



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Committee on Law and Safety

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MEDIA RELEASE

Community safety in regional and rural communities

There is an urgent need for early intervention to deal with the complex social drivers of youth crime in regional and rural NSW.

The Committee on Law and Safety has today tabled its first report for the inquiry into community safety in regional and rural communities.

Since adopting the inquiry on 20 March 2024, the Committee received almost 200 submissions and conducted hearings in Bourke, Broken Hill, Kempsey and Sydney, with additional meetings held in Wagga Wagga and the Mid North Coast.

Committee Chair and MP for Mount Druitt, Mr Edmond Atalla, said the report is informed by powerful testimonies from individuals and communities directly impacted by crime.

"We've heard first-hand from people who've experienced the trauma of crime in their communities. The message is loud and clear: people feel unsafe, and they want lasting solutions," Mr Atalla said.

"Our report emphasises that youth crime is a complex issue that can't be addressed through policing alone. Evidence overwhelmingly supports early intervention and community-based support programs as the most effective tools to prevent youth offending. Our recommendations highlight the need for a long-term approach to community safety."

"Tough-on-crime responses might seem appealing, but they don't deliver long-term change. We need to invest in what works and that means supporting vulnerable young people early, before they come into contact with the justice system," Mr Atalla said.

The report also identifies significant service gaps, referral inefficiencies, and funding constraints that limit the effectiveness of current early intervention efforts. The Committee's recommendations aim to strengthen these systems and expand effective programs.

"We are deeply thankful to the people who shared their experiences and insights with us. Your voices have shaped this report, and we have tried to reflect your testimony as authentically as possible."

"We hope the recommendations in this report are given serious consideration so they can translate into positive action and improved outcomes for communities across regional and rural New South Wales," Mr Atalla said.

The Committee's inquiry is ongoing, and a final report will be furnished at a later date.

The report can be found on the Committee's [webpage](#).

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