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MEDIA RELEASE

Labor won't shoulder the load on prison safety !

Calls from staff at the Townsville Correctional Centre for stab proof vests have fallen on deaf ears in State Parliament. (Reference below)

In a reply to a Question on Notice, Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Mark Ryan, said load bearing vests were being provided to staff but made no mention of the protective vests requested in light of recent violent attacks on staff.

Member for Burdekin and Shadow Minister for Northern Queensland, Dale Last, said the reply to his question proved the Minister didn't understand the challenges his staff faced.

"The staff aren't asking for vests to carry equipment; they are asking for vests that could save their lives," Mr Last said.

"Minister Ryan says the Government wants to ensure staff have what they need to keep communities safe but what about the safety of the staff themselves?"

Following another attack on staff at the Townsville prison, calls were made by the union representing prison staff for tear gas and stab proof vests to be issued.

"I know the Together Union supports Labor but surely a staff member's life is worth more than political loyalty," Mr Last said.

"Myself and LNP members are the only ones asking questions about assaults on prison staff and making them safe because, unlike the Minister, we value what they do to keep the community safe."

"There is no point in issuing load bearing vests when the staff don't have the equipment they would need the vests to carry."

"Labor is soft on crime, soft on criminals and they don't care about the staff who are left to handle overcrowded, dangerous prisons thanks to their poor policy."

ENDS

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Reference: <http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/documents/tableOffice/questionsAnswers/2018/559-2018.pdf>