



Dale Last MP
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Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Fire and Emergency Services
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Media Release - Answers on Premier's desk

Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Dale Last, has slammed the Premier's demand for answers and highlighted what he calls "obvious weaknesses" in the legislation the government claims to have strengthened.

Mr Last said he was being inundated with calls from residents of regional centres like Townsville who believe Tuesday's tragedy could have been avoided if the Premier had listened to them.

"For the Premier to demand answers now is complete hypocrisy," Mr Last said. "For years now, people in places like Townsville have been predicting lives would be lost and it's important to remember this is not the first fatal incident involving young offenders."

"Again, the Premier and Minister Ryan are trying to blame the judiciary but most of the problems stem from errors in the legislation Labor has pushed through parliament. If the Premier won't admit the errors, then it's proof that her 'strengthening' of youth justice laws was a blatant attempt to trick Queenslanders."

Mr Last said one of the reasons young offenders were being released was the government's choice to put the reputation of offenders above the rights of the community.

"In February last year¹, in parliament, I raised the issue that offenders who are deemed an unacceptable risk of breaching bail could be released without bail if being in detention would have a negative effect on their reputation," Mr Last said. "That part of the legislation still applies and was completely overlooked in the so-called strengthening of laws²."

"Even the sections that were changed refer to 'safety of the community' and make absolutely no reference to property. Effectively, it says that an offender who steals without violence should be released."

"It's one thing to make bold statements about strengthening the laws but you actually have to take the right action. Labor clearly has not done that, and you have to question if that was deliberate."

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Sources:



1. https://aeec36-35a5-44a6-bef2-7d8ff10de667.filesusr.com/ugd/f86332_c1bee222648c4603aed7487d33c55af5.pdf
2. <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/inforce/current/act-1992-044>