



Speech By  
**David Janetzki**


**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Funeral Industry**

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (7.01 pm): Tonight I rise to draw attention to the state of the funeral industry across Queensland. The funeral industry was cast into the national spotlight at the start of this year when in Rockhampton Mrs Valigura, deceased, was removed from an expensive coffin purchased by her family into a pine box on the way to the crematorium. That unleashed a raft of people complaining directly to my office and directly to the department. Moreover, it has been revealed that there is a significant gap in the way that unethical behaviour is managed and dealt with in the funeral industry in Queensland. That also led to a raft of other complaints. These complaints have been well ventilated in the public arena, but they relate to coffin swapping, backyard embalmments and reports of mass cremations. At the moment the position of the department and the Attorney-General has been to ignore these problems and to limit their scope and influence throughout Queensland.

It is no longer good enough to ignore these complaints. There are three very good reasons why it is not good enough: firstly, the funeral operators of Queensland want an industry where there is integrity, consistency and where their good reputation will not be besmirched by the activities of a few dodgy operators. I have met funeral operators from all over Queensland—from Townsville to the Gold Coast and Gympie and everywhere in between. I am very fortunate in my own electorate to have extraordinary funeral operators who do an amazing job, families like the Burstows. They are honest, hardworking people who want to see an industry full of integrity. It is not just funeral operators who want to see an industry full of integrity, it is the industry bodies.

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mr JANETZKI:** I will take the interjection from the Attorney-General. I understand the Attorney-General is meeting with the QFDA and the AFDA to thrash out a way forward on this particular issue. The industry needs assistance. It is crying out for regulation. I will let them discuss that with the Attorney-General. It needs to be a mandatory code.

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mr JANETZKI:** A voluntary code is not good enough when we are talking about people's livelihoods. More than anything else, it is about the consumers of Queensland: grieving families like the Valiguras—it was a real pleasure to meet Karen and Mick and their families—who want certainty that in their most vulnerable state, when they are burying and saying goodbye to their loved ones, they can rely on a funeral industry that is well managed and well governed.