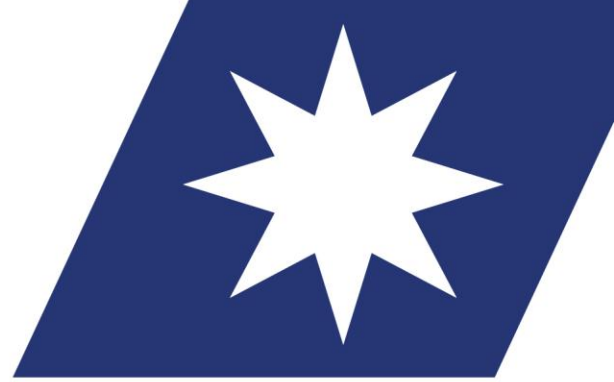


**ROBBIE KATTER**

Member for Traeger



## MEDIA RELEASE

February 23, 2021

### LABOR "FORGETS" TO ACT ON YOUTH CRIME

The Palaszczuk Government's failure to introduce emergency youth justice legislation into the Queensland Parliament this week has been labelled as bitterly disappointing by Katter's Australian Party MPs.

KAP Leader and Traeger MP Robbie Katter said the Palaszczuk Government had today taken advantage of the low expectations of members of the public - many of whom don't believe Labor can resolve the crisis - and chose to not act urgently.

The Queensland Parliament has today convened for the first time this year.

Today's sitting marked an important opportunity for the State Government to introduce important youth justice changes that it announced in the media weeks ago, including introducing GPS trackers for youth offenders and making amendments to bail laws.

Emergency legislation was introduced today by Labor regarding the resolution of issues in Local Government, and the COVID-19 response, but the youth justice emergency that has reached crisis levels in the North failed to make the cut.

"This is a very acute problem right now and this Government has a very strong track record of kicking the can down the road," Mr Katter said.

"We thought perhaps some of the recent tragic events linked to youth crime would jerk them into action but it's jerked them into a PR exercise."

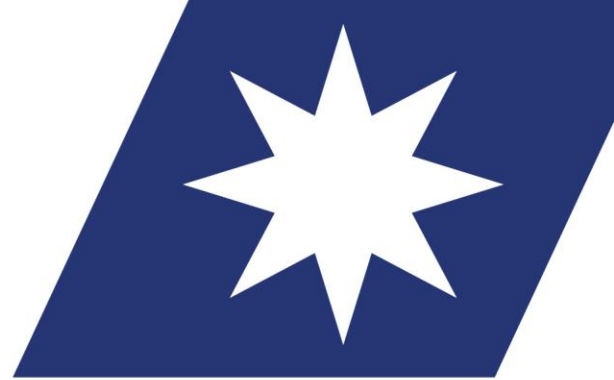
He added the Government's manipulative citing of a "30 per cent reduction in youth crime" occurred during a data collection timeframe encompassing the COVID-10 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, during which people were forced indoors and were not legally allowed to be out on the street.

The KAP today announced it had already planned pre-emptive amendments to whatever legislation the Government introduced, and would move on this as soon as possible.

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**Member for Traeger**

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## MEDIA RELEASE

The amendments include introducing a relocation sentencing option, mandatory sentencing for particular crimes including break and enter, and omitting Clause 50 of the Youth Justice Act which determined detention as a last resort.

This week, KAP MPs will also deliver Budget reply speeches this week in favour of acting on the youth justice emergency.

KAP Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto said the reforms that had been proposed, but not yet acted on, by the State Government had done nothing over the past couple of weeks to deter young offenders from committing crime.

“Time after time, night after night, we’re still seeing them breaking into houses, stealing vehicles; as recently as last night,” he said.

“This has to stop - Queenslanders are calling for a circuit-breaker piece of legislation.”

KAP Hill MP Shane Knuth said his office had launched an e-petition to Parliament calling for changes to youth justice laws, prioritising relocation sentencing as a desperately-needed deterrent.

“Young criminals are committing crime to get into Cleveland Youth Detention Centre – we’ve never heard of that before,” he said.

In the quarter from November 2020 to 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021, a total 5,098 offences were committed in the Townsville Local Government Area.

These included: 771 unlawful entries, 20 robberies, 271 unlawful uses of a motor vehicle, and 964 other thefts (excluding unlawful entry).

—ENDS—

**Media enquiries: Morgan Oss, 0428 772 544**