




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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EDUCATION (OVERSEAS STUDENTS) BILL

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (4.40 pm): I, too, rise to make a brief contribution to the debate of the Education (Overseas Students) Bill 2018. This bill, and in particular the aspect of international students and the regulation of their relationship with authorities in Australia, is of particular interest to the people of Toowoomba because our Toowoomba Regional Council, the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise and the community at large want to see Toowoomba as a major part of the education system. International students play a major role in that.

Toowoomba has 86 schools, both primary and secondary. Toowoomba boarding schools make up 20 per cent of all boarding schools across Queensland. A significant number of those students are in fact international students, and why would international students not want to come to Toowoomba? It is a beautiful city. It has a diversified economy and there are lots of opportunities for students to move on to university when they complete school. It is a stated goal of the Toowoomba Regional Council and our local economic development board to make education a primary part of our economy. As the service centre hub for Southern and Western Queensland, that is the right thing to aspire to. As education is jostling for position as Queensland and Australian's third largest export, we understand how important education is to the future economic prosperity of the Toowoomba region and Queensland itself.

More importantly, in a multicultural city like Toowoomba I want to acknowledge the fact that international students can in fact be the human bridge between cultures. We have seen great benefits in the diversity of our community through international high school students, many of whom stay on to study at the University of Southern Queensland. I am very happy to make a contribution to the debate of this bill not only for the economic prosperity which will come to the Toowoomba region as a result of a well-regulated and well-supported international student marketplace but also because of the cultural diversity that international students bring to our beautiful city.

There are a range of schools in my electorate, and my good friend and colleague the member for Toowoomba North has canvassed a large range of Toowoomba private schools and state schools that work in the international student space. I will not repeat all of the schools because he has many of those schools in his electorate, but I want to reflect on a couple of the schools in my electorate of Toowoomba South that do a wonderful job in encouraging international students to come to Australia and Toowoomba and settling them into their new community. I am thinking in particular of Centenary Heights State High School. The principal there, Maryanne Walsh, is one of the most outstanding educators in Queensland, and I think of the P&C president Wayne Heading and vice-president Alistair Webb, who are busy preparing Centenary Heights State High School for their 50th anniversary this year and the wonderful job they do in encouraging international students to come to Toowoomba.

Harristown State High School does an amazing job. They have an international student program. Their principal is Ken Green. I am looking forward to spending time with their year 12 students and the entire school assembly. In fact, I will be speaking at the Anzac Day service there shortly. They too do

an amazing job encouraging and integrating international students into their school community and I commend them for it. I particularly reflect on Chris Parker, who does an amazing job working with the students there.

I think of Christian Outreach College Toowoomba—Principal Michael Bray and Chairman Ken Wooton—who also have an amazing and very integrated international student program. They encourage students to attend Christian Outreach College. It was wonderful to share their 35th anniversary with them recently. They do a wonderful job educating Toowoomba students as well as international students who come to Toowoomba.

Of course, I include the school I attended, Concordia Lutheran College. I welcome the new principal, Mr Adrian Wiles, who was previously a principal at St Peters Lutheran College here in Brisbane. It is wonderful to welcome Adrian to the Toowoomba community. I know that he is going to do an amazing job encouraging international students and working with current students as well. I know from my experience at boarding school how great it was to have the influence of international cultures. I boarded with plenty of students from Papua New Guinea and Japan, so I pay tribute to Adrian and I wish him all the very best. The chairman of Concordia Lutheran College, Kyal Osborne, is a good friend of mine. He does a wonderful job working with the school, and I know that international students are a vital part of Concordia's planning for the future.

I also acknowledge St Savier's College, a Sisters of Mercy school, which recently launched their strategic plan. It is an exciting time for St Savier's College. Toowoomba, as I have alluded to, is a very competitive education space. There are lots of schools and lots of people who want to be educated there as it is the education hub for Southern and Western Queensland. St Savier's has redrafted its strategic plan. I wish Sharon Collins, the principal there, all the very best for the future. I know that international students make up a large part of McAuley House, their boarding house, and I look forward to working with them and their international students into the future.

As I alluded to, there is obvious flowthrough from international high school students who attend our local university, the University of Southern Queensland. Nobody can mention the University of Southern Queensland and the role of international students there without mentioning the name of one woman, Dellys Kelly. Dellys very sadly passed away on Thursday. With some latitude, I want to briefly note her contribution to international students at the University of Southern Queensland.

It was 1958 when Dellys had the idea of Toowoomba as a growing city, a metropolis deserving of its own centre of higher education, so she packed up the car with her young children and drove to Canberra seeking a meeting with Prime Minister Menzies. Somehow Dellys talked her way into the Prime Minister's office, and upon meeting Dellys I am not quite sure whether the Prime Minister knew what he was in for. She asked him for support to build a centre of higher education in Toowoomba as she knew that the future of Toowoomba was bright, both for local students and also international students, of which Toowoomba sought its share of the market. The Prime Minister said, 'Dellys, if you go away and raise £30,000, come back and tell me about it and we will see what we can do.'

I think the Prime Minister underestimated Dellys, because she went away and in a couple of months raised that £30,000. You can only imagine how much that is in today's dollars. She went back and put her case to the Prime Minister, and there was born the very beginning of the University of Southern Queensland—a centre of higher education for a great city like Toowoomba. I have to say that while she was there the Prime Minister convinced her to sign up to the very young Liberal Party, and she joined the Liberal Party for the princely sum of two guineas on 14 June 1958. Upon her untimely passing on Thursday, although she had reached the ripe old age of 86, Dellys had been a member of the Liberal Party—and now Liberal National Party—for nearly 60 years.

Toowoomba and the University of Southern Queensland would not have been the same but for Dellys' contribution to the university and what she did to get a local centre of higher learning for the people of Toowoomba, the community of the Darling Downs and for all international students who followed. Dellys was an outstanding friend, colleague and supporter to many of us. It saddens me greatly that she will be buried in Toowoomba on Friday at St Patrick's Cathedral at 11 o'clock. Toowoomba, the community, the LNP and her many friends and family—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Member for Toowoomba South, can I counsel you that I did give you some latitude. Perhaps your speech would be more apt during an adjournment. Can I bring you back to the long title of the bill, please?

Mr JANETZKI: On that note, the University of Southern Queensland owes a great deal to Dellys Kelly and I pay tribute to her.