




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.21 pm): I rise to speak briefly about the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing—a great project funded by the state and federal LNP governments. The minister only had one job to do and that was to sign a contract. That has not been delivered on very well thus far. Before we get into a debate across the chamber, I want to make a comment about something very serious. There is a twin bridge that goes from Highfields to Toowoomba, and the range crossing will pass underneath this bridge. We as a community have a great opportunity to name this bridge the 'Brett Forte Bridge'. Highfields was where he lived. Toowoomba was where he worked. The road coming up from the Lockyer, the range crossing, is where he lost his life. I ask the minister to consider very seriously naming the twin bridge the 'Brett Forte Bridge'.

Let's get on to other matters that I am sure the minister will want to interject on. First and foremost I would like to talk about something that is worrying me greatly. I have been made aware of a biosecurity threat to the paddocks across Queensland, particularly in the north, from grader grass, which I am told has been sprayed along the range as a stabilising vegetation. This is a potential weed—*Themeda quadrivalvis*. This is not good for paddocks across Queensland, particularly in the northern areas. I ask the minister to look very seriously into the comments that have been made surrounding this weed being used and, if it is there, to kill it before it gets into our watercourses, before it gets carried across Queensland, before it ends up wrecking paddocks all over Queensland. That is a very serious biosecurity threat.

There were a bunch of coins discovered at this site—one of the largest discoveries of coins in Queensland. It was obviously someone's buried wealth. We, the people of Toowoomba, have a wonderful museum—the Cobb and Co Museum—and we would like to see those coins displayed there.

I have constantly banged on about the toll because businesses in my electorate are furious that they cannot plan for the future. They do not know what the completion date is and they do not know what the toll will be. They are pitching for contracts, often with very big organisations not knowing whether they will be allowed to drive through town, how much the toll is going to be and how it is going to work for them. These are contracts that they need to tie down. I implore the minister to let people know when the second range crossing will open and what the toll will be.

We also know that there is going to be a partial opening on 2 December, I am told, so that an insurance claim can be made over the slip. I am not sure of all of the circumstances around this, but let's get on and get it fixed. This range crossing is a piece of logistics that will lower the cost of exports in our nation, not just Queensland. I implore the minister to get it underway as soon as possible and not wait for an insurance claim.

(Time expired)