




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOWOOMBA NORTH

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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba North Electorate, Bus Service; Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (5.57 pm): I rise to speak about public transport in Toowoomba and the fact that our bus service is in urgent need of a review. Our bus service was changed a couple of years ago, and we receive nothing but complaints in the office about it being unreliable, inaccessible and at inconvenient times. I recently submitted a petition to the parliament from 630 frustrated residents from Highfields and Crows Nest—and that is just one bus route we have been having problems with.

The petition was meant to send a clear message to the minister asking him to review the bus service that we have in place. As part of that review—I know it is a new concept and we are not looking for a rigged survey out of head office—we are looking for someone to consult with the people of Toowoomba and the Highfields area so they can have some input into the bus service they need. It must include community consultation.

Some elderly members of the community are walking two kilometres from the bus stop. Members can imagine being in their 70s and trying to walk two kilometres from the bus stop when the bus used to go right past where they live. The changes to the network have made things so efficient that hardly anybody is using it anymore. It is very disappointing to see the changes to particularly the 950 bus service, which I hear about a lot. Some people in my community are aged and vulnerable. This is how they keep in touch with their friends and relatives. This is how they do their shopping and go to get their pension. This is a fundamental service. These people have the same rights as anybody else in Queensland to have a public transport system that they can use.

The other issue I raise today is for the same minister. The logistics and transport companies in Toowoomba, the Darling Downs and the surrounding regions are increasingly frustrated that this minister will not release the tolling rates for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. We all know what was in the business case: \$2 for cars, \$20 for a single and \$25 for a B-double. People are trying to get hauling contracts that are two, three, four or five years long, but they have no idea how much it will cost them to cross the range going forward. There is absolutely no reason for this minister to sit on his hands, do nothing and not tell the people of Toowoomba and the logistics companies what the toll will be. I urge the minister, in the interests of business and an efficient Queensland, to tell people what the toll will be so they can manage their businesses.