



MEDIA RELEASE

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CRIPPS CALLS ON MINISTER TO SUPPORT POLICE

Member for Hinchinbrook, Andrew Cripps, has called on the Police Minister and the Bligh Government to put politics aside and support an LNP proposal for mandatory sentences for assaults on police in an effort to protect police officers from increasingly violent assaults.

Speaking in the Queensland Parliament in relation to the serious assault on two police officers in Innisfail in the early hours of last Saturday morning, Mr Cripps said the assaults were totally unacceptable and that the local community would be shocked and alarmed that yet another act of violence had been directed towards police officers in the district.

“It saddens me that this has occurred in a community that I represent. I am absolutely appalled by these assaults. I will not sit back and just watch this sort of violence occur. Unfortunately, larger cities in the region, Cairns and Townsville, have a history of violence and are known to be hot spots for violence against police” said Mr Cripps.

“An incident like this would normally be considered out of character for communities in the Cassowary Coast. However, the assault on a police officer in November 2009 at Mission Beach and the assaults on these two police officers in Innisfail on the weekend are signs that this is changing. It shows a lack of respect for police and the law” he said.

“The Minister for Police this morning had an opportunity to make a Ministerial Statement on this issue, but he failed to do so, even in these extraordinary circumstances when a police officers’ jaw has been broken and he has had to undergo surgery. This issue can not continue to be ignored by the Minister and the Bligh Labor Government” said Mr Cripps.

“The LNP introduced a Private Members Bill into parliament to provide for mandatory sentences of three months gaol for anyone convicted of an assault against a police officer. The Coalition Government in Western Australia has introduced mandatory sentences for people who assault police officers, which sent a message to would be offenders” he said.

“This is the second time the LNP has put forward this proposal. The State Labor Government voted against it for political reasons. The LNP is giving Labor a second chance. I call on the Minister and the Bligh Government to put politics aside, send a message this behaviour is unacceptable and support our police officers” said Mr Cripps.

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