



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

In reply please quote: 562911/1, 2664330

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter dated 12 September 2014 regarding Petition 2233-14, which was tabled in Parliament on 11 September 2014 and advocates for the introduction of legislative amendments to ensure that offenders who commit serious offences against children, such as murder, manslaughter, any form of sexual offending or offences relating to child exploitation material, be subject to indefinite imprisonment and never be released.

The Government has no current plans to introduce amendments as outlined in the Petition. However, our resolve to make Queensland the safest place to raise a child cannot be doubted. We have acted swiftly and decisively to implement strong new criminal laws to help ensure adequate punishments are handed down by the courts to serious criminal offenders and in particular, those who would prey on our children.

Tough new laws strengthening the penalties for repeat child sex offenders have already been introduced by this Government. Specifically, a new mandatory sentence regime of life imprisonment, with a minimum non-parole period of 20 years, was introduced for certain repeat child sex offenders. This unprecedented reform to sentencing laws is intended to have a significant deterrent effect on offenders who target children and reflects the abhorrence of such offending.

To break sophisticated paedophile rings, child sexual offences were added in the schedule of 'declared offences' in the *Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Act 2013*, which provides strong mandatory penalties for members and associates of criminal associations who commit serious offences as part of their participation in the association.

We have significantly increased the maximum penalties for certain child sex offences, for example, the child exploitation material offences. Further we have created a new offence of 'grooming' a child to target offenders who engage in grooming conduct with the intention of making it easier for them to procure a child to engage in sexual activity.

The Government is committed to delivering a complete and effective response to the management of child sex offenders.

The *Child Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2004* requires people who commit serious offences against children to regularly report details of their whereabouts to police. These offenders must provide police with details as to where they reside and work, their vehicle registration, passport details and even personal distinguishing marks. Reportable offenders must also report to police any association with clubs or organisations that have child participation in its activities, and details of any carriage service or internet service connection, including usernames.

Under this legislation, a reportable offender is required to report to police as outlined for a period up to life.

The recently passed *Child Protection (Offender Reporting) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014* now requires reportable offenders to report more regularly to police, that is, every three months.

In an acknowledgment of murder as the most heinous of all criminal offences, this Government amended the offence of murder to increase the mandatory minimum non-parole period from 15 years to 20 years imprisonment and for multiple murders from 20 years to 30 years imprisonment.

Queensland also has in place a number of preventative detention regimes that provide the community with protection from the most dangerous sex offenders.

A sentencing court may impose an indefinite sentence on an offender it considers would pose a serious danger to the community if released, on its own initiative, or upon an application by the prosecution. An indefinite sentence may be imposed for certain violent and sexual offences including child sexual offences.

The *Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003* (DPSOA) allows for the preventative detention of sex offenders who, in the opinion of the court, pose a serious danger to the community if released at the end of their sentence. The court can order that such prisoners be detained indefinitely or released conditionally and subject to strict supervision.

Further, sex offenders in the community subject to a supervision order under the DPSOA are required to report to, and receive visits from, a corrective services officer and must notify the officer of every change of name, place of residence or employment, before the change happens.

Also, supervised sex offenders are fitted with monitoring bracelets which allows for their constant monitoring by Queensland Corrective Services, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Recently commenced amendments to DPSOA ensure that if a monitored sex offender removes or tampers with their electronic monitoring bracelet they will go to jail for at least 12 months.

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The Government is determined to ensure that the DPSOA is providing maximum protection to the community and that is why the DPSOA and related sex offender community protection laws are currently under review.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



JARROD BLEIJIE MP

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice