




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

Olympic and Paralympic Games, Infrastructure

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (2.37 pm): Do honourable members remember when the Olympic dream was a '45-minute region' and about transport infrastructure? People in Toowoomba were really excited about the opportunity. We even got federal government money to do an investigation into what the rail line to Brisbane would cost. This minister, a Toowoomba boy himself, is now sitting on that and will not release the findings of the federally funded transport investigation into rail to Brisbane. I call on the minister to do that so the Olympic dream can still stay alive in Toowoomba.

Whilst I am on the Olympic dream in Toowoomba, I want to talk about the absolute debacle—the chaos—that was caused by the Labor government and Premier Miles in the lead-up to what we are going to do in Toowoomba. They have a stadium where there is no car parking. There was no consultation. They did not talk to the community. There is poor access. They threatened some of Queensland's longest standing sporting clubs. It is a complete and utter debacle that has caused great discomfort for many people in my electorate. What they should be looking at is a Toowoomba equestrian centre of excellence. Council think it is a good idea. I think members here would all think it is a good idea.

It would fit very well with the sorts of activities we can provide in our region. Our showgrounds, under the leadership of Damon Phillips, have put together a very good plan. It is quite modest. It builds up over a period of time. It will leave a significant legacy for the region as well as give the equestrian community somewhere to have their Queensland championships. At the moment—with Labor being in government for 30 of the last 35 years—the Queensland equestrian championships are held in Tamworth. This is a perfect opportunity for an equestrian centre of excellence to be built at the Toowoomba showgrounds and to have quarantine facilities built. We could bring the animals straight into the Wellcamp Airport. It would be a fantastic legacy for our region. I think that, in all seriousness, the government should look at it as an opportunity that has come out of the chaos and disaster that was the consultation around the stadium.

While I am on the subject of other potential legacies, we could upgrade our women's changing room facilities and disability access to our various sporting grounds. That would be a good Olympic legacy because they do not have great access in Toowoomba. We could build a tartan track in Toowoomba. Toowoomba is one of the only cities that does not have a tartan track. There is no funding available. There is nowhere for anybody to do that apart from an undersized track at one private school. The government has had its blinkers on when it comes to opportunities in Toowoomba. I ask it to please take them off and look at the equestrian opportunity. Minister, release the fast rail information.