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Media Release – Last calls for hearings in Townsville & Cairns

Following the tabling of Youth Justice amendments in Parliament this week, Shadow Minister for Police & Corrective Services, Dale Last, says it is imperative that residents in centres like Townsville and Cairns are able to have their say before these amendments are passed into legislation.

Mr Last said it was vital that the experiences of victims and frontline workers in regional centres were taken into consideration to ensure the amendments worked in all areas, not just South East Queensland.

“I want to make sure that residents and stakeholder groups have input into these amendments,” Mr Last said. “It’s all well and good for the Committee to have hearings in Brisbane but people in Townsville and Cairns have seen the impact of the youth crime epidemic firsthand and deserve to be heard.”

“The Youth Justice laws need to make a difference throughout the state, so we need to ensure that the right services are available. I can guarantee that the availability of support services, as one example, is completely different in Townsville or Cairns compared to Brisbane.”

“If Minister Ryan is serious about improving safety for all Queenslanders, he would support giving all Queenslanders the chance to have their say.”

Mr Last said that, in addition to public hearings in Townsville and Cairns, the committee members reviewing the legislation could spend time ‘on the front line’ in both cities.

“To fully grasp the situation, you have to see it with your own eyes,” Mr Last said. “I spent 25 years in a Police uniform, and I can tell you for a fact that these offenders don’t play nicely with police and other agencies.”

“If the committee members can hear from victims and see the level of disrespect that these young offenders have for the law, they will understand the need to make sure the amendments achieve a real outcome. I’d like to see them spend time with Police, youth justice workers and in the court system.”

“There also needs to be an opportunity for the frontline workers to have input because their knowledge and experience is crucial. They need to be able to speak freely and openly without fear or favour.”



“Since the government announced the changes, I have said that the LNP will not stand in the way of enacting them, but we have seen changes announced before that have achieved basically nothing. This is an opportunity to get it right and we must embrace that opportunity.”

“Victims, and families in general, deserve to be listened to and if the Government is serious about getting this right, they will take that feedback on board.”

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