




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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ADJOURNMENT

Townsville Central State School, Pedestrian Crossing

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (8.41 pm): I rise tonight to speak of the improvements to the Townsville Central State School pedestrian crossing. In October last year two parents from Townsville Central State School, Sonia Hore and Kylie Ringuet, met with me in my office to discuss their concerns about drivers not stopping at the signalled crossing at the front of the school, thereby putting students' lives at risk.

Having known this school for many years, I visited the location and saw for myself the concerns of parents and brought them to the attention of the Minister for Road Safety, Hon. Mark Bailey, and invited him to visit the school crossing when next in Townsville. True to his word, the minister visited the school and met with the two parents and principal Craig Holmer, who described countless instances of near misses between children crossing and vehicles not stopping at those particular lights.

I can say from firsthand experience that the crossing at the front of the school was dangerous as I, too, was nearly skittled on the first day of the school year as two drivers ignored the red signal and drove through the crossing while I was crossing. We nearly had a by-election for the seat of Townsville! I can see those opposite champing at the bit for that. Thankfully, I had organised a police officer to be in attendance on that particular day at the crossing. Needless to say, he did his job with the offending drivers.

The two parents had also organised a petition from concerned parents and locals in the area which, I am proud to say, I presented to the parliament on the first day of sitting this year. There were over 600 signatures recorded. It shows how important this was not only for those at the school but also for the Townsville community.

I can report that work on improved safety at a signalised crossing outside the Townsville Central State School has begun. Minister Bailey awarded \$150,000 in safety improvements to improve visibility of the crossing. This included replacing faded signage, adding a new set of overhead traffic lights and installing flashing lights to warn motorists who are approaching the red signal and, believe it or not, moving the stop line further back.

This upgrade complemented recent signal changes that delayed green lights for vehicles, giving pedestrians more time to cross the road. This work has been completed 31 days ahead of schedule. I take this opportunity to thank Minister Bailey for the funding to complete the work, but, more importantly, I would like to acknowledge the work of parents Sonia Hore and Kylie Ringuet and principal Craig Holmer for their sustained campaigning on this issue. As we all know, children's safety is the most important thing.