

Queensland Parliament Hansard Green


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SUBJECT: Noosa Electorate

MEMBER: Ms BOLTON

Noosa Electorate

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (9.25 pm): The quality of debate and speeches at the 30th annual YMCA Youth Parliament was outstanding. Congratulations to all including Grace, Bryson and the team who did a superb job. Our very own Noosa Youth MP, Jarrah Small, spoke with passion and maturity on impacts to Noosa's iconic environmental tourism brand which is critical for our economy. Hence why the 11 whale entanglements in Queensland shark nets during this migration has seen outrage from coastal communities and visitors, and peaceful protests and petitions. A meeting of Noosa organisations that work with or use the ocean voted in the majority for net replacement with safe alternatives during whale migration season including Noosa council and Tourism Noosa, and I thank them for the leadership shown.

The Federal Court determined in 2019 that drum lines do not reduce the risk of unprovoked shark interactions. An extensive review during the appeals tribunal case against the Queensland government reported, 'The lethal component of the shark control program does not reduce the risk of unprovoked shark interactions. The scientific evidence before us is overwhelming in this regard.' According to research from the University of Wollongong, nets do not keep swimmers safer.

Mr Stevens: Rubbish. Ask the people who've been bitten.

Ms BOLTON: I take the interjection. I am just reporting exactly what the tribunal determined. Since 2006 there have been three fatal shark bites at Queensland beaches where lethal drum lines and nets are in place. Governments so far have disregarded the recommendation from the KPMG report to transition away from nets as well as calls from Noosa council and residents who voted over 70 per cent for a trial of nonlethal shark control measures.

Living amongst nature comes with risks, as does driving—in Australia in 2023 tragically 1,290 people lost their lives. Education, as we know, is paramount to reduce injuries and fatalities in every realm.

Questions from our community are many and include why net alternatives being used successfully elsewhere are not being made available to community requests. Other questions include whether nets attract sharks via the bycatch that is in the nets. We also need a CSIRO study to put that debate to bed, amongst many others.

Our community seeks to live, work and play alongside our natural environment, not against it. I ask our government to listen to them and work towards replacing those nets before the next migration