

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

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Self-imposed curfew a sad sign of the times

A TOWNSVILLE mother's self-imposed curfew of not driving around the city after 4:30pm because of crime is "absolutely horrifying", says Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto.

Mr Dametto said he was shocked to read a report in local media which quoted Mel Houston after she witnessed a disturbing attack on Willows McDonald's by youths on Monday night.

Ms Houston said she had regretted breaking her "4:30pm rule" in order to avoid getting caught up in dangerous situations like the one she witnessed.

"This is not the Bronx. This is not South-Central LA. This is not Mexico. People in Townsville should be free to drive, walk or travel through Townsville past 4:30pm and in fact, at any time," Mr Dametto said.

"What Mel went through would be traumatic for any parent. She was surrounded by these thugs after McDonald's locked down. Thank God her and her daughters were not attacked."

Mr Dametto said no law-abiding citizen should ever feel the need to "lock themselves down."

"But unfortunately, that's what we're seeing. People forced to live like prisoners in their homes because the State Labor Government refuses to take real action on these young criminals," he said.

"The arrogance of Labor is just disgusting. They are prepared to let North Queenslanders suffer because they think the voters endorsed their policies on crime when the reality was it was their response to COVID-19 that won it for them. Nothing else.

"Any one in that government, including Townsville's three Labor MPs, are kidding themselves if they think this crime situation is acceptable. People are living in fear."

Mr Dametto said Katter's Australian Party had drafted strong amendments to the government's Youth Justice Bill, which is currently under review by Parliament's Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

The KAP's amendments will institute a minimum of 12 months imprisonment to be served wholly in a corrective services facility (detention centre or approved remote property) for recidivist young offenders who commit either Unlawful use or possession of motor vehicles, aircraft or vessel, Burglary and Entering or being in premises and committing indictable offences.

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The amendments will also define a recidivist offender as someone who has been convicted of those serious offences at least twice, regardless of whether the offences were the same.

"We believe these are the measures required for a real change to curb the youth crime crisis affecting the North,' Mr Dametto said.

"The KAP will not stop in its fight to improve community safety for law abiding residents."

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