




Speech By  
**Trevor Watts**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

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**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (ROAD SAFETY AND OTHER MATTERS)  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (6.54 pm): I rise briefly to speak to the Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. The bill is a very sensible bill and, obviously, I will be supporting the bill. I worked for a number of years at a university and one of the terrible statistics to come out of working at the university was the number of funerals of young people I had to go to. Nearly all of those funerals were from people who had either been speeding or drink-driving, so anything that we can do to reduce either of those activities on our roads makes our roads safer for not only individuals but also every other road user who finds themselves facing a car coming at them at an excessive speed or on the wrong side of the road or in an out-of-control manner.

In a town like Toowoomba pretty much everybody has to drive long distances at some point. Whether they are heading north, south, east or west, there is travel involved. I am a father of four who has watched his children get their licences and get on the road. There is no doubt that your heart skips a beat when they first start driving on their own. Combine that with coming of age, there is always a concern that they might be tempted in that they might contemplate having a drink and thinking, 'I've only had one,' or 'I've only had two.' We spent a lot of time talking about that in my family to make sure that they never did and, hopefully, never will.

In Toowoomba there have been some serious tragedies from parties that have been held out of town where kids have then jumped in cars. These are 19- or 20-year-olds who have then jumped in cars. The argument has been, 'Well, I was the least drunk,' or 'I was the person who everybody thought would be the best person to drive the car.' My advice is do not drive the car. Instead, just sleep where you are or make better arrangements or do whatever. From a drink-driving perspective, obviously everybody can support the objectives of the bill. When there is a serious accident, obviously the first responders do not get away scot-free once they have attended that accident. It is something that will haunt them. We have had a situation in Toowoomba where there were nine people in a car that was involved in a serious accident through speed and other causes. One young fellow was in the boot. It was a pretty torturous scene, so I think we can all support those measures.

With regard to point-to-point speeding, I would encourage the minister to look at the new range crossing as a road that could be used. It will be a great thing for our region and for the people west of us and may be a good candidate to have point-to-point cameras fitted to ensure that people who are going along there do it in a safe and sensible manner. I also want to thank the minister for some flashing school signs to increase road safety around the schools in Toowoomba, but hopefully we would do a little bit more maybe around Toowoomba North State School and maybe a little bit more around Mater Dei going forward. They would be two schools that would very much appreciate some signs on other roads that are around them. However, both the existing Toowoomba range crossing and the new road present an opportunity to ensure that people are driving safely.

Over many years the existing road has seen many accidents on it, and people do go down it fast. It is easy to be tempted, particularly since it was improved when the LNP was in government. People do not necessarily follow the speed limits and they get around a corner and see the back of a big truck moving much slower than they were anticipating.

I would very much encourage the minister to have a look at both of those roads but also the roads to the west, north and south. I would like to see everybody who lives in my electorate return safely from a journey and make sure that they are following safe practices on the road and not speeding.

Certainly, as a former publican, I have been involved in a lot of public safety—talking about drink-driving and trying to discourage it. Anything that we can do in that space I think is very worthwhile. With those few short words, I support the bill.