



Speech By  
**Trevor Watts**


**MEMBER FOR TOWOOMBA NORTH**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Toowoomba North Electorate, Crime

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.11 pm): I rise to talk about some of the crime that is going on in Toowoomba. Unfortunately small business, which is the lifeblood of our community, is coming under extreme pressure. Betros Bros, an independent supermarket that has been operating for 85 years in Toowoomba, is an absolute institution in Toowoomba. They are absolutely fed up with criminals coming in trying to steal things. When challenged by the staff, they put their hoods up so they could not get their picture taken and then physically attacked the staff. On the way out the door, they physically attacked customers. The police did a fantastic job of chasing them down the street and arresting them. That case has gone through the court. They were charged and found guilty and are back out stealing again. Just recently they were back out stealing again, in the same shop. This is a problem.

Our small businesses in Toowoomba need the Labor government to bring strong legislation forward. In the last 12 months to October, there have been 1,376 cars stolen in the Darling Downs. At my main shopping centre, the security guards are now wearing stab vests because of incidents that have been happening in Toowoomba with machetes and axes. This is not the society that we want to have in Toowoomba, but this is what has been created by the Labor government's inaction on youth crime over nearly a decade. Worse than that is how it is impacting the people of Toowoomba.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** They do not like it, because they know it is true. Insurance is up 17.1 per cent. That is over \$300 a year for many people—car and house insurance. Rents are up 8.9 per cent, with a vacancy rate of just 0.6 per cent in Toowoomba. Electricity is up 25 per cent. Health costs are up 6.7 per cent. What we see after nine years is a complete failure by this Labor government to manage Queensland. We have a crime crisis; we have a health crisis; we have a housing crisis. The people of Toowoomba have had enough of this government's failure. I want some assurances from this government that the police will not be rostered short over Christmas, because this is a time when people are feeling most vulnerable in their homes.

One of the things that came out of my recent survey was the need for mental health support in Toowoomba. We need it now because people are suffering, particularly victims of crime. What I would say overall is that it is time to show Labor the door in '24 because they are a failed government.

*(Time expired)*