



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## THURSDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2010

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. John Mickel, Logan) read prayers and took the chair.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

**Mr SPEAKER:** I advise honourable members that the annual general meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Queensland branch will be held in the Legislative Assembly chamber on Thursday, 28 October at 1 pm.

### PETITION

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the honourable member indicated—

#### Bruce Highway, Upgrade

**Mr Powell**, from 151 petitioners, requesting the House to secure funding to fast track the upgrade of the Bruce Highway to six lanes between the Caloundra and Sunshine Coast Motorway interchanges [\[3315\]](#).  
Petition received.

### TABLED PAPERS

#### MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Main Roads (Mr Wallace)—

Gateway Upgrade Project—

[3316](#) Deed of Variation—Separable Portions A, B, C, D & E

[3317](#) Deed of Variation No. 2—Separable Portions B, C, D & E

[3318](#) Deed of Variation and Settlement No. 3—Separable Portions D & E

[3319](#) Deed of Variation No. 4

#### MEMBER'S PAPER TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Mundingburra (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

[3320](#) Non-conforming petition relating to the Townsville Aboriginal Islander Health Service

### NOTICE OF MOTION

#### Revocation of State Forest Areas

**Hon. S ROBERTSON** (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (9.32 am): I lay upon the table of the House a proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 and a brief explanation of the proposal.

*Tabled paper:* Proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959—Explanation of the proposal [\[3321\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959—Location map of area subject to revocation [\[3321A\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Proposal under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959—Additional text [\[3322\]](#).

I give notice that, after the expiration of at least 14 days as provided in the Forestry Act 1959, I shall move—

- 1) That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 the setting apart and declaration as State Forest of the area as set out in the proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

#### Description of area to be revoked

Sonoma State Forest (SF71)

Area described as lots 3, 5 and 6 on plan SP240432 and containing an area of 7.5765 hectares as illustrated on the attached sketch.

- 2) That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade for submission to the Governor in Council.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Gladstone, Infrastructure Project

**Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.33 am): I am very pleased today to be able to announce more infrastructure jobs for Gladstone on a project that will support future economic growth not only for Gladstone but for the state of Queensland. The government has approved the construction phase of a \$10 million project to define a 25-kilometre strategic pipeline and services corridor for the future industries of Gladstone. Work will begin next week on a nine-kilometre section from Gladstone port to the Aldoga industrial precinct. This construction phase will involve earthworks and the building of an access road to deliver a strategic infrastructure link and certainty of access for industry in the Gladstone State Development Area.

The project is a key piece of enabling infrastructure for industrial land in the Gladstone State Development Area. It will attract international investment and attention, further boosting the Gladstone region. Increasingly, international companies are also working in this region. Companies like Bhushan Steel—one of the largest steel manufacturers in the world—are ready to expand their operations in the region and were very excited about the future of Gladstone port when I met with them in Delhi last week.

The 110-metre wide corridor will accommodate pipelines associated with future projects, including the Rio Tinto Yarwun alumina refinery expansion and the Stanwell-Gladstone water pipeline. These projects are expected to provide additional jobs and further boost the economic growth of this region. It is expected that construction of the corridor will be finished in six months and will create employment for around 30 people, but by providing an essential services corridor for this state development area, this project has the potential to support many thousands of jobs into the future.

I am pleased to report that the open market tender is complete and the civil contractor, BMD, is making preparations to commence construction next week on 11 October. This project contributes to a stronger Queensland economy and is part of our determination to continue to boost regional Queensland as part of managing population growth right across the state.

### Gold Coast Rapid Transit

**Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.36 am): On the subject of infrastructure, I am also very pleased to advise that two contracts worth \$68 million have been awarded for early works on Queensland's first light rail system—the Gold Coast Rapid Transit system. Seymour Whyte Constructions and Baulderstone Pty Ltd are the successful tenderers to prepare the Gold Coast Rapid Transit corridor for construction. These two contracts are expected to create about 800 direct and indirect jobs, while stage 1 of the Gold Coast light rail project will generate 6,300 direct and indirect jobs in total.

**Mr Lucas:** First regional city in Australia to have it.

**Ms BLIGH:** I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. The Gold Coast will become the first regional city in Australia to boast a light rail system.

