




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

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ADJOURNMENT

Highfields

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (6.58 pm): I want to talk about a region in my electorate, Highfields. As their strong local voice, I am working hard to build a better Highfields, whether it is building the high school out there and ensuring that the sports facility will be complete with an indoor recreational hall, whether it is turning the ambulance station to 24 hours so that people have the coverage they deserve, or getting funding for the Mary McKillop high school to go ahead.

One of the things that is concerning some of the residents at Highfields at the moment is their electricity supply. This has been a serious problem. I am not sure whether the government are running a test on the unreliable future they will have or whether it is just poor management. On 2 and 3 October, there was an outage of more than 12 hours and people were massively inconvenienced. It was a foggy night and the traffic lights were not working. It took 12 hours before the power came back on.

I have had people come into my office about this. Mervyn came and saw me and he had all the times written down. He said that the power was out from 9.08 pm until 9.20 am the following day. It again went out from 7.20 pm to 8.40 pm. Then on 16 October power was lost from 6.05 pm until 9.30 pm. I do not know why they cannot get reliable power. I do not understand what this government are doing. I am not sure whether it is some sort of trial on unreliable power going forward or if it is just incompetence.

What we do know is that the former member for Toowoomba North, Kerry Shine, did not even want this area in the electorate. He wanted it kicked out of the electorate and its representative to be from Kingaroy. He did not want to represent the area because he knows it is too hard. He knows he could not deliver the high school and that the LNP delivered the high school. He knows he could not get the ambulance station. It took him nearly nine years to get part-time coverage, and we got it to 24-hour coverage. We have also upgraded the fire station out there and we have invested money into a sports and recreation park.

I look forward to helping the people of Highfields build a much better Highfields going forward. It is one of the fastest growing places in Queensland and it has been consistently for over 10 years. As it experiences those growing pains, we will be building the roads and we will be building the infrastructure. We will make sure they have the community facilities, the education facilities, the health facilities and the transport facilities they need to be able to be a successful suburb and realise their dreams for Highfields.

I recently had to get involved in a massive fight out there to try to protect some open green space in the centre of town. We have had great success working with the council in achieving that. Unlike the former member, who wants to run away and desert this area, I intend to work hard to represent them to make sure they get the services and facilities they need and deserve into the future.