



Minister for Children and Youth Justice  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Your reference: A1073684  
Our reference: CYJMA 01218-2023

1 William Street Brisbane 4000  
Locked Bag 3405  
Brisbane Queensland 4001 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3719 7330  
Email [cjma@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:cjma@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

13 April 2023

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
[ClerksOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:ClerksOffice@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition 3855-23, tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 14 March 2023 titled 'Youth Crime'.

I would like to assure the petitioners that community safety is a key priority of the Queensland Government. All Queenslanders have the right to feel safe in their homes and communities. The Queensland Government has listened closely to Queenslanders, has understood the concerns in local communities about youth crime and has made it clear through amendments to the *Youth Justice Act 1992* and wider reforms that community safety comes first.

Diversionary and rehabilitation programs work for the majority of young people, noting most young people who enter the criminal justice system do not reoffend. However, there is a small group of serious repeat offenders who are continuing to offend and endangering community safety by committing serious offences such as unlawful use of a motor vehicle and burglary.

The *Strengthening Community Safety Act 2023* (the Act) addresses a number of the concerns raised in the petition. The Act has introduced breach of bail as an offence for when a young offender breaches a condition of their bail, the maximum sentences have increased for unlawful use of motor vehicle offences if the person is armed, uses violence or where the offending is published on social media. Powers for the Queensland Police Service have also been clarified, so that Police officers do not need to consider alternatives to arrest if a young person is breaching, or likely to breach, a condition of their bail.

Additionally, the Act introduced the following:

- strengthening conditional release orders whereby serious repeat offenders are more likely to serve out their detention when they breach a condition;
- extending conditional release orders to a maximum of six months, allowing additional supervision and rehabilitative programs to be undertaken;
- empowering the Court to declare certain young people as 'serious repeat offenders', so tougher sentencing principles to protect community safety must be applied; and
- making it more difficult for serious repeat offenders to get bail by expanding the list of offences with a presumption against bail.

Alongside these tougher measures the Queensland Government is investing over \$100 million into diversion and rehabilitation programs that are evidence based and proven to make a difference in changing the trajectory of youth offending behaviours. Some of these programs include:

- the expansion of Intensive Case Management which targets chronic young offenders aged 13 to 17 years and their families to help break the cycle of crime;

- the expansion of Youth Co-Responder Teams which are dedicated teams of police and youth justice workers who provide 24/7 coordinated responses to young people at risk of committing offences and young people on bail, including after hours;
- investing \$4 million into On Country programs providing culture-based rehabilitation for young First Nations people; and
- more investment in grassroots early intervention, working with communities on programs that work.

The government is supporting community safety by assisting Queenslanders with crime prevention and providing support to victims, these measures include investing:

- \$17 million into joint flying squads, for police and expert youth workers as partners to target high-risk youth offending and provide specialist support;
- \$15 million into a trial helping senior citizens with the cost of securing their homes in three trial locations across Queensland;
- \$10 million dollars in a trial to help subsidise the cost for Queenslanders to install vehicle immobilisers in their vehicles in trial locations; and
- \$9 million dollars for enhanced assistance to victims of property crime where violence or threat of violence is used.

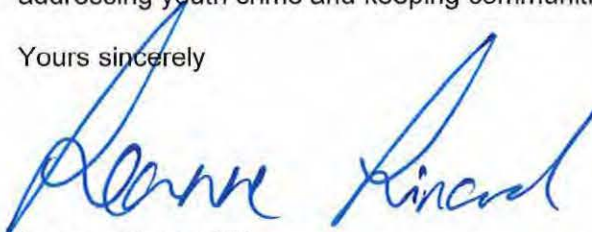
The government continues to boost the capacity of the Queensland Police Service to tackle youth crime, by investing a further \$25 million into high visibility police patrols and proactive policing. There are more than 12,000 police officers in Queensland.

We know there is no quick fix and there is always more work to be done. While we will continue diverting young people away from crime through evidence-based programs and services, we know the community is demanding tougher penalties and we are delivering on this.

While the Government has a strong focus on keeping communities safe, it is important to recognise there will always be children, who despite the best intentions of Government and all the help available, may still break the law and these young people must be held accountable.

Finally, I reiterate that all Queenslanders have a right to feel safe in their homes and communities. We are committed to continually reviewing the *Youth Justice Act 1992* to ensure it provides the most effective framework, governance and evidence base in addressing youth crime and keeping communities safe.

Yours sincerely



**Leanne Linard MP**  
**Minister for Children and Youth Justice and**  
**Minister for Multicultural Affairs**