




Speech By
Sandy Bolton

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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ADJOURNMENT

Youth Crime

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (9.26 pm): It has now been two months since the Making Queensland Safer Bill was passed introducing Adult Crime, Adult Time and already we are again seeing the previous conflicting debate on statistics. It needs to end as Queenslanders have had enough of the bickering. The reality is there is continued car theft; terrorising of households by armed gangs with knives, machetes and steel bars; masked youths breaking into homes; communities afraid to walk the streets; stabbings; and attempted murder. The threat of increased incarceration has not stopped these offenders.

Like all Queenslanders, I had hoped that the government's policy, which went against everything we had been advised or was evidenced during the youth justice inquiry, nor was put forward by the now government, would work in some way to decrease the trauma inflicted by a specific minority of youth offenders. However, it appears it has not and alongside this legislation, government must now fast-track all recommendations from the Youth Justice Reform Select Committee's report, which emanated from expert advice, frontliners and the voices of Queenslanders. It is a positive to see that four of the 60 recommendations have been committed to so far. This includes a 12-month transition plan when youth are released from detention and ensuring full access to Childrens Court proceedings for victims' families and the media. However, not targeted so far anywhere that we can see is the 500 or so youth across Queensland who are identified as a risk to communities.

Also a lowering of the threshold for serious repeat offender declarations has not been initiated as recommended. This would at the very least allow them and their families to be mandated into long-term rehabilitation, whether that be an extension of the on-country program or otherwise. We need to intervene now before this cohort commit their next dangerous offence, not wait until they do. These identified violent youth who have spent their whole life in domestic violence households, who have brain injuries or multiple comorbidities are beyond early intervention, gold or otherwise, or a reset program of two weeks. Required are serious, long-term and extensive commitments which election slogans cannot address. Only solid, bipartisan agreements over long terms can achieve this.

I now ask again that the recommendations from that inquiry continue to progress, as committed to by the previous government, and that the data on all crime be simplified through recommendation 60 to end the cherrypicking that has occurred in the past and is continuing again. As I said when I agreed to independently chair that select committee, it was time to move beyond the politics to create greater safety now and into the future. I am saying it still and I will keep saying it. Our communities do deserve much better.