




Speech by

Hon. David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

Hansard Thursday, 23 August 2012

TOWNSVILLE, NATIONAL WEATHER MAP

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (2.33 pm): I rise to speak about an issue that has troubled the people of Mundingburra and, indeed, the entire City of Townsville for many years. Despite being the nation's largest northern city, despite being the second capital of our state and despite having regional Australia's most diverse and robust economy, we do not command a position on the national weather map. This is a disgrace and must be fixed.

Mr Crandon: It is outrageous.

Mr CRISAFULLI: It is. If we are to grow a four-pillar economy, we need to take every opportunity to promote our state's largest northern centre to show we are open for business. This is not a Townsville versus Cairns battle. Our cities have moved on from that nonsense. Despite being smaller than Townsville, Cairns rightly deserves its place on the national weather map because of its vital role in Australia's tourism industry, but so too does Townsville. We have earned that right. We have transformed a once dry and dusty frontier town, known as 'Brownsville', into a thriving commercial centre. Almost 200,000 people now call Townsville home, while many of the towns from the Cape to Rockhampton and out to the Isa do business in our town every day. We have a waterfront that is the envy of many larger Australian cities, and with community facilities like Riverway, a new look city heart and the myriad public parks we are now a desirable place to live.

As the proud home to three successful national sporting teams, passionate host of a round of the V8 Supercars and birthplace of the highly regarded Australian Festival of Chamber Music, we are a city commanding interest from television viewers across the country and, indeed, the world. It is great to have in the chamber my good friend the member for Townsville; it is not so great to have my good friend the member for Coomera here beside me. We wear our relationship with the Australian Defence Force as a badge of honour and are now the posting of choice for Defence families, while our educational institutions are led by the revered James Cook University.

This has been a battle I have fought for many years. I have written letters to TV executives, I have lobbied federal and state politicians, I have even run lengthy radio campaigns with my good mates CK and Blake from Mix 106. OMG! Won't someone please take notice of Townsville? In the past I have been told by TV executives, 'It is unfortunate to view a city's strength as linked to its position on a weather map.' That is not unfortunate; it is reality. The argument that the map will become cluttered is a nonsense. There are around 350 kilometres between Townsville and Cairns. They have no dramas fitting in Canberra and Sydney, which is over 50 kilometres closer. Like Sydney and Canberra, Townsville and Cairns are vastly different cities with vastly different weather patterns. There is room for us both. Townsville is a city that has worked hard to put itself on the nation's economic map. It is time we took our place on the nation's weather map as well.