




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba, Quarantine Facility

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (6.24 pm): I rise to speak about a situation that is really concerning the people of Toowoomba. First of all we had the most unusual and unprecedented step of locking our border to other states for Queensland residents under any circumstances. This has caused a lot of distress because people have family members who are trapped on the wrong side with no accommodation, no money, no ability to earn an income and no ability to pay for the hotel that they are even staying in. The border lockout with no possibility of anybody coming in is just unbelievable, but what is more unbelievable is that the day after that announcement was made the Premier flew a plane up to Toowoomba and landed in Toowoomba and announced that she is going to build a quarantine facility and that the government finances—the taxpayers' money—for that facility will be commercial-in-confidence and she did not outline any form of a plan in relation to it. I want to draw the House's attention to a letter I wrote on 27 January—eight months ago. It is addressed to the Premier and says—

Due to overwhelming feedback from the community, a majority of which is not in support of the facility, I do ask that yourself and the Chief Health Officer travel to Toowoomba to outline in full detail the plan for a quarantine facility at Wellcamp. It's important that Australians can get home safely, but we must also safeguard those in the Toowoomba community that I represent.

Simply, this was all I was asking for: where is the plan? How are we going to manage this facility? I wrote several letters after that, none of which I got a decent response to. The only response we have had is eight months after the letter was written the Premier flies in, speaks to one or two people who live in Toowoomba and explains nothing and gets on the plane and flies back out again.

There has been no plan outlined as to how medical facilities might be able to deal with this. Toowoomba does not have the facilities to deal with a medical outbreak of COVID. We can move them to Brisbane and that would be fantastic, but unfortunately we do not have enough paramedics and we do not have enough ambulances to move them down to Brisbane. We already have one in three ambulances ramped at the back of the hospital. We do not have spare beds. We do not have the negative pressure rooms. We do not have the ICU units. We do not have the capacity to deal with an outbreak, so please, Premier, explain to the people of Toowoomba how this is going to work and please, Premier, provide us with some of the medical facilities that will be required if we have an outbreak in Toowoomba. I am very concerned. There are currently no spare beds. If COVID gets out in my community, it is going to be a travesty for the people of Toowoomba.