



Speech By  
**Trevor Watts**


**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2016

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Toowoomba Second Range Crossing**

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.54 pm): I rise to talk about the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. We were very blessed in Toowoomba to have LNP members at a state and federal level for the first time in a long, long time in 2012. This was a window of opportunity to finally get on with this great project. I commend Ian Macfarlane and Warren Truss for all the hard work they put into it. It has been great working with John McVeigh to make sure the project gets across the line.

There is an important issue that is starting to develop in my community. There was a commitment made that 1,800 new jobs would be delivered by this project and that 75 per cent of those would be sourced from local contractors and in the local area, areas such as the Lockyer Valley, Southern Downs, Western Downs, South Burnett, Goondiwindi, the Maranoa and, of course, the greater Toowoomba region. I am hearing from a lot of subcontractors that this may not be happening in the way they had hoped. Some of them, rightly so, should lose out because they are not price competitive.

The selection criteria includes prior safety performance, prior work history and price. One of the factors that also needs to be considered is local content. It is very important for us on the Darling Downs to make sure that our local people and young people are getting opportunities to be apprentices on this wonderful job. I know that David Janetzki, who is our candidate in Toowoomba South, is looking forward to getting his teeth into this and making sure that we fight hard for the jobs to stay local for our local community and to ensure that local companies are seriously considered for contracts.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** I hear the interjections coming from the other side about the former member for Toowoomba North, Kerry Shine. He was there for a long time—11 years. In 11 years this project did not progress. It went nowhere. There was not one single dollar from the state government from two different Labor premiers. They did business case after business case—and nothing. I look forward very much to working with David Janetzki to make sure that we keep the LNP right across our region to make sure that we can deliver for our region. This will ensure that not only do we have an advocate in our region fighting for them but we do not have a city focused Labor government that forgets about the people who live west of the Great Divide.

This road is critically important for the infrastructure and the productivity of Queensland, to make sure that our farmers and other commodity producers can get their products to port in an efficient and effective way. Whilst we are constructing this road, the people on the Darling Downs and in the greater Toowoomba region deserve the opportunity of those local jobs. I ask the minister, as have many of my constituents, and I ask Nexus to consider local people. I look forward to working with David Janetzki to make sure that local people get the opportunity of those jobs in our community.

*(Time expired)*