



THE COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

"What we want is nothing more than equity"

MEDIA RELEASE

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Premier's intervention welcomed

The Country Mayors Association of NSW has welcomed the NSW Premier's announcement that the NSW Government will implement new initiatives to start to address regional youth crime.

CMA Chair Mayor Jamie Chaffey said the announcement, a timely intervention by the Premier following his recent visit to Moree, was recognition of the CMA's call for change to address the inequity regional communities face.

"It's obvious the Premier's visit to Moree has shone a spotlight on the urgent need for action in regional New South Wales to address our crime issues," Mayor Chaffey said.

"We are supportive of the legislative reforms focussed on youth crime and hopeful it will bring about meaningful change. We urge the Government to implement these reforms as soon as possible. Regional New South Wales cannot afford to wait.

"If the minor changes to bail laws are legislated and actions such as 'posting and boasting' are outlawed, our hope is this will form part of the solution in reducing youth crime in regional communities."

Mayor Chaffey said the CMA's [report on Crime, Law & Order in Regional NSW](#), launched in October 2023, clearly showed regional NSW communities faced higher crime rates and had fewer police resources.

"Rural and regional communities are over-represented in incidents of all crime in Bureau of Crime Statistics figures," he said.

CMA Deputy Chairman Mayor Rick Firman OAM also welcomed the announcement the Government would work with Moree organisations on funded targeted pilot programs that could make a significant difference to youth crime.

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"This targeted approach is good news for Moree and, if the initiatives are found to be successful, this could also be extremely beneficial to the rest of regional New South Wales," Mayor Firman said.

"It is clear recognition by the NSW Government that diversionary programs are important when it comes to long-term change, and we will be watching the outcomes of this pilot with much interest."

Cr Chaffey said the package of reforms and initiatives was a much-needed first step, and showed the NSW Government was listening and willing to make change.

"This is a very encouraging way forward," he said.

"However, we still have a long way to go to make meaningful change.

"The Bureau of Crime Statistics shows regional crime is a problem across the board – not just in youth crime, but in sexual assault, domestic assault and breaches of AVOs. None of these new initiatives address inequity in any area other than youth crime, which is only part of the problem.

"While we welcome the announcement, a parliamentary inquiry into crime and policing resources in regional NSW is still badly needed so that victims of regional crime, support workers, past and present law enforcement officers, and communities have an opportunity to share their lived experiences and offer suggested solutions to address and turn around the current situation.

"We look forward to the immediate implementation of the announced reforms, and to working with the Government to further address crime issues in regional New South Wales." Mayor Chaffey concluded.

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