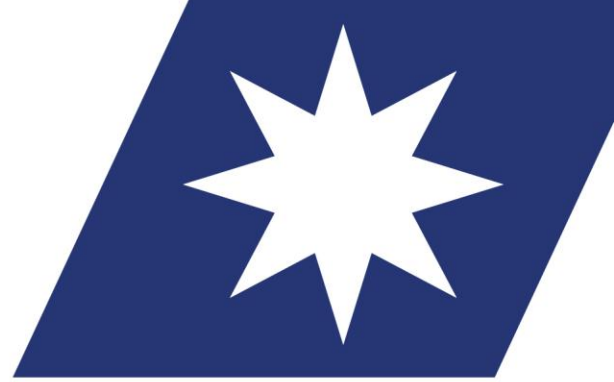


**ROBBIE KATTER**

Member for Traeger



## MEDIA RELEASE

10 March, 2020

### KAP WELCOMES STATE'S BACKFLIP ON YOUTH CRIME

The State Government's surprise back-flip on relocation sentencing as a youth crime solution has offered a glimmer of hope for the North, Katter's Australian Party (KAP) MPs have said.

Following years of pressure from the KAP and the broader community, Police Minister Mark Ryan has today announced on-country programs would form part of Labor's state-wide "crackdown" on youth crime.

The new plan would go "hardcore on hard-nut offenders", the Minister has told the *Townsville Bulletin*.

KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter said youth crime had reached crisis point in recent weeks, and warned North Queenslanders would not take lightly to pre-election lip service.

He said locations such as Townsville, Cairns and Mount Isa were currently at high-risk of retaliatory vigilantism, and that youth crime solutions had to immediately improve public safety.

"I am welcoming but cautious of this announcement from the State Government," Mr Katter said.

"For three years now we have been banging on their doors, pleading with Labor to look at alternative sentencing options that would include getting kids 'on-country'.

"Time and time again we were knocked back, and told relocation sentencing wasn't the answer as they proceeded with business as usual.

"Even though the timing is convenient with the State Election only months away, it is refreshing the government has finally decided to move on this issue.

"Both short and long-term solutions of this crime crisis must look at its symptoms and causes: including generational unemployment, alcohol and substance abuse (including the effect in Queensland of the alcohol bans in the NT) and the effectiveness of the Youth Justice Act."

Mr Katter said the KAP was now waiting to learn more about Labor's new plan, but stressed the devil could be in the detail.



## MEDIA RELEASE

He said the KAP's door was always open for discussions with both major parties on the issue.

### **Keys points of the KAP Relocation Sentencing Policy:**

1. Applies to young, repeat offenders aged 10-17 who have been identified as 'at-risk' of recidivism and have a demonstrated history of escalating criminality
2. Provides alternative sentencing (and/or bail arrangement) options to Magistrates/Judges when dealing with these offenders
3. These alternative sentencing options include 'on-country' programs in a remote and approved location. Ankle bracelets would be used for added security, but security would largely be maintained through distance and isolation
4. An incentive system, based on points and certificate awards, would allow the offenders to feel a sense of achievement. This would include qualifications towards things such as a windmill technician, master butcher and stockman, but would not be limited to primary industries.
5. The ultimate goal of Relocation Sentencing is to provide these children life skills, education and a sense of purpose not available to them on the streets or in juvenile detention facilities
6. It would be available to both indigenous and non-indigenous children, and programs would draw heavily on the involvement and teachings of First Australian elders
7. The KAP have identified a series of possible facility locations in North West Queensland, such as Lake Julius (north of Mount Isa) – it is envisioned multiple locations will be established across the state in strategic areas
8. The program is designed to be the ultimate 'circuit-breaker' for repeat, young offenders who are likely to re-offend if returned to the streets and are at-risk of further "criminalisation" if incarcerated at juvenile detention centres.

—ENDS—

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