




Speech By
David Janetzki

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH

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LIQUOR (RURAL HOTELS CONCESSION) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (6.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill introduced by the member for Traeger. I did not have an opportunity this afternoon to speak to the Premier's motion, but I want to convey my dismay and sadness and extend my best wishes to the people in particular of North-West Queensland, in the electorate of Traeger, but across Townsville as well. To see the devastation across North-West Queensland and to see hundreds of thousands of cattle lost, perished by exposure or drowning, is heartbreaking. I extend my very best wishes to affected families as they seek to get back on their feet.

That is precisely why a bill of this nature is an important one. As we know, pubs in small country towns—and in larger country towns and in regional centres—are often the heartbeat of the area. We know that these pubs face all kinds of pressures in the 21st century. We have changing demographics, with populations leaving these areas—young people seeking work and study opportunities in bigger urban centres or in Brisbane. These pubs are facing a series of challenges, with people leaving the communities. As we have seen all too tragically, they now face flooding. More than anything else, these local communities face drought. The amendment I will be seeking to introduce later this evening relates to that question of drought. I will not speak any further on that, Mr Deputy Speaker, given your earlier guidance.

I probably was not aware of these issues and this inequality before I had the opportunity to travel with the irrepressible member for Gregory. The member for Gregory invited me to his electorate. It had been a long time since I had been that far west, since I was a young bloke. You cannot understand the vastness of our state except from the air. We live in an extraordinarily large state and these communities are made up of the most resilient and, in my opinion, remarkable Queenslanders we have.

After I flew into Blackall the member for Gregory and I visited the Union Hotel, where we saw firsthand the challenges that small pubs face. From there we went on to Isisford. I have to say that Isisford has the most amusing welcome to town that I have ever seen. They were quite upset about council amalgamations in 2008 and they posted a sign which reads 'The people of the Isisford shire will never forgive the Labor Party'. I digress. I met the hotel owner there. They rely on small business in that town and on grey nomads. That pub needs a concessional fee as is proposed in this bill. Finally, I spent the night at Yaraka, in far west Queensland. It has a town population of 12 and a catchment of 120 people across the district. It was there that I realised that they pay the same licence fee for a catchment of 120 people as the Breakfast Creek Hotel pays in Brisbane, with a catchment north of two million people. This is why I am keen to support this bill tonight. I look forward to moving my amendment shortly.