



Speech By  
**Trevor Watts**


**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 May 2018

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Toowoomba Second Range Crossing**

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (10.52 pm): I rise, as I have on many occasions in this place, to talk about the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing—a great piece of infrastructure that has been funded by state and federal LNP governments. The only thing the LNP did not do was appoint the contractor. The contractor was appointed by the incoming Labor government.

On 11 May 2017, I rose in this place and brought to the attention of the minister that I was hearing that there were some serious safety concerns about the range crossing. I was given an assurance that there were no issues with the contractor. A year later, I have found that there have been many safety breaches on the range crossing. I was pleased that, eventually, on 23 February the minister went to Toowoomba to start addressing some of the issues by appointing an independent auditor, because nobody should go to work with the expectation that they will not be getting home safely.

Now, a year later, we are addressing the safety issues, but another issue has come to my attention. Today, I have spoken about it briefly. The contractor subcontracts many parts of the work. I am concerned that the infrastructure that is being built is not going to be of the lasting standard that we were promised. I am also concerned about ongoing safety issues, because the subcontractors are being pushed too hard. Those are the same words that I used a year ago. When I do my regular roadsides in my electorate—and I will be there again on the weekend—people tell me that those same subcontractors are not getting paid appropriately for the work they are doing. They are considering having to launch potentially expensive legal action to ensure they get paid both for their original contract and for some of the variations.

I wanted to make sure that that was on record, because the Second Range Crossing should be a great piece of infrastructure. It should be a great good-news story for Queensland. This project will unlock Western Queensland's potential. It will lower our logistics costs. It will help our farmers compete in international markets. This minister has been asleep at the wheel on safety, contract administration and on so many other facets of this infrastructure. I hope that he can turn his attention to it briefly.