

ROBBIE KATTER

Member for Traeger



MEDIA RELEASE

March 8, 2023

MAYOR'S SUPPORT FOR CHANGE A SIGN OF THE CRIME TIMES

Long-serving Townsville Mayor Jenny Hill has thrown her support behind Katter's Australian Party's (KAP's) Relocation Sentencing Policy, publicly advocating for the alternative sentencing model alongside a raft of other changes in a bid to address youth crime.

Speaking to the Economics and Governance Committee during its Townsville public hearing into the *Strengthening Community Safety Bill 2023*, Cr Hill said youth crime crisis needed to be addressed at its core.

This includes the issues of housing, alcohol and inter-generational criminality, she said.

"I want to take this opportunity to reiterate my view that the age of criminal responsibility should not be raised; I am aware that this is not up for debate in this bill, but it is an important point to make," Cr Hill told the Committee last week.

"Saying that we do not have enough space in youth detention is a bit of a furphy in my (view), (kids are) not getting the support they require and the community expect; an announcement late last year about expanded capacity in youth centres has come a bit too late.

"Constructing these facilities and the exploration of things like remote area Relocation Sentencing, as has been called for by the members for Hill, Traeger and Hinchinbrook, is worth exploring."

KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter said the Townsville Mayor's support was indicative of growing calls across the North for change.

These calls have only been spurred on by reports that three stolen vehicles targeted, pursued and rammed two police cars – sending an injured female cop to hospital – across three Townsville suburbs early on Monday.

"Juvenile offenders are so empowered by inaction and detached from society that they feel no fear in targeting even police officers – we're really at breaking point here and more tragedy is inevitable," Mr Katter said.

"No one is satisfied that the building of two new detention centres, designed to mimic the three that already exist across the state, is the answer here.

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“Unless you’re going to lock these kids up indefinitely then we must do better in terms of providing punitive yet rehabilitative consequences.

“The KAP has long proposed that Relocation Sentencing is this solution, and we welcome Mayor Hill’s support as she provided it to the Committee last week.

“Our view is that serious recidivist offenders who are deemed suitable by the courts would be best dealt with at a remote facility where they are offered intensive rehabilitative treatment and required to engage with job training or education over a six to 24 month period.”

ENDS

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