When stage 1 of the \$949 million Gold Coast Rapid Transit project is complete in 2014, it will be a world-class public transport system which will change the way people move around the Gold Coast and add to the amenity of the city for visitors and residents alike. The 13-kilometre dedicated light rail corridor will service the new Gold Coast University Hospital, which is the largest tertiary hospital in the Southern Hemisphere; it will service Griffith University, which is the fastest-growing university campus in Australia; and it will also service the Southport medical precinct and the fast-growing commercial, retail and recreational centres of Southport, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach.

Before this vital light rail system can be built, the roads it will travel on have to be prepared. The tenders I have announced today will perform this early work, which will include surveying, road widening, intersection upgrades, landscaping, concreting and paving. Services located under the road, such as the gas, water and telecommunications, also have to be moved to a more accessible location to allow for future repairs and upgrades.

The Southport roadworks will take place in a number of areas: Queen Street west between Wardoo Street and Nerang Street; Nerang Street from Queen Street to Scarborough Street; and Queen Street east between Scarborough Street and the Gold Coast Highway. Broadbeach roadworks will take place along the Gold Coast Highway between the intersections of Thornton Street and Australia Avenue. I can assure the House that local residents will be kept informed of works, which are expected to take approximately 12 months to complete. Residents and businesses will be advised in advance of any work, the nature of the work and the hours in which it will be done.

The interactive tendering process to determine the successful consortium to construct and operate the final light rail system is well progressed. Submissions are expected in late November this year and a successful consortium will be announced in June 2011. This light rail system is a symbol of our \$17 billion capital works program and the thousands of jobs it creates, but it is also a symbol of the exciting potential of the Gold Coast and the very bright future that this fast-growing city can look forward to.

I acknowledge the contribution and partnership of the federal government and the Gold Coast City Council on this project. Between the three levels of government it is being financed and work is happening to make it a reality.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before the Premier continues, there is far too much audible conversation. I would ask honourable members on both sides of the House to extend the courtesy to the people I have given the call to.

### **Brisbane Festival**

**Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.39 am): The Brisbane Festival closed on a high last month with the opening performances of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba's stunning *Don Quixote*, providing a spectacular ending to 22 days of inspirational arts and cultural celebrations.

**Mr Reeves** interjected.

**Ms BLIGH:** I take the interjection from the Minister for Sport and thank him for representing me at the Titans game instead of the ballet. It was a great sacrifice on his part.

This breathtaking work from one of the world's most esteemed ballet companies received a standing ovation, which was a fitting note on which to end a very successful festival season. More than 650,000 people flocked to 513 dance, opera, theatre, visual arts, symphony, contemporary music, circus and community events and performances across the city. I take the opportunity this morning to congratulate the new artistic director of the Brisbane Festival, Noel Staunton, and his team on his first Brisbane Festival. He genuinely captured the imagination and interest of residents and visitors from interstate and across the world.

The Brisbane Festival program included five world premiere productions, seven Queensland premieres and 10 Australian premieres. Box office targets were exceeded, achieving 108 per cent, and many shows sold out including *Sutra*, *Shanghai Lady Killer*, *Macbeth* and *Circa*. The much loved *Spiegeltent* could not have done much better, with performances by Paul Dempsey, Ed Kuepper and many others also selling out.

The visual arts program, which was introduced for the first time this year, was also well received. The exhibition of Douglas Kirkland photography at the Gallery of Modern Art attracted 13,000 people in its first four days. This exhibition is on until 24 October 2010. I encourage members to make the effort to get there. These are world-class works of art and I encourage people to take the opportunity to see them. Children were also the big winners during the Brisbane Festival, with the free and community events in public parks, backyards and open spaces all popular with families.

Our government invests \$5.3 million into this \$12.5 million annual event, and we are very happy to be able to support a festival of international quality that delivers so much enjoyment for Queenslanders. I also take the opportunity to thank the Brisbane City Council for its partnership in this festival. As members here will know, the Lord Mayor is on a mission to ensure that Brisbane becomes Australia's new world city. You simply cannot be a world city without a strong arts and cultural sector, and the Brisbane Festival is an important part of that. To have the state and the council work together on this is in the public interest.

