




Speech By
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MOTION

Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (3.55 pm): This afternoon the Labor government wants us to talk about its economic plan for the state. I have some particular ideas for its economic plan which would relate well to my part of the world, the Toowoomba region. We are crying out for vision and for leadership across the Toowoomba region, and this state Labor government is just not giving it to us. Just as we were breaking in the last sitting of parliament, the unemployment numbers for March and April came out and it showed the Toowoomba region as the worst in the country, with unemployment topping 12.2 per cent, having risen five per cent across those two months.

Business sentiment remains strong and there is a positive atmosphere in Toowoomba; however, we need some vision. What could this Labor government do to help the Toowoomba region right now? First it could set down a budget. Budgets reveal priorities. Our region needs to know this government's priorities and that is exactly what Toowoomba & Surat Basin Enterprise and Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is looking for as well—leadership and priorities from this state Labor government.

What else could this state Labor government do for us? It could give us certainty around grants programs and around a clear road map particularly for hospitality. I think of Richard at the Southern Hotel who I have spoken with regularly about social distancing requirements. Wendy at Beauty with Perfection at Westridge Shopping Centre simply wanted to get a grant application in but, because it was closed on a Sunday without any foreknowledge, she missed out on that opportunity. Clarity is so important when you are trying to run big organisations, big employers across the region, and that is what this government is failing to deliver.

Even the border closures in Toowoomba have had an impact. Two of the most beautiful wedding venues in Queensland—Gabbabar Homestead and Preston Peak—employ hundreds of people, if not directly then through indirect employment right throughout the economy because they engage photographers, florists and gardeners. These are major employers in our region that desperately need clarity on when they can open up their businesses again.

What can this state Labor government do otherwise? It can get behind some major projects in our region. It can invest for growth, road upgrades, inland rail—fully supporting that inland rail—and energy projects across the region. There are major jobs on the line if we do not get this state Labor government to intervene. Fund the new Toowoomba Hospital. We desperately need it. Our hospital is out of date and desperately needs upgrading for the 21st century. They could get behind the entertainment centre at Wellcamp Airport. They could listen to your calls, Mr Deputy Speaker, to call in Fernleigh, which will deliver more jobs in our region—and off it will hang high schools, Catholic schools, public schools, road infrastructure. There are jobs on the line. Vision is more important than ever, and our region is desperately crying out for it from this government.