




Speech by

Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Hansard Tuesday, 12 February 2013

TOOWOOMBA, SECOND RANGE CROSSING

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (11.23 pm): I wish to bring the attention of the House to the Toowoomba second range crossing. We recently had a meeting in Toowoomba that was convened by Mayor Paul Antonio and the Toowoomba Regional Council. It was attended by 250 people, including people from businesses and politicians. Senator Barnaby Joyce and Ian Macfarlane, our local federal member, were there. Warren Truss came and spoke about the federal coalition's position going into the next election, which is that they have committed \$700 million to the project. This is a substantial contribution, but there will still need to be other contributions either via a toll or maybe a state contribution.

At this meeting where we had mayors from five of the shires around the area—four from the west and one from the east—Labor were sadly absent. The federal government really showed their contempt for anything west of the divide by not sending any politician to the meeting. They are not committing any funding at all. In fact, they do not really care what is happening in my region with regard to this crossing.

At the moment 26,000 vehicles travel along this road a day, up to 6,000 of which are heavy goods vehicles. They pass 20 and 30 metres from people's front doors. The livability of Toowoomba is being destroyed by these heavy goods vehicles servicing the Surat Basin.

The only real solution is to build this second range crossing. Anybody who wants to see what a massive task this will be can go to my website at trevorwatts.com.au and see a 3D visualisation that was put together by the department. I need to thank the Deputy Premier for his work in putting together the business case and the Treasurer and Projects Queensland for presenting it. It was very well received by everybody in our area.

Unfortunately, we had one mayor, Steve Jones from the Lockyer Valley, who seemed to think that putting a toll on the road might mean that truck drivers do not want to use it. I ask if he will come and doorknock with me down James Street, which is part of the Warrego Highway, and talk to the residents so that he can truly understand that a toll on trucks travelling through the heart of our town and actually putting them on a bypass route is all about giving the town back to the people of Toowoomba so constituents can enjoy the lifestyle and amenity of the garden city.