

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

31 July, 2018

GOVERNMENT'S \$200M WASTE OF MONEY

State KAP leader and member for Traeger Robbie Katter has accused the Labor Government of throwing money away by committing to spend \$200m to transfer 17-year-olds out of adult prisons into youth detention centres.

"It is just ludicrous to spend this enormous amount of money moving more kids into detention centres - perpetuating a system that isn't working," he said.

"Prison officers are already concerned about their safety due to the overcrowding issues in the Cleveland Detention Centre.

"Inspectors who recently carried out the investigation of the Cleveland Centre said young offenders would have to continue staying in police watch houses because the centre was full, while the Government's planned expansion of 12 new beds for Cleveland in 2019 wouldn't be enough to deal with population increases.

"We have overcrowding in our detention centres, an expansion planned for next year that has already been deemed as not enough and on top of that the government has to house 17-year-olds who will be taken out of adult prisons.

"Instead, how about giving some serious thought to a new, feasible solution.

"The kids committing these crimes need to learn respect and need to be given the skills to become productive members of the community. Relocation sentencing does this, putting them in an overcrowded prison clearly does not."

Mr Katter said the KAP's Relocation Sentencing program would give magistrates a much needed third option when it came to dealing with criminal youth.

"At the moment judges who sentence youth offenders have their hands tied," he said.

"They can either put these kids in detention or put them straight back into the community on bail, and we know bail is a joke because there are no repercussions for breaching bail.

"This money could be much better spent by being put towards a Relocation Sentencing pilot program.

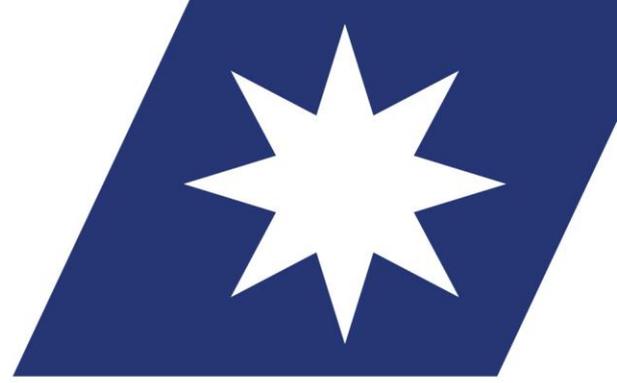
"It would immediately address a number of issues including overcrowding, get these kids out of the town and away from bad influences, keep kids out of jail and away from more experienced criminals, teach them some fundamental life skills and how to become better members of our society.

"The government is on the clock to support a better alternative to dealing with youth crime."

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