



Nick Dametto

Member For Hinchinbrook

MEDIA RELEASE

15 November 2022

Youth crime is organised crime: Dametto

Townsville saw scenes of chaos once again on the weekend as “organised” youth crime groups terrorised the streets damaging cars and property and leaving behind a trail of devastation.

The latest crime spree occurred on the eve of a visit by the Queensland Premier who was visiting Townsville to make a hydrogen announcement. During the announcement the Premier was asked about the Government’s solution to youth crime where she struggled to provide a response beyond a commitment for extra police and a presumption against bail.

KAP Deputy Leader and Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto, who has been pushing for unprecedented and harsh changes to the Queensland Youth Justice Act, said the Premier must take the northern communities for a joke if she thinks that coming to Townsville and suggesting extra police and a presumption against bail would ease any concerns.

When quizzed about making crime numbers drop, the Premier boldly stated that they were already seeing “good numbers” but was unable to say what those numbers were.

Mr Dametto said crime was the number one issue for residents in Townsville and a visit from the Premier who failed to address the issue in any substantial way, despite being in the company of her local Labor MPs, was inexcusable.

“Regional Queenslanders are absolutely furious that nothing meaningful has been done at the State Government level to fix this youth crime problem,” Mr Dametto said.

“The police are doing their utmost, but these children are not in fear of anything that is about to happen to them, they are well trained, and they are training the younger kids who are coming up through the ranks.

“Some of the tagging that we are seeing suggests that these offenders are operating in gangs and what was once unsophisticated, unorganised crime, has now become organised.

“They are a well-oiled machine, utilising technology, social media, their contacts and even the legislation to be organised and operate at the best of their abilities. If they don’t evade police all together, once detained they evade any meaningful judicial penalty.

“Time and time again we are told by the Government that youth crime is a complex problem and I don’t disagree, however it is due time that the Premier and her Ministers get out there and start finding creative and calculated solutions to try and fix this problem.



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“The Palaszczuk Government can’t keep tinkering around the edges and think that they are going to solve the complex issues of these kids”, he said.

Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) MPs have recently been calling for harsher penalties and sweeping changes to youth justice laws. The proposal includes youth offenders being dealt with and punished as adults for particularly serious offences, mandatory minimum sentencing for offences of unlawful use of motor vehicle, burglary or break-in offences and cumulative sentences for recidivist offenders.

The harsher schedule of punishments is designed to coincide with the KAP’s long-touted Relocation Sentencing policy to break the cycle of youth crime and the revolving door of youth detention.

“The Government has a lot of seats in the northern regions and these MPs have their heads in political noose right now unless they can address the issue of youth crime”.

—ENDS—

Photo: State Member for Hinchinbrook and KAP Deputy Leader, Nick Dametto.

Media Enquiries: Catherine Holden – 0416 817 333