Queensland Law Society

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Office of the President

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Our ref: [MC]

Committee Secretary
Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

By email: [redacted]

Dear Committee Secretary

Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024

The Queensland Law Society (QLS) supports measures that enhance community safety. It is our firm view that all Queenslanders have a right to be and feel safe in our community.

QLS has significant and serious concerns about the Queensland Community Safety Bill 2024 (the Bill). In line with our previous advocacy and the advice of our specialist legal policy committees, including the Domestic and Family Violence, Children's Law, Criminal Law, First Nations Legal Policy, Human Rights and Public Law and Committees, we oppose the passage of the Bill.

QLS is deeply concerned about the inimical impact this Bill will have on community safety. These provisions will not enhance community safety. This legislation will not address the underlying drivers of crime which would be best served by investment, and expansion of early intervention initiatives, diversionary options, restorative justice and rehabilitation programs. The detrimental and devastating impact that this legislation will have on all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (who are overrepresented in the child protection, youth justice and criminal justice systems), should be of significant concern to the legislature. If passed, this Bill will place further strain on overpopulated prisons, youth detention centres and watchhouses. These environments are unsafe for corrective services staff and will impinge on the rehabilitation prospects of detainees.

Increased penalties

QLS is committed to evidence-based policy, that is, public policy informed by cogent and objective evidence.[1] Therefore, any increase of maximum penalties must be proportionate, that is, the severity of penalties should align with the seriousness of offences. The Bill contains a number of provisions pertaining to an increase maximum penalties. We consider the maximum sentences for serious vehicle offences are appropriate.

It is crucial to recognise that increased penalties do not deter criminal behaviour. Research shows that punishment and imprisonment not only fail to deter but are, in fact, criminogenic.

[1] https://www.qls.com.au/Content-Collections/Policy-Positions/Evidence-based-policy-position

This is evident at the domestic level, with the Queensland Productivity Commission report into imprisonment and recidivism finding that recidivism rates in Queensland are increasing.[2]

Deterrence theory relies upon an individual committing a crime to engage in a rational calculation, using cost-benefit of whether the punishment outweighs the benefits. However, this is often not the case as many crimes are fuelled by anger, rage, depression, drug or alcohol use. This is compounded in the case of children by the fact that their relative immaturity makes them more impulsive and prone to engaging in sensation-seeking experiences than adults.[3] Current research indicates that the human brain does not reach developmental maturity until a person reaches their mid-20s,[4] with the last two parts of the brain to reach maturity being those responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and emotional processing and control.[5] Time in custody can also increase the likelihood of recidivism by enabling children to learn better criminal strategies and skills from other offenders and expand anti-social peer networks.[6]

Closing the Gap

The Bill does not reflect Closing the Gap priorities and the proposed changes to criminal and policing legislation are not cogent or evidence-based. These reforms will result in further uncertainty and a high level of distrust of government bodies by First Nations citizens. The justice gap is of great concern to QLS. The justice gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians is set to widen as a result of this Bill.

Online criminal content

Amendment of Summary Offences Act 2005

Clause 7 – Insertion of new s 26B (Publishing material about particular offending behaviour)

We oppose the introduction of the new provision in Clause 7 regarding advertising offences.

The development of an appropriate legislative response to publishing material on social media depicting conduct that constitutes an offence must be undertaken carefully. QLS is particularly concerned at the amendments to the Summary Offences Act 2005, their disproportionate impact on young people and First Nations people.

We note establishing the proposed offence will require the prosecution to prove that the accused published material that depicts a prescribed offence, and, that it was published, for the purpose of glorifying the conduct, or increasing the person's, or another person's, reputation. We note the term '*glorifying*' is not defined and anticipate difficulties in proving these elements.

QLS also opposes the proposed amendments contained in clauses 15 – 20 that seek to introduce an aggravating circumstance in relation to publishing content depicting the specific offences contained in these clauses and increasing the associated maximum penalties.

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[2] Queensland Productivity Commission, *Inquiry into Imprisonment and Recidivism* (Final Report, 2019) 48.
[3] Queensland Treasury, Youth offending – Research brief (April 2021) 8.
[4] Queensland Treasury, Youth offending – Research brief (April 2021) 7.
[5] Queensland Treasury, Youth offending – Research brief (April 2021) 7.
[6] Queensland Treasury, Youth offending – Research brief (April 2021) 8.

Vehicle and advertising-related offending

Amendment of Criminal Code

Clause 13 – Amendment of s 328A (Dangerous operation of a vehicle)

The Bill seeks to increase penalties for a number of offences against the Criminal Code, including:

(a) 328A(4)(a) – dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death or grievous bodily harm. Maximum penalty increased from 10 years to 14 years imprisonment.

(b) 328(4)(b) and 328(4)(c) – maximum penalty to be increased from 14 years to 20 years imprisonment where the aggravating circumstances apply

We are opposed to the increase in the maximum penalties for offences against Criminal Code sections 408A, 427 and 469. We note that when dangerous operation of a motor vehicle causing death occurs this offence is usually charged in addition with manslaughter. Manslaughter has a significant maximum penalty of imprisonment for life.

The Society is concerned that increasing the maximum penalty for this offence will create delay for children and young people in the system. This will mean that children will spend more time on remand and in unsafe detention facilities.

The emphasis on punitive measures is misplaced and unjustified. Instead, emphasis should be placed on addressing the causes of this type of offending.

Clause 14 – New Chapter 29 offences

The Bill seeks to insert the following new offences into Chapter 29 of the Criminal Code.

(a) Makes it an offence for a person to use a vehicle in a way that causes damage to an emergency vehicle, where a person may know, or ought to reasonably know that the vehicle is an emergency vehicle. A maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment is proposed.

(b) To prohibit the driving of a motor vehicle at or near a police officer in an attempt to threaten the officer's safety. A maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment is proposed.

QLS does not support the introduction of the new offences in clause 14.

In our view, the proposed offences are already appropriately covered by the current driving offences resulting in death or grievous bodily harm.

Regrettably, it is anticipated that this new offence will be used to charge young offenders driving in the vicinity of a police officer. We are concerned about the seriousness of this offence and its potential to prolong the resolution of matters. If this offence is enacted, we strongly recommend it be a summary offence and be granted an exception under section 8 to ensure that the resolution of matters involving young people are not delayed.

QLS is aware that there has been significant pressure for a stronger stance to be taken with respect to driving related offences involving police and emergency workers. We acknowledge that these types of offences are particularly serious, as the persons the subject of these types

of offences are in a position of vulnerability due to their employment. However, this is already recognised and considered as an aggravating circumstance under the current criminal law.

The measures proposed in the Bill are unlikely to achieve their objective in changing behaviour. They are likely, however, to have a disproportionate effect on First Nations people, who are already overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

Prevention of knife crime (Jack's Law)

Amendment of Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000

Clauses 30 and 36

Clauses 30 and 36 of the Bill pertain to amend the PPRA to expand the prescribed public places to which the hand held scanner provisions may apply (s 39C) and extend the expiry date of the scanning provisions (s 39L).

The QLS understands the devastating impact that knife crime has on the Queensland community. We acknowledge all those who have been impacted by knife crime and crime in general. We are supportive of evidence-based measures that seek to reduce the incidence of knife crime by both adults and children, thereby enhancing community safety.

We note the *Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Act 2023* was enacted last year. This legislation significantly expanded police search powers. The purpose for this was to allow for a further evaluation, yet it is unclear whether this has occurred. We note the August 2022 Griffith Criminology Institute report into the Review of the Queensland Police Service Wanding Trial. This project evaluated the first 12 months of the wanding trial, which took place in two safe night precincts (SNPs) at the Gold Coast from 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022. This period of time overlapped with COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the Society proposes that a review into the *Police Powers and Responsibilities (Jack's Law) Amendment Act 2023* be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the legislation reducing the incidence of knife crime since the introduction of the legislation.

While we do not outright oppose this expansion, we advocate for evidence to substantiate its necessity. The Society suggests that further consideration needs to be taken into account as to causes which drive children and young people to purchase knives. This must include analysis into measure to make children feel safe in their communities, including stable housing. In addition, alternatives to criminalisation should be investigated as the research indicating the criminogenic nature of detention has been widely published. The evidence shows that the mechanisms to prevent knife crime involves supporting families and young people and diverting children and young people into positive programs.

Moreover, there is currently no mechanism in place for police to report instances of stopping and taking details from young people. While police keep this information internally, there exists no external reporting on the frequency of stops involving the same young person without any associated offending. We advocate for this accountability to coincide with any expansion of police powers. Additionally, we propose the establishment of an external body tasked with analysing such statistics to mitigate instances of over-policing and racial profiling by the police. Police should provide evidence and data to justify their actions, particularly in light of proposed expansive powers. With broad expansion of powers suggested, increased mechanisms of accountability are appropriate.

Amendment of Weapons Act 1990

Clause 40 – Amendment of s 51 Weapons Act 1990 (Possession of a knife in a public place or a school)

Clause 40 of the Bill amends section 51 of the Weapons Act 1990 to increase the maximum penalty for possessing a knife in a public place or school.

QLS opposes the proposal to increase the maximum penalty for possessing a knife in a public place or school, as there is no evidence-based rationale for this change. There is no indication of an increasing prevalence of the offence. Experience suggests that this offence disproportionately criminalises benign knife possession situations by itinerant and indigent individuals who commonly carry knives for domestic reasons while living in or occupying public places.

Weapons safety

Amendment of Explosives Act 1999

Clause 42 – Insertion of new s 43A (Requirement to check licence or authority before selling small arms ammunition)

The Bill introduces a safeguard in relation to the sale of small arms ammunition by amending the Explosives Act 1999. Clause 42 inserts a new section 43A. This appears to be double up on existing legislation; a person is already required to be licenced to possess a firearm and there is already a test to be applied as to whether a person is fit to possess a firearms licence. Furthermore, it is already a serious criminal offence to possess a firearm without a licence.

Amendment of Weapons Act 1990

Clause 73 – Insertion of new pt 5A (Firearm prohibition orders)

Clause 73 of the Bill introduces an FPO scheme in Queensland by amending the Weapons Act 1990 with the insertion of new pt 5A (Firearm prohibition orders).

The Society holds a number of reservations regarding proposed FPO legislative scheme. We submit that further data and analysis is required to ensure that a legislative regime, that will limit individual rights and introduce broad search powers, is justified. In particular, that it is appropriately targeted to individuals who are demonstrable at high risk of criminal use of firearms and therefore clearly captured within the objective.

At the outset, the Society makes the following overarching comments:

- The proposed FPO scheme grants police extensive powers to restrict firearm possession, even without prior convictions related to firearms. It is important that any such scheme strikes the right balance between public safety and individual rights.
- In effect, the proposed broadening of search powers will eliminate the requirement for a police officer to form, as a prerequisite to conducting a search, a reasonable suspicion that a certain offence has been committed. We strongly oppose this approach.
- Lengthy exclusion periods may hinder rehabilitation and reintegration.
- The proposed codification of the scheme must be consistent with the Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld).

- Any reform should also consider broader issues including the high rates of incarceration of First Nations people and the Queensland Government's commitment to Closing the Gap.
- The Society strongly supports the diversion of young people from the criminal justice system to community support centres as the optimal response to youth crime, including firearm related offending.

Search powers

The proposed search powers for police, in relation to individuals who are, or suspected to be, subject to a FPO, are very broad and largely unfettered. The police have adequate search powers under existing legislation to search a person the subject of a FPO. In effect, the proposed FPO scheme would authorise police to take the following action, if the exercise of power is reasonably required, to ensure compliance with an FPO:

- stop, detain and search the person subject to the FPO;
- step, detain and search any vehicle used by the person; and
- Enter and search any place occupied by the person.

The fair and reasonable use of new FPO search powers depends largely on the discretion of individual police officers. We hold concerns about the breadth of the powers and the consequential risks associated with unreasonable and arbitrary use. If the scheme is progressed in the proposed form, we consider it important for limitations to be included in respect of necessity, reasonableness and proportionality.

We also recommend that any new scheme includes a statutory requirement for an independent and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the search powers be undertaken once the scheme has been in operation for at least two years.

Exclusion period

With respect to exclusion periods, while the Society recognises the importance of public safety and the need to prevent firearm-related harm, we consider that the 10 year exclusion period may have unintended consequences and disproportionately impact individuals.

For instance, where a weapons licence is required for a person's employment (i.e. police service, security officer etc.) the exclusion period aspects of the proposed scheme may have ramifications that are entirely disproportionate to the nature of offending that resulted in the issuing of a FPO.

Members of the Society's Criminal Law Committee also consider that this disproportionality will discourage accused individuals from cooperating with the police and seeking legal avenues for rehabilitation, education and community engagement.

Power to revoke

The Bill states that the Commissioner will be empowered to revoke a police issued FPO at any time, however a Court issued FPO can be revoked by the court only upon application of the Commissioner. The Bill appears silent in relation to any scope for a person issued with a FPO to make an application for the order to be revoked, separate to the proposed review and appeal avenues. QLS holds the strong view that it is wrong to provide only the Commissioner with the power to apply to revoke an FPO.

Any legislative framework establishing a FPO scheme should permit a person issued with a FPO to apply to the Commissioner or the Court for the order to be revoked. We propose that the test that must be met in order for a person to apply could include a change in their circumstances. For example, if they have taken steps to reduce risk by engaging in rehabilitative, diversionary or education programs.

Children and FPOs

The proposal does not include adequate safeguards for children. The imposition of FPOs on children will further expose young people to the criminal justice system. The imposition of such orders leads to the over-policing of children and their families. As discussed above, FPOs enable extensive personal and property search powers and this, in and of itself, is a form of punishment of young people. A diversionary approach will lessen the potential trauma and other negative effects associated with young people having continuing contact with police and the criminal justice system.

Hooning and low-range drink-driving

Amendment of Summary Offences Act 2005 and Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995

QLS opposes the proposed measures to address hooning and low-range drink-driving. This includes increasing both the maximum fine amount that can be imposed by a court for drink driving offences and the minimum driver licence disqualification that a court must impose for certain drink driving offences. Additionally, the Bill proposes to attach a licence disqualification of two months to a penalty infringement notice.

It is unclear why the current maximum fine penalties and mandatory minimum license disqualification periods for low and mid-range BAC offences are not seen as sufficiently severe deterrent.

The Society does not support children receiving infringement notices as these can result in mandatory disqualifications. Children, due to their age, have limited earning capacity and the ability to repay such infringement notices. It is rare that infringement notices would be ordered by a court.

Amendment of Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012

Clause 108 - Amendment of s 105 (Form of police protection notice)

The Law Society does not support this amendment to extend the maximum period before a police protection notice must be first mentioned in court to 14 days.

This amendment provides power to police to completely sidestep the court process and unilaterally make determinations about the imposition of orders and conditions which are disruptive to the lives of respondents and aggrieved persons who may not want the orders in the first place. It should be noted that many PPNs purport to oust respondents from their home, with limited time for them to make alternative arrangements. In circumstances where an applicant officer has very little evidence supporting allegations of domestic violence, a respondent is unfairly disadvantaged by having to comply with conditions of a PPN that might largely interrupt their life, before they have the opportunity to attend court and advocate against a temporary protection order being made and/or the conditions to be imposed.

Amendments relating to youth justice

Amendments to the Children's Court Act 1992

Clause 112 – Amendment of s 20 (Who may be present at a proceeding)

The Law Society does not support this amendment.

The explanatory notes do not provide the policy rationale for the proposed amendment. Currently, victims are permitted to attend the Childrens Court and participate in restorative justice processes. As such, the proposed amendment does not expand the rights of victims. QLS has reservations regarding the lack of adequate support and suitable environments for victims within the Children's Court. In contrast, the restorative justice process has been designed to allow for meaningful victim participation.

The Society does not support removal of the court's discretion to exclude victims when necessary. There are some instances where a victim should be excluded from Childrens Court and the judicial discretion to allow this should be maintained. For example, where a child who has been subjected to sexual abuse who then commits a property offence against their abuser should not have to face their abuser in the court room.

In relation to the opening of the Children's Court to the media and the public at large, there are certain restrictions which should remain in place. This is a measure which aims to protect a child's identity from the public in order to ensure their safety. It ensures that the decisions made as a child do not follow into adulthood and jeopardise the opportunity to become productive community members. In our view, allowing the media to report on Children's Court proceedings could cause further harm and vigilantism within the community. We support strong guidelines to ensure confidentiality provisions are effective.

Amendment of Youth Justice Act 1992

Clause 119 – Amendment of s 52AA (Court may impose monitoring device condition)

Clause 119 of the Bill purports to expand the electronic monitoring trial (EM) trial. While the Society acknowledges the policy rationale for the expansion of the use of EM, we do not support this amendment. This is the second time that the trial cohort has been expanded due to an inability to establish sufficient numbers for an effective evaluation of electronic monitoring.

The first expansion also involved increasing both the geographic areas and the age of the young people that might be subject to electronic monitoring. This first expansion did not yield sufficient numbers for an evaluation. Therefore, the Society is concerned that the proposed second expansion will become a net widening exercise that will, again, not yield sufficient numbers for an evaluation. Due to the considerations that must be undertaken before a child is subject to electronic monitoring, this means that it will only be applicable to a very small number of young people. The Society would like to see that a proper evaluation can be undertaken and determined and seeks a government commitment that this will occur. As such, we suggest carrying out a trial on the children and young people currently participating in the electronic monitoring trial.

Electronic monitoring trial, by its nature, identifies children in their communities as those who have involvement in the youth justice system. A significant issue is that children might be subject to electronic monitoring even if the child's matters have not been finalised. In practical terms, this means that a first time offender can be known and identified in the

community. This concern is exacerbated by the fact that a large proportion of children in youth justice have an undiagnosed disability. Therefore, further involvement of these children in the youth justice system may reflect other matters, rather than ongoing criminal intent. This is a concern from a human rights and privacy perspective.

Clause 120 – Insertion of new s 56A (Temporary transfer of child on remand)

The Society supports this proposal to enable temporary transfers from watchhouses to youth detention centres to facilitate participation in programs and physical exercise. In our view, this is an ideal opportunity to consider extending the proposal to permit day leave from watchhouses generally. In our view, the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* should include an amendment to allow children and young people to obtain day leave from watchhouses, for example to attend family funerals.

In addition, we consider that there must be a requirement for police or youth justice officers to notify parents when young people are given leave. In our view, there must be a discretion to allow police officers not to notify parents if there is intelligence to suggest that the child or hospital would be placed in danger. These reasons must be recorded for review by the Inspector of Detention Services.

Given the likely infrequency of such leave due to administrative constraints and lockdowns in detention centres, we also suggest establishing accountability mechanisms such as reporting requirements to monitor the usage of this power. This reporting mechanism may mitigate its misuse as a justification for prolonged detention of children in watch-houses.

Finally, we note that this proposal can only be operationalised in areas that are located in close proximity to a youth detention centre. Therefore, if a child is detained in a watch-house which is too far away from a youth detention centre, they will be deprived of the benefit of this proposal.

Clause 125 - Amendment of s 263A (Recordings in detention centres and use of body-worn cameras)

The Society is concerned about the proposal to record detainee phone calls, particularly regarding the protection of legal conversations. We are concerned as to how these recorded statements of children and young people will be used. In our view, these recorded statements have the potential to be used against children which may result in further criminalising children in detention. Children and young people, due to their neurodevelopmental status and cognitive development lack the maturity to understand the consequences of their words and deeds. This lack of foresight underpins a child's ability to undertake cogent, decision-making processes. As a result, children have a propensity to engage in reckless conversations and their ability to be influenced by others is markedly different to adults.

The Society is concerned about the effect that this proposal will have on legal professional privilege. Despite legislation stating that recording cannot occur of legal conversations, doubts exist as to the technological feasibility of enforcing this safeguard. The Society has great concern about the lack of capacity for young people to engage in conversations protected by legal professional privilege. The legislation states that they must have a confidential space for legal conversations, but in practical terms these conversations can occur in an open area. In addition, children do not understand the nuances of legal professional privilege. They may engage in conversations with their parents that might compromise their legal proceedings.

Furthermore, children might be reluctant to speak with parents if they fear that their recorded conversations will be used as evidence in child protection proceedings. This would have the unfortunate effect of reducing familial connection.

We note section 29 of the *Youth Justice Act 1992* which mandates that a support person must be present for a statement to be admissible. We seek confirmation that this provision will apply to recorded detainee phone calls.

Clause 126 – Placement of pt 8, div 2A (Age related transfers to corrective services facilities)

The Law Society does not support this amendment.

Clause 126 of the Bill amends the arrangements for the transfer of remanded detainees over 18 years old, creating a presumption of prompt transfer.

These provisions will apply to young people who have committed offences as children and are then remanded (who have not been convicted) in adult correctional facilities. In our view, a distinction should be made between children who are held on remand and children who are sentenced. In this regard, we note children who are involved in a Mental Health Court process who are not eligible for bail but may have charges dropped. In our view, it would be inappropriate for children involved in Mental Health Court proceedings to be transferred to an adult correctional facility.

Adult correctional facilities are not appropriate for children and young people. As noted by the Parole Board of Queensland, adult correctional facilities are overcrowded. In addition, the Department of Corrective Services cannot provide programmes, interventions and the appropriate environment for the rehabilitation of 17 year old children. It is our submission that careful consideration must be given to the harm that this transfer process will have on this cohort of children. The vulnerability of this 17 year old cohort was recognised by the government in their decision to transfer 17 year olds out of adult criminal justice system and adult prisons and into the youth justice system.

The sentencing regime used by the Courts when sentencing adults operates on the principle that young offenders (aged 18 to their early 20s) should not be sentenced to actual custody unless absolutely necessary. The justice system's focus is on the rehabilitation of young adult offenders. Creating a presumption of prompt transfer for 18 year olds in youth detention is inconsistent with other legislative principles. Sending 18 year olds into a prison with a variety of serious adult offenders risks their safety, could result in them becoming institutionalised, could introduce them to more serious offenders and expand their knowledge about criminal offending (especially in circumstances where they will be young and vulnerable among serious adult criminal offenders).

This amendment appears to serve no real purpose other than freeing up space in detention centres for more youth offenders to be detained under the new proposed amendment that detention "should" be imposed, where necessary, etc.

Clause 127 – Insertion of new s 279B (Photographing detainees and parts of a detention centre)

We have reservations regarding clause 127 of the Bill, which purports to integrate a provision similar to section 132 of the *Corrective Services Act 2006* (Qld) into the *Youth Justice Act 1992* (Qld). Section 132 has an overly broad scope and given past instances of misuse restricting right to information, we are primarily concerned that such a provision has the potential to hinder

accountability and suppress crucial information which does not serve to protect the interests of vulnerable children.

Clause 132 – Amendment of sch 1 (Charter of youth justice principles)

The Law Society does not support this amendment.

Clause 132 of the Bill modifies youth justice principle 18 to state a child should be detained in custody, where necessary, including to ensure community safety, where other non-custodial measures of prevention and intervention would not be sufficient, and for no longer than necessary to meet the purpose of detention.

The Society notes that community safety is already a significant consideration when sentencing. Judicial officers balance the need for community safety and the need to protect children and young people when making sentencing decisions. The principle of detention as a last resort, merely means that other sentencing options should be considered before imposing a custodial sentence. It does not mean that a custodial sentence cannot be imposed. Custodial sentences are and will continue to be imposed. This is evidenced by the fact that watchhouses, youth detention centres and prisons are overcrowded. There are situations where a judicial officer, in possession of all the relevant information, has decided that the rights of the child should be overridden by the right of the community to feel safe. These decisions continue to be made.

The proposed phrase '*ensure community safety*' in clause 132 is nebulous and carries the risk of more children being detained in watch houses and more children on remand. The exposure of children to these criminogenic environments will not ensure community safety and will further entrench children in the criminal justice system. This is wrong and will not only exacerbate the risks of recidivism among children, but also perpetuates a cycle of criminality that undermines efforts to rehabilitate and support them.

We hold the strong view that detention should be reserved as a last resort for both adults and children. Removing this principle for children while retaining it for adults creates a vexed situation that is both bizarre and inappropriate and undermines the objectives of the Youth Justice Act.

The practical effect of the amendment to principle 18 will be that children will continue to be held in unsafe watchhouses for extended periods of time, impacting their mental health and exposing them to adult offenders. This will not enhance community safety or reduce youth crime in the long-term.

QLS urges the Government to reconsider the Bill having regard to the concerns noted above.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact our Legal Policy team via policy@qls.com.au [redacted]

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