




Speech By
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ADJOURNMENT

Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (9.06 pm): Spring has sprung well and truly in Queensland and that means it is time to visit the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers. The event has been an award-winning tourism attraction for Queensland, having won multiple national awards. The 75th carnival kicks off this weekend with the food and wine festival and entertainment in the great Queens Park. If you are interested in wine tasting, cheese tasting, beer appreciation or distillery tasting, if you like flowers or if you like music, it is time to get in your vehicles and drive up the hill to Toowoomba. The whole place looks fabulous, with 150,000 seed bulbs and seedlings having been planted in Queens Park and Laurel Bank Park. Over 50 private homes will open their homes up for people to take tours and look at what people plant in the conditions we have in Toowoomba. There are beautiful gardens of all different kinds. We have coach tours coming through.

The other part of it is from a music point of view and I love a bit of live music. Thirsty Merc, Kate Ceberano, Pete Murray and James Reyne will all be playing across the weekend, as well as some local and up-and-coming musicians, particularly on Friday night. Whether you are interested in the garden competition and going to see private homes, whether you are interested in Laurel Bank Park which is one of our wonderful parks with a scented garden for sight impaired people or whether you want to look at the botanic gardens in Queens Park, they are all absolutely fabulous. My favourite, and I am a little biased, is the UniSQ Japanese Garden, which is one of the most authentic Japanese walk gardens outside of Japan in the world. It is a beautiful place. The only thing missing is koi carp in the pond, but there is a reason why we do not have koi carp in a pond in Queensland. It is a beautiful garden to take the family to and spend some time in.

At the food and wine festival itself, there will be various displays all through the day and into the afternoon and evening. During the day there will be different cooking classes and shows as well as different flower presentations, including from the Bromeliad Society. It is across our whole community. Do not think you can come up and do it in a day; you will need to stay overnight. The carnival is operational from 13 September to 7 October, kicking off with the entertainment in the park this weekend. The flowers, the food and the wine will be flowing well and truly across Toowoomba for the entire month. Let us hope we can win another gold award for a tourism event in Toowoomba. Last year 400,000 people visited.