




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

Record of Proceedings, 2 March 2017

LIQUOR AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.59 pm): I may not have been in this House long, but if there is one issue that has had me more confused than any other it is the position of the Labor Party on lockout laws and alcohol fuelled violence, and that confusion continues. As a legacy, we have the LNP position. The LNP position was one of clarity and certainty. We invested \$50 million in wide consultation and created wise legislation. We sought to introduce 15 safe night precincts to centralise night-time entertainment so that the police could allocate their resources to address any antisocial behaviour. The LNP government sought to increase police powers to ban and to act. The LNP government sought to ensure that antisocial behaviour such as attacks on police and other people patronising night-time establishments would no longer be tolerated.

We saw the fruits of that. In 2014-15, assaults were down by nine per cent, property damage was down by 10 per cent and drug offences detected in the safe night precincts were up by 26 per cent, showing that the laws were working. Then the Labor government came into power. They were in search of a problem that probably did not exist. They were trying to address alcohol fuelled violence, as all of us here are trying to do, but they actually took us down a path towards mass confusion. They tried to take us to New South Wales. They pointed to Newcastle and Kings Cross as examples of the perfect safe night precinct model. However, we know that in those places there was no discernible change in crime figures or assaults, although there was a significant change in employment numbers, which dropped substantially. Had their laws persisted, the same would have happened here in Queensland.

I wish to tell the House about what the people of Toowoomba are doing. There are 15 safe night precincts across the state and a great one is located in Toowoomba. I want to spend a bit of time focusing on it, because everybody in Toowoomba is toasting it.

Mr MINNIKIN: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Before taking the point of order, I will say this: member for Capalaba, you are interjecting but not from your seat. The member for Stretton is getting close to a warning and the member for Thuringowa is not far behind him. Member for Chatsworth, what is your point of order?

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Deputy Speaker, you have taken care of the point of order.

Mr JANETZKI: I do not think they enjoy hearing the truth. I do not think they are real keen on it. I want to focus on Toowoomba, where we are all toasting the dawning of common sense within the government. The Toowoomba Safe Night Precinct President, Brad Fitzgibbon, and his family run a great pub in Toowoomba called Fitzy's. The pub's Tapestry Bar is great. Brad Fitzgibbon has said that the precinct puts the focus back on those behaving badly. ID scanners—a great idea of the LNP, thankfully adopted by those opposite—weed out the one per cent who want to cause trouble, without nannying the 99 per cent who just want to go out and have a good time. Toowoomba has a booming night scene, with the University of Southern Queensland attracting lots of young people. We have families who want to invest in pubs and clubs. With the diminishing of these Labor laws through rolling back of lockouts, families will invest substantially in the economic future of our city.

We have plenty of theatres. The Empire Theatre is the greatest regional theatre in the state, if not the nation—

Mr Watts: In the country.

Mr JANETZKI: In the country; I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. Across the city we have theatres and music spots. We have a great environment for entertainment. Mr Deputy Speaker, I know you have spent some time in Toowoomba and I am sure you would know of the Spotted Cow. I believe the *Betoota Advocate* is launching a beer at the Spotted Cow tomorrow night.

Mr Boothman: What is the Spotted Cow?

Mr JANETZKI: I can tell the member for Albert that the Spotted Cow is the greatest pub in Toowoomba.

Mr McEachan: I thought it was Fitzy's.

Mr JANETZKI: I take that interjection from the member for Redlands. Fitzy's is, too. We have great pubs everywhere. The Coorey family runs the Spotted Cow and I have often spoken with Phil Coorey, as has the member for Toowoomba North. The family is investing millions of dollars into the future of the safe night precinct in Toowoomba. They are investing in the Mills Precinct, which will have a new bar and bistro called the Flour Mill. An abandoned Westpac building located in the heart of Toowoomba city, on the corner of Ruthven and Margaret streets—

Mr Watts: In Toowoomba North.

Mr JANETZKI: I will not take that interjection. We are seeing families invest in pubs and clubs in Toowoomba, all because there has been a return to common sense and sensible lawmaking. It may come as some surprise to members, but I am not often out at midnight on a Saturday night. I am not a big one for being out late on a Saturday night and I never have been. However, I went out last Saturday night. I was invited by METRO Care, which runs a street crew in Toowoomba. For a number of years now, the safe night precinct has been the centrepiece of their oversight of Toowoomba's night-life. The METRO Care street crew is led incredibly well by operations manager Matt Gregg and volunteer Helen Muller. Last Saturday night, I went out with a whole range of people from the METRO Care street crew. Sometimes they will be there just to put an arm around somebody who has had too much to drink or who may be having an emotional meltdown. They give people red frogs. METRO Care is there for the people, all because of the safe night precinct introduced because of the LNP. Those guys do an incredible job.

Last Saturday night, I was fortunate to see the police in full operation. The safe night precincts introduced by the LNP allow police to allocate their resources where they are needed rather than having everybody running off into the suburbs. The police allowed me to shadow them on Saturday night and I saw a major operation involving over 35 police. I was incredibly impressed by their professionalism and their dedication. A couple of sniffer dogs were out and about. If there was any trouble, they were on it like a seagull on a hot chip. They were all over it. I caught up with Inspector Sharee Cumming, Sergeant Jason Hopgood and their team, all of whom did an incredible job on Saturday night because they can allocate their resources where they are needed. I pay tribute to them.

I want to finish on an economic point. We know that the safe night precincts, created by the LNP, sit in central business districts throughout regional Queensland in cities such as Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Bundaberg, Ipswich and Toowoomba. We have safe night precincts that overlap central business districts. We also know that half of all new jobs created in Australia are now created in central business districts. That tells us that central business district activity leads to ever more central business district activity. Therefore, it makes good economic sense for safe night precincts to operate because it encourages investment in the safe night precincts, which leads to additional investment in central business districts. If there is one distortion in labour markets throughout Australia, it is in regional centres. Therefore, it is a very good economic argument. Tonight from a range of speakers on our side we have heard a lot about the impact that these laws have had on jobs. I believe that, by turning back these proposed lockout laws, we will have a system that will encourage investment and economic development in central business districts.

For all of those reasons, it is pleasing that the Labor government has followed the lead of the LNP and seen sense. Basically, it has seen the light. It has been a long night, but the dawn is coming. At last we have an acknowledgement that the LNP laws have worked, are working and will continue to work into the future.