have backed resoundingly and seeks to prevent crime before it happens, as well as turn around the lives of young offenders before they turn into hardened criminals.

Another key element that ties into this bill is the introduction of breach of bail as an offence, which was a measure long championed by the Liberal National Party. We are already hearing that EMDs can play a key role in the enforcing of bail conditions, while also alleviating pressure on frontline police.

Communities have been inundated with youth crime and have been calling out for more to be done and more support for the hardworking police officers who are doing a stellar job in combatting youth crime. Among the trial sites for EMDs is a city at the forefront of the youth crime crisis—Cairns, where we know QPS resources are already stretched thin.

In their submission, Cairns Regional Council advised that EMDs will serve as a 'proactive tool to reduce reoffending while allowing police tacticians to allocate resources more effectively'. They also said that there is a significant burden on ratepayer funds from council crews having to remedy graffiti and other forms of vandalism, and they firmly believe that monitoring youth offenders on bail can curb the incidents of vandalism and other antisocial behaviour.

We delivered the Making Queensland Safer Laws before Christmas last year, just as we promised Queenslanders at the election. I know that residents in my electorate of Capalaba have had enough of their homes being invaded, cars stolen, people assaulted and seeing the same offenders running riot after being released on bail.

This week we are introducing more than a dozen additional offences to the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws, on the advice of the Expert Legal Panel, in order to strengthen those laws further. This bill before the House is another step in the process of unwinding a decade of weak laws and certainly will not be the last step either. I am proud to be a part of the Crisafulli government that is committed and laser focused on improving and building these steps so we can drive down victim numbers in this state.

I urge the House to support this bill because we must continue to take strong action on youth crime. Queenslanders have made it abundantly clear that serious repeat offenders cannot be allowed to continue reoffending. I personally have a fair idea what is required. That is why I put my hand up to represent the people of Capalaba. It is clear community sentiment. That is why so many voters across the state placed their trust in this government. This is an issue we must address head on. This government will not shy away from that fact.