The 2011 Brisbane Festival will take place from 3-24 September. So I encourage people to mark these dates in their diary now for 2011. The arts and cultural sector in Queensland is not only alive and well; it is thriving and leading Australia.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There is still too much audible conversation.

### **Mental Health; Health Practitioner Reclassification**

**Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (9.42 am): This Sunday, 10 October 2010, marks World Mental Health Day and will kick-start Mental Health Week here in Queensland. Mental Health Week provides an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of looking after our mental health and reducing the stigma attached to mental illness. The Bligh government has embarked on a \$617.4 million strategy that is delivering a range of acute treatment and community based services, including 270 treatment beds and 74 new community care unit beds. Yet the reality is that the vast majority of people who suffer from mental illness do not need to be admitted to acute hospitals. What they need is support, respect and understanding.

It is unfortunate that in 2010 mental illness continues to generate misunderstanding, prejudice, confusion and fear, with many of those experiencing mental illness reporting that the stigma can at times be worse than the illness itself. Mental illness continues to attract less empathy and more distrust than many other forms of illness. Despite the fact that almost half of the Australian population will experience a mental illness in their lifetime—and we here are no different from the rest of the population—there are still those who do not see mental illness as a true medical illness like heart disease or diabetes. There

are those who still see severe mental illness, such as schizophrenia, as being characterised by danger and violence, when those suffering from a psychosis are more often frightened and confused than violent.

The Bligh government recognises that in order to truly address mental illness the first step is to reduce the stigma. I am proud that we are leading the nation with our \$8.5 million antistigma campaign. The 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing revealed that an estimated two-thirds of the adult population and an incredible three-quarters of young people who have a mental health problem do not seek help, largely because of the stigma attached to mental illness. Prior to the Queensland budget this year, Australia was the only English-speaking OECD country that did not have an antistigma campaign.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Queensland Alliance CEO Jeff Cheverton for his relentless passion to address the stigma attached to mental illness in Queensland. Mr Cheverton has indicated to me that he sees the Bligh government's \$8.5 million campaign as a visionary investment in the future mental health of all Queenslanders. Of course, the federal government really should be stepping into the breach here. The Queensland government will work closely with the Queensland Alliance to implement this vital strategy to change the way we can include people with mental illness in our communities.

Key to improving the mental wellbeing of Queenslanders is also the continuing focus on mental health promotion and early intervention. In August this year I was proud to officially open the Early Psychosis Program on the Gold Coast, a new eight-member multidisciplinary team that is providing a contemporary model of early psychosis intervention for young people on the Gold Coast. All parents of children in this age bracket should take note. An estimated 80 per cent of patients affected by a psychotic disorder experience their first episode between the ages of 15 and 30, making psychosis more common than diabetes in young people. The Early Psychosis Gold Coast team provides a vital service to improve access to mental health care for young people presenting with a psychotic disorder for the first time. It is expected that case management support will be provided to up to 70 young people at any one point in time, with a further 150 to 200 per year accessing the service for assessment and monitoring.

I encourage my parliamentary colleagues to use next week's Mental Health Week—and there is a march on Sunday in the city if anyone wants to participate—to encourage the people of Queensland to get active, get connected and be involved in activities available in the community, to make a start to redress the long-held belief that mental health issues are things we should be afraid of. Physical activity, social interaction and community involvement go a long way to improving and maintaining good mental health.

I would also like to encourage my parliamentary colleagues to take some time today to ask each other, friends, family and colleagues, 'Are you okay?' Today is R U OK?Day—

**An opposition member:** Are you okay?

**Mr LUCAS:** Yes. Actually I have the flu. R U OK?Day is a national day of action that aims to prevent suicide by encouraging Australians to connect with someone they care about and help stop little problems turning into big ones. Peak national mental health bodies including beyondblue, Lifeline, headspace and the Black Dog Institute are wanting everyone across the country to ask family, friends and colleagues, 'Are you okay?' Staying connected with others is crucial to our general health and wellbeing. We respond better to the stresses and challenges of daily life, are more creative, use our abilities to the fullest and make the most of opportunities when we are mentally healthy. As health minister, I am passionate about ensuring Queenslