




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

Record of Proceedings, 17 November 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Tuffield, Mr D, OAM

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.24 pm): Derek Tuffield OAM, Chief Executive Officer of Lifeline Darling Downs and South-West Queensland Ltd, has announced his retirement. I want to tell the House a little bit about this great man who came to the Darling Downs 40 years ago and has spent 34 years devoting his life to Lifeline in our region. Derek has been the CEO of Lifeline Darling Downs in Western Queensland for the past 21 years and he has worked at Lifeline for more than 34 years. When he joined Lifeline in 1987, the organisation employed 20 staff. Today under his leadership, it employs 300 staff supported by more than 270 dedicated volunteers and covers over 550,000 square kilometres. Lifeline Darling Downs, as people may be aware, offers community focused programs and it deals with domestic and family violence, it deals with child protection, it offers financial counselling and it offers emergency relief. It has a great program coming up, Loads of Love, which will raise dried goods for hundreds of families across our region.

It is unbelievable to think of the impact he has had on our community of Toowoomba. Often communities are marked by an icon or a landmark. Toowoomba has been well and truly served by Derek Tuffield and he is an icon of Toowoomba. He not only has an Order of Australia Medal; he is also a fellow of the University of Southern Queensland for his services to our community. He is a life member of both Willowburn Football Club and Football Toowoomba Inc. I know that he did an awful lot of work to make sure those football clubs progressed and grew. He is an honorary member of the USQ Golden Key club and won the Community Hero Award for Blueprint for the Bush in 2008. He has been a commissioner of declarations for 35 years, he has been a member of the Gambling Help Network in Queensland since 2000 and a current chairman of the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee in Queensland. He is an independent chairman of Southern Queensland Rural Health.

Derek has also been a member of the Christmas Wonderland committee for the last 17 years. This is a great fundraising event that lights up the wonderful Queens Park for people to come and see. Derek is married to Rosemary and is a proud father of three adult children, and I am sure that he might just get to spend a little bit of time with them now. He has been a wonderful person who has affected so many people in our area—so many families, so many disadvantaged. He has given so much help to so many and our community says thank you, Derek.