



Honourable Yvette D'Ath MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
Leader of the House

Our ref: 572305/8;6833022

Your ref: A1170030

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21 November 2023

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to e-Petition 3895-23 tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 24 October 2023 titled '*Support victims of crime by replacing their stolen and damaged vehicle*'.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to protecting the rights of victims and holding perpetrators to account.

I am pleased to advise that the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee (the LASC) recently conducted an inquiry into the support provided to victims of crime and provided a report to Government on 19 May 2023. The Queensland Government supported, or supported in principle, all 18 of the LASC recommendations focussed on improving the support provided to victims of crime.

The Government is progressing a range of initiatives the Committee identified or supported to improve the quality of support offered to victims, including reviewing the legislated financial assistance model for victims of crime. In February 2023, the Government announced an additional \$9 million over four years from 2023-24 to support victims of violent crime and to undertake the review.

The review will consider the current state of the financial assistance scheme in Queensland, including the assistance needs of victims of property crime.

In September 2023, the Government announced a package of reforms to better support victims of crime and their families. This includes investment of more than \$200 million over the next five years to boost victim support services.

The Government also recently announced the establishment of the Justice Reform Office (JRO) which is a new, permanent office tasked with leading reform of Queensland's criminal justice system. The JRO's work is based on evidence and focuses on new approaches to:

- reduce demand on courts and prisons;
- modernise Queensland's laws;
- improve programs to divert people away from the criminal justice system; and
- help people to break the cycle of reoffending.

The JRO will also support the recently announced Independent Ministerial Advisory Council (IMAC) that will examine crime related issues and make recommendations on justice system reform and victim support. The IMAC is being established in response to concerns from victims and community members impacted by crime.

The IMAC will have the capacity to provide advice about all elements of criminal justice reform and will build on work already underway, including the appointment of the Interim Victims' Commissioner Jon Rouse, and supporting the appointment of a permanent victims' commissioner by the end of June 2024.

Earlier this year, the Queensland Government introduced the Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023 (the Bill). The Queensland Legislative Assembly passed the Bill on 16 March 2023. The Bill, which commenced on assent, increased maximum penalties for the unlawful use of a motor vehicle, made it an offence for a young person to breach a condition of their bail, extended and expanded the trial of electronic monitoring as a condition of bail for certain young people, and ensured that a young person's bail history must be taken into account at sentencing. It also allowed sentencing courts to declare certain youth offenders as serious repeat offenders to enable considerations such as community safety to be paramount during sentencing.

The Queensland Government will target serious repeat offenders and will also continue to fight the complex causes of youth crime. A wide range of intervention and diversionary programs will receive increased funding of \$189.5 million over five years to complement the tough new laws introduced earlier this year. This includes funding for:

- extending and expanding Youth Co-responder Teams;
- extending and expanding the Intensive Bail Initiative for repeat offenders with complex needs; the fast track sentencing pilot program;
- grassroots early intervention programs and the shopping precincts crime prevention program;
- extending and expanding the Early Action Groups already operating in Townsville to Cairns and Mount Isa; and
- extending and expanding Intensive Case Management to address issues that contribute to chronic juvenile offending.

The Government is also doing more to assist Queenslanders with crime prevention and providing support to victims of crime. We are trialling engine immobilisers in Mt Isa, Cairns and Townsville and continue to boost the capacity for the Queensland Police Service to tackle youth crime and keep the community safe, including extreme high visibility police patrols and proactive policing.

The Youth Justice Reform Select Committee (the Select Committee) recently announced by the Premier has been established. The Select Committee was established to examine ongoing reforms to the youth justice system and support for victims of crime. The Select Committee is chaired by Ms Sandy Bolton MP, Member for Noosa, and will allow a bipartisan approach examining all aspects of this very complex issue.

I am looking forward to considering the views of the Select Committee about issues impacting victims of crime.

I thank the petitioners for bringing their concerns to the attention of the House.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yvette D'ATH'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'Y' and a stylized 'D'.

YVETTE D'ATH MP

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