




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (4.00 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Strengthening Community Safety Bill. It is a debate that we have had in this chamber on numerous occasions. To give members a bit of history, in 2016 we were talking about this when those opposite watered down youth justice legislation; in 2018 we were talking about it; in 2019, 2021 and again in 2021 we debated it. We revisit the same problem time and time again. When I have my community roadsides—I make myself available to my local residents to listen to their concerns—this is a matter that makes me angry. Good, hardworking local residents in my area are subjected to youth crime all the time. Every time laws are watered down, as the government did back in 2016, it makes the situation worse on the northern Gold Coast. There has been an increase in the amount of criminal activity from these individuals who think they can get away with it because the laws are watered down. Those opposite will not take responsibility for those actions. It is as simple as that.

My residents—good, hardworking people—sleep in fear because they are worried that somebody is going to break into their house and steal their motor vehicle. Let us talk about what a motor vehicle means to these individuals. It is their work. Many tradies and people who work in the services industry live in my electorate and they need their cars. These tradies have their tools in the back of their utes and their tools are stolen with their vehicles.

Government members interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I hear those opposite interjecting, laughing, having a little joke about it, but these people pay their taxes, pay their rates and pay their insurance. Their insurance is going up. They pay their excess because they get broken into. They are continually slogged with additional expenses because they are getting broken into. This is not fair on them. These are the people who put us in this place. These are our residents—the residents of those opposite. Their voices need to be heard. These victims need to be heard.

I wholeheartedly believe in intervention. Last week I visited the Traction program which is based in my electorate. This program is about helping young people who are potentially going down the wrong pathway. I say to Sandy, 'Well done, mate. You are making a difference for these people.' They are not government funded; they rely on donations. They work with our local schools. The program is fantastic because it is giving ownership to these young people. They are building a bike that they will own at the end. They say to these young people, 'What would you think if somebody came along and stole your bike?' It is a moment of epiphany. They realise that it is not fair stealing someone else's property. That is what we need. Grant from Blue Diamond Youth runs early intervention programs. Early intervention programs are key, but we need these young people to participate in it or we will lose a generation. I regularly talk to my teachers and principals. Teachers and police officers regularly stop at my roadsides. My teachers are frustrated because they feel the system is letting them down.

Ms McMillan: Rubbish!

Mr BOOTHMAN: The member may say 'rubbish', but there was a good article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* about teachers living in fear of their jobs. We need a proper approach. We need a society that understands there are two parts: the hope of reward and the fear of punishment. If you take away hope or the fear of punishment, society starts to fail. I applaud the government for finally listening to the LNP and bringing in breach of bail as an offence. That is important, but we need to empower our magistrates and give them the option to not use incarceration as a last resort if they feel that the individual will potentially cause harm to somebody else. When they steal a motor vehicle it becomes a missile on the road which potentially puts good, innocent drivers and people walking in the street in harm's way. We have seen that happen. I say to the government again and again that intervention is key, but we need to make sure that these intervention programs work. I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for putting forward to the Auditor-General's office a review into this matter because we need to know what is actually working.

Mrs Gerber: The government would not look at it.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take the interjection from the member for Currumbin. They will not do it. We are potentially losing a generation of souls to a life that they do not want, but they do not know anything different. I am proud of my local police officers, who turn up every day knowing that when they arrest individuals they are most likely going to be back out on the street in 24 hours. They turn up because they know they provide a service to my community on the northern Gold Coast and they do not want to let us down.

Recently at a Neighbourhood Watch meeting in one of my local estates I heard stories from residents who have been recently broken into. They felt violated. They felt that their home was not their home anymore; it was just a house. They had their home violated and they do not want to live there anymore. They want to move somewhere else because they feel that their house is not their home anymore. We have to address this properly. We have been here five times. I have previously stated that we would come back here again because the law was not strong enough. I stated it in 2019 and in 2020.

Mr Power: This is just a sham. Why wouldn't he tell the truth to his constituents?

Mr BOOTHMAN: The member for Logan likes to heckle in the background but he does not care about my constituents and what they are going through or those residents who lost their vehicle because somebody decided to take it away and burn it on the side of the street or in bushland. It is not applicable for a member in this chamber to carry on about it. These are my residents and I am proud of them. I live in one of the best parts of the Gold Coast.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I do not take that interjection from the member for Coomera. My electorate has Dreamworld and Movie World. We are out towards Tamborine Mountain. It is a place we can be proud of, but we are not proud of those individuals who are destroying our community. I say to the government: I do not want to come back in this place again and debate laws that should have been done right in the first place.