



Speech by

**Barbara Stone**

**MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD**

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## **JUVENILE JUSTICE AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL; JUVENILE JUSTICE (SENTENCING PRINCIPLES) AMENDMENT BILL**

**Ms STONE** (Springwood—ALP) (6.02 pm): I rise to speak briefly in this cognate debate. A juvenile justice system should be accountable and fair, it should protect the community and it should also aim to provide reintegration of offenders into their communities. That is what the government aims to do with the introduction of this bill.

While the majority of young people in our communities are doing the right thing and will never come into contact with the justice system, it is important that we strike the right balance for those who do become involved in the system. Earlier this year I visited the Townsville Youth Detention Centre and noted its educational activities along with its sporting resources. I congratulate the staff of the centre for their work in building self-esteem and helping young people turn their lives around. The centre is currently being expanded, and this will enable even more educational and rehabilitation services to be provided. It is these types of services that truly help turn an offender's life around.

The PCYC is also assisting young people to have a positive relationship with their communities. I acknowledge the hard work of everybody involved in the Logan PCYC. This includes supporters, sponsors, volunteers and police officers who give much of their own time to make this PCYC successful. I congratulate Sergeant Rachel Whitford and her team for their commitment to creating better communities through youth development.

It was disturbing to learn from the Youth Violence Task Force, a task force that was set up by the former minister for police, the Hon. Judy Spence, that young people between 15 and 19 years of age are the most likely group to be the victims of violence and are also most likely to be the perpetrators. A change that I am very pleased to see in the government's bill before the House is the amendments that automatically prohibit the publication of information that identifies a child victim of crime.

A constituent of mine, whom I will not name in order to keep this matter private, came to see me as her son had been viciously attacked. While she and other family members were dealing with the situation of her son being in intensive care and what had happened, on top of all that they also had to deal with a barrage of media. Her words to me were—

Here was my son lying seriously injured in hospital. I nor other members of the family felt it appropriate or necessary to be speaking to the media when all we wanted was our loved son to be out of danger and to be well. Our minds and energies were with our son not with dealing with the media. It is something we believe should never happen to us or should never happen to any other family in the future.

Her son was identified in the media, which caused angst amongst family members as they felt this could put her son and family members at risk of more violence due to reprisal attacks. Yet the offenders were not named and had their privacy protected. She lobbied me and the former minister, the Hon. Lindy Nelson-Carr, about changing the law regarding the naming of child victims. Tonight I stand here and I thank the former minister and her staff for listening to my constituent and acting to ensure that child victims of crime will have their privacy protected. I know that my constituent is extremely pleased with this part of the bill. She can be very proud that she helped make a difference to our juvenile justice system.

In respect of the opposition's bill, it once again shows the old outdated solutions that the LNP would like to impose on our communities, particularly our young people. While some of its proposals may sound all right, the reality is that domestic and international research does not support it. In fact, it states that there are no good outcomes to be produced from going down this path with juvenile justice. The recent *Four Corners* program on young offenders in detention centres demonstrates this quite clearly. I congratulate the minister for bringing this bill before the House and I commend the government's bill before the House.