



The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

In reply please quote: 545951/1

Your ref: 10.4 Petitions

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09 AUG 2012

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
Corner Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition No. 1885-12 presented by Mr Anthony Shorten MP, Member for Algester on behalf of the principal petitioner, Mr Richard Banks and received by the Legislative Assembly on 10 July 2012.

The petitioners call on Parliament to address community concern that sentences imposed for offences against the person and property are inconsistent and inadequate.

During the recent State election the Liberal National Party made clear its tough approach to crime and its view that sentences must reflect community expectations. Since forming Government we have acted quickly to implement the commitments in our 100 day action plan.

The *Criminal Law (Two Strike Child Sex Offenders) Amendment Act 2012* (the Act) commenced on 19 July 2012 and delivers on the Government's election commitment to strengthen the penalties for repeat child sex offenders. The Act prescribes a sentence of mandatory life imprisonment, with a minimum non-parole period of 20 years imprisonment, for certain repeat child sex offenders. It represents an unprecedented amendment to sentencing laws in Queensland and I anticipate it having a significant deterrent effect.

The Criminal Law Amendment Bill 2012 (the Bill) was introduced to Parliament on 20 June 2012 and is awaiting debate. The Bill implements the following law and order election commitments:

- increasing non-parole periods for murder and multiple murders and ensuring that offenders who murder police officers face a non-parole period of 25 years;
- doubling the current maximum penalty for serious assaults on police officers;
and

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- fighting illegal street racing and hooning by creating a mandatory-minimum \$5000 fine and two-year disqualification for evading police.

On 13 July 2012, the Premier announced this Government's *Six Month Action Plan for July to December 2012*, which contains a number of key law and order commitments aimed at revitalising front line services for families.

In particular, we have a plan to boost the fight against crime through positive community partnerships, including enhanced support to the Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers programs, and by cracking down on graffiti crime through the implementation of long term strategies aimed at the cause and effect of graffiti offending.

The 'Six Month Action Plan' includes our commitment to establish a Graffiti Grants Program, the Graffiti Offender Clean Up program and the GraffitiSTOP hotline, which is a dedicated hotline that individuals and businesses can call to request assistance with the removal of graffiti. The penalty for graffiti crime under Queensland's Criminal Code will also be increased from five years to seven years imprisonment to make it clear that graffiti is not art but rather an act of vandalism that is against the law.

The 'Six Month Action Plan' also includes our commitment to:

- amend laws to address synthetic drugs, penalties for child pornography and some child sex offences, including a new child grooming offence;
- amend legislation to crack down on the unexplained wealth of organised criminals;
- draft new laws to ensure drug traffickers serve at least 80% of their sentence before being eligible for parole;
- increase penalties for drug traffickers who target children;
- develop a framework for improved GPS tracking of dangerous sex offenders;
- prepare tough new anti-hooning laws; and
- bring in tough new mandatory sentences for possession and trafficking of illegal firearms in response to community concern about a number of recent shootings in Queensland and reports of escalating outlaw motorcycle gang violence.

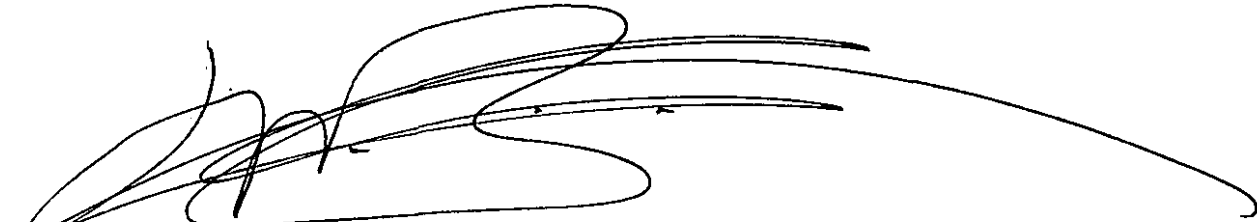
Further, the Queensland Government has undertaken to increase frontline police numbers State-wide by 1,100 members over the next three years. Those extra positions will be allocated throughout the State to areas of identified need. This increase in frontline police will enable the Queensland Police Service to commit more officers to proactive tasks and will increase their visibility to the public.

Over the next six months, we have committed to finalising the recruitment of 300 new police; establishing a major crime squad and to relocating the illegal firearms squad to the Gold Coast; and to delivering 15 more school and community based police.

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The policies outlined above reflect this Government's resolve to be tough on crime and to strive to ensure that adequate punishments are handed down by the courts to serious criminal offenders.

Yours sincerely



JARROD BLEIJIE MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice