

CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL SUBMISSION TO BREACH BAIL, GO TO JAIL AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

L&C | 52/2/4-02 | #7943014

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

Retrospectively endorses the attached submission to the Queensland Parliament's Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee in support of the introduction of the Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026.

INTERESTED PARTIES:

N/A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On 27 August 2026, the Queensland Government introduced the Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 into Parliament. The Bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee, which has invited interested parties to provide submissions in response to the Bill.

Council Officers have prepared and lodged a submission on behalf of Cairns Regional Council. The submission commends the Queensland Government for enacting legislation which prioritises community safety by ensuring that offenders who commit further serious offences while on bail are held appropriately accountable. Council welcomes a firm and consistent response to repeat offenders, whilst also calling on the Queensland Government to ensure the justice system is appropriately resourced and has sufficient capacity to safely and effectively implement the reforms, as well as maintaining investment in rehabilitation, education and other initiatives aimed at reducing reoffending.

BACKGROUND:

On 27 August 2026 the Hon Deb Frecklington MP, Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Integrity introduced the Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 into Parliament. The Bill was referred to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for detailed consideration.

The overarching objective of the Bill is to address and deter serious reoffending and promote compliance with bail orders. This will be achieved by implementing a one-year minimum custodial sentence for adult and youth offenders who commit serious offences while on bail. The measures aim to strengthen community safety and improve public confidence in the bail system.

COMMENT:

Council supports the objectives of the Bill, recognising the Queensland Government's commitment to improving community safety, strengthening public confidence in the justice system and increasing accountability for offenders who commit serious offences while on bail. In a regional centre such as Cairns, where community connections are strong and the local economy is heavily reliant on tourism and small business activity, the effects of repeat offending can be particularly pronounced. It has significant impacts on victims, community wellbeing, business operations and perceptions of the region as a safe and welcoming place to live, work and visit. Council believes bail decisions should appropriately balance the presumption of innocence with community safety considerations and supports the Bill's emphasis on recognising the lasting emotional, psychological and financial impacts of crime on victims and their families.

While Council's submission expresses support for stronger bail laws and offender accountability, it emphasises that a long-term strengthening of community safety requires more than custodial responses alone. Sustainable reductions in offending will depend on adequate resourcing of correctional and youth detention systems, alongside continued investment in rehabilitation, early intervention and prevention initiatives. Council advocates for stronger coordination between agencies and community services, as well as targeted support addressing factors linked to offending, including childhood disadvantage, mental health challenges and disengagement from education and employment.

In summary, Council supports both firm responses to serious offending and greater investment in early intervention, acknowledging that lasting community safety depends on achieving both.

OPTIONS:

That Council:

Option 1 (recommended):

Retrospectively endorses the attached submission to the Queensland Parliament's Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee in support of the introduction of the Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026.

Option 2:

That Council does not endorse the attached submission to the Commission and requests that it be withdrawn.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Corporate and Operational Plans:

Councils' submission to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee supports the following pillars of Council's Corporate Plan 2025-2030:

Focus 3: Design for liveability - *A place-based approach that celebrates our community*

- Proactive advocacy and collaboration with state and federal governments
- Promote a vibrant community that supports wellbeing, safety and resilience

CONSULTATION:

Council Officers consulted with Councillors prior to drafting the submission. Councillors were then provided with a draft copy of the submission for feedback and comment prior to the finalised submission being uploaded to the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee website.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 – #7942132 Submission to Breach Bail Go to Jail and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026



Andrew Moore
Executive Manager Community Life



Destry Puia
Director Lifestyle & Community

Attachment 1 – #7942132 Submission to Breach Bail Go to Jail and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026



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OUR REF: #7942132

07 September 2026

Justice, Integrity and
Community Safety Committee

Via email: jicsc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Committee,

Breach Bail, Go to Jail and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026

Cairns Regional Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the *Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026*.

Council supports the overarching intent of the Bill and the Queensland Government's commitment to strengthening community safety, improving public confidence in the justice system and ensuring that offenders who commit further serious offences while on bail are held appropriately accountable. Community safety remains a significant concern across the Cairns region. Council regularly hears from residents, businesses and community organisations regarding the impacts of repeat offending including the effect on victims, perceptions of safety, business operations and confidence in our city as a safe and welcoming place to live and visit.

In a regional centre such as Cairns, where community connections are strong and the local economy is heavily reliant on tourism and small business activity, the effects of repeat offending can be particularly pronounced. Persistent criminal behaviour can undermine community confidence, affect business operations and negatively influence perceptions of the region as a safe and welcoming destination.

Council recognises the importance of balancing individual rights, including the fundamental presumption of innocence, with the need to protect the broader community from unacceptable risk. The community reasonably expects that bail decisions appropriately account for the risk of further serious offending and that breaches involving further offending are addressed firmly and consistently.

Council also supports the Bill's strong focus on recognising and protecting victims of crime. The impact of offending extends well beyond immediate financial loss. Victims and their families can experience lasting emotional and psychological harm and a reduced sense of safety in their own homes and community. Those impacts must remain central to considerations about community safety and justice reform. Council considers accountability and prevention to be complementary, rather than competing, objectives. Stronger bail laws can respond to the immediate risk posed by serious offending, but they cannot be the end of the response.

By the time an individual is repeatedly offending while on bail, the justice system is already responding at the most serious and costly end of the spectrum. Long-term improvements in community safety also require earlier intervention to identify and address the circumstances contributing to offending before behaviour escalates and another person becomes a victim.

Council acknowledges that stronger bail laws and increased custodial penalties may place additional demand on Queensland's correctional and youth detention systems. The Queensland Government must ensure these systems are appropriately resourced and have sufficient capacity to safely and effectively implement the reforms, including maintaining access to rehabilitation, education and other programs aimed at reducing reoffending.

Council's previous submission on the *Youth Justice (Circuit Breaker) Amendment Bill 2026* highlighted the importance of evidence-based rehabilitative approaches that address the underlying causes of offending and reduce recidivism. Council maintains this position. Secure detention has an important role in protecting the community and ensuring offender accountability. However sustainable long-term reductions in offending are most likely to be achieved when appropriate custodial responses are accompanied by rehabilitation, education, vocational training, therapeutic interventions and structured reintegration support.

Council therefore encourages continued investment in evidence-based prevention and early intervention and prevention initiatives, including youth diversionary programs, mentoring, family support services, education and training pathways, employment programs, mental health services and locally-led initiatives. Particular attention should also be given to the known links between childhood disadvantage, contact with the child protection system and subsequent involvement in criminal offending, as well as access to early diagnosis and treatment for conditions disproportionately represented amongst young people in the justice system.

Equally important is timely information sharing and coordinated case management between agencies and service providers, including police, youth justice, child safety, health, education, First Nations organisations and locally based services. Fragmented responses can result in individual agencies holding only part of the picture and opportunities for effective early intervention being missed. Stronger place-based partnerships can help identify people at risk earlier, coordinate appropriate support and intervene before offending escalates.

In summary, Cairns Regional Council supports the objectives of the *Breach Bail, Go to Jail and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026*, particularly its emphasis on improving community safety, offender accountability and recognising the impacts of crime on victims. Stronger laws must be supported by a justice system with sufficient capacity to implement them effectively. Council also supports investment in additional correctional and youth detention capacity to ensure the justice system has the infrastructure necessary to respond effectively to increasing demand. Equally, the long-term success of these reforms will depend on sustained investment in rehabilitation, education, therapeutic support, early intervention and prevention.

We must respond firmly when serious offending occurs and protect the community from unacceptable risk. At the same time, we must get better at intervening earlier, before offending escalates and before there is another victim.

Community safety requires both.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Eden', written in a cursive style.

Cr Amy Eden
Mayor