



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 October 2018

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Toowoomba Second Range Crossing**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.55 am): The \$1.6 billion Toowoomba Second Range Crossing is a once-in-a-generation project. When the second range crossing opens next year, the benefits will be immediate and lasting for the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley communities. It will remove up to 80 per cent of trucks from residential streets and improve road safety.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** Local roads will be freed from the slow convoy of large vehicles that crawl up the range—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North.

**Mr BAILEY:** I would have thought the member for Toowoomba North would be interested in this, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, that is not helpful. Member for Toowoomba North, the minister appears not to be taking your interjections. However, that remains to be seen.

**Mr BAILEY:** Local roads will be freed from the slow convoy of large vehicles that crawl up the range and through Toowoomba streets. Members of this House had the opportunity to visit Toowoomba last month as part of the Palaszczuk government's Governing from the Regions program. The visit afforded me another opportunity to see those trucks on local roads and appreciate the difference that the second range crossing will make.

There is a tremendous sense of optimism among the people we met in Toowoomba. As Queensland's largest inland city, Toowoomba is an important contributor to our Queensland economy. Local investment in infrastructure is driving excitement for new ideas and opportunities. The Pulse Data Centre at the Toowoomba Technology Park, the Wellcamp airport and its associated industry precinct and the plans we have seen for an innovative food and fibre hub are being set up to create jobs of the future. The construction of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing will play an important supporting role in that prosperous future.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders. You are repeatedly interjecting. Minister, please continue.

**Mr BAILEY:** When completed next year, it will be a 41-kilometre-long toll road, passing Toowoomba's northern side, linking the Warrego Highway at Helidon Spa in the east and the Gore Highway—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, I have just issued a warning. If you would like me to name multiple members at once, I am happy to do so, but I would hope you could take my lead.

**Mr BAILEY:** When completed next year, it will be a 41-kilometre-long toll road, passing Toowoomba's northern side, linking the Warrego Highway at Helidon Spa in the east and the Gore Highway at Athol in the west.

The second range crossing is projected to contribute more than \$2.4 billion in economic and productivity gains for Toowoomba businesses and industry over the next 30 years. We have already seen significant economic benefits for the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley regions since the contracts were signed by the Palaszczuk Labor government and the federal government in 2015 and since construction started in April 2016.

Local participation from the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley region on the project has been measured at just over 80 per cent in the total dollar value of contracts awarded to August 2018. Up to 1,800 direct and indirect jobs were forecast to be created during the construction and operation and maintenance stages of the project. More than 5,000 people have been inducted to work on site during the construction stage, with up to 700 people, including subcontractors, working on site daily.

The local benefits are clear, but the wider freight industry also stands to gain from this project. Trucks headed to the port of Brisbane will avoid 18 sets of traffic lights on the existing Toowoomba range crossing through Withcott and Toowoomba. It will also improve driver safety and reduce vehicle operating costs by ensuring a maximum gradient of 6.5 per cent across the range. Upon its completion, more than 10 million cubic metres of earth will have been moved and more than 2,000 pieces of heavy machinery used. To date, project hours exceed 3.3 million. If the weather is kind, the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing is expected to open for business around mid-2019. I look forward to joining the people of Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley to celebrate that milestone, one of many, I am sure, the region will continue to enjoy in the years to come.