




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Join the Drive to Save Lives

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.55 pm): Today I would like to talk about an issue that is affecting our community in Toowoomba, and that is fatalities on the roads in our region. As my good friend Dr John from Toowoomba South and Pat Weir from Condamine would know, we have had 17 fatalities in our region since the start of this year. I would like to raise an issue that has come up in my community this past week where we have had several fatalities.

The question has been asked about what happened to the Join the Drive to Save Lives community action program. This was a community action program that was introduced in December 2014, and a meeting was supposed to be held each month to come up with a local solution. It was designed to involve community groups in discussions to make decisions about road safety because the Queensland government on its own cannot solve our road safety issues; it involves the community and it involves everybody changing their attitudes and behaviours. The idea of this community action program was to come up with local solutions by meeting regularly with a facilitator and the department to give some local ownership to road safety, to effect some change in our local communities and to build on already strong community networks and programs that are running such as the Rotary educational program that runs in Toowoomba.

Unfortunately, this community action program was put on hold in January 2015 as we went into caretaker mode, and 10 months later it has not been re-enacted. I call on the government to re-enact this program so that we can look at some of the issues that are affecting our young people and our road users in Toowoomba, because 17 in our small region is far too many people who have lost their lives. Ultimately it is about local solutions being developed by local people so that the community has some ownership and we can start to address issues that affect the people who live in Toowoomba. Those issues are different for people who might live in the city and they are different for people who might live in North Queensland, but it will take government to help facilitate and coordinate this activity. I really urge the minister to look at this. It was a good program that was well supported by the community and it clearly needs to be re-introduced. If there is no plan for road safety in Queensland, then consider this plan—because it is a good plan and one that I think the minister should adopt.

(Time expired)