



The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

In reply please quote: 2342400, 553607/2
Your ref: 10.4 Petitions

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4 OCT 2013

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 13 September 2013 enclosing Petition 2133-13 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 11 September 2013 in relation to the potential imposition of a "Street Curfew" on young people between the ages of 10 and 16 between the times of 11pm and 5am, unless accompanied by an adult or guardian.

In response to concerns around youth crime, the Government has initiated a formal review of the *Youth Justice Act 1992*, which focusses on the issues outlined below. The review is included as one of the Government's key priorities in the Six Month Action Plan (January to June 2013). The Plan is available online at: <http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/plans-and-progress/plans/6-months-jan-jun-13.aspx>.

Key areas for reform which will be considered as part of the review include:

- making it easier to publicly name and shame young offenders;
- creating an offence for young people who offend while on bail for prior offences;
- the automatic transfer of juveniles from youth detention centres to adult correctional facilities upon reaching maturity;
- removal of the principal that detention is a sentence of last resort upon sentencing by the courts; and
- allowing crimes committed by a person as a child to be admissible in courts when sentencing them as an adult.

Both the review and the resulting reforms form part of the larger *Blueprint for the Future of Youth Justice* (the Blueprint) for which community consultation recently closed.

The Blueprint will provide a systemic and structural overview of the way reform can be achieved in the medium to long term in the youth justice system. It will transform the youth justice system to one that leads the nation, is supported by our community, and holds young offenders accountable.

The Blueprint will include:

- a plan to work closely with partners to address the causes of crime and manage the demand for youth justice services by moving young offenders quickly through the system and providing the right support to young people at the right time before their offending behaviour becomes entrenched; and
- strategies to prevent crime through working closely with other areas of government, including the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Child Safety and the Department of Education, Training and Employment.

These proposed legislative amendments under the umbrella of the Blueprint build upon actions already introduced by the Government including implementation of a Sentenced Youth Boot Camp Program in the Cairns area and an Early Intervention Youth Boot Camp Program on the Gold Coast. These programs which aim to instil discipline, values and respect in young offenders, are now set to be expanded into the Townsville, Fraser Coast and Rockhampton regions, with camps in these areas due to be operational by late 2013.

As part of the development of the Blueprint, a wide variety of ideas and strategies will be considered, including the potential use of curfews. Under existing legislation, curfews are commonly included as part of a young person's conditions of bail. Courts can also impose curfews on youth justice orders. In determining sentences and the conditions placed on orders, the court considers a number of factors including the nature and seriousness of the offence, the young offender's previous offending history, the impact of the offence on a victim, and any time the young offender may have already spent in detention on remand.

Through collaboration and community input we will develop a youth justice system that will deliver safer communities while getting value for money from every dollar spent on youth justice in Queensland.

Yours sincerely



JARROD BLEIJIE MP
Attorney General and Minister for Justice