



Speech By  
**David Janetzki**


**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH**

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Vanguard Laundry Service**

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.48 pm): Tonight I rise to air Toowoomba's dirty laundry and speak to the pioneering work of Vanguard Laundry Service in the heart of Toowoomba South at Harristown. Vanguard Laundry Service is the name given to a social enterprise project that will set the template for future social entrepreneurship in Queensland. The building is almost complete and the laundry equipment is about to hit Australian shores. Together with award-winning social entrepreneur and executive director of the Toowoomba Clubhouse, Luke Terry, I was delighted to show the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield, around the nearly constructed laundry last week.

**Mr Watts:** I was there too.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I should not forget the member for Toowoomba North, so I will take that interjection. No dirty laundry from Toowoomba North either. I also recognise Vanguard's chairman Jan Knox, the general manager Shane Walters, and Jo Sheppard, the CEO of the Toowoomba Clubhouse, who does an incredible job leading that organisation.

Vanguard is a commercial laundry business that will employ over the next three years up to 100 Toowoomba and Darling Downs people with mental health problems, providing a supportive workplace and a link to mainstream employment. The total cost of mental illness has reached nearly \$200 billion per annum in Australia, with nearly 20 million absentee days attributed to mental illness each year. What is most extraordinary about this community project is the local support and national philanthropic commitment to it. We have 55 local partners, including 104 individuals who have made contributions, 26 cash donors and 28 pro bono partners with local blood in their veins, like Hallmark Property, Clive Berghofer Land Sales, Precinct Urban Planning and Heritage Bank. Notably, Vanguard has a nine-year contract to supply laundry services to St Vincent's Private Hospital in Toowoomba, a long-term customer with the courage to back a pioneering project.

This will be Australia's largest mental health employment project. In recognition of this fact, the Paul Ramsay Foundation recently invested \$600,000 in its first social enterprise. The federal government has also contributed \$1 million to kickstart this project. Although not as high profile as his accomplishment of delivering the second range crossing, the retired member for Groom, Ian Macfarlane, has played an enormous role in achieving the completion of this laundry. 'Changing lives one wash at a time' is the tag line, and that is exactly what will happen. Social enterprise models deliver strong investments in social impacts—whether creating jobs or investing in education, disability support or social housing. Toowoomba is leading the way in reimagining what society thinks of 'charity', and I look forward to advocating for innovation in social enterprise into the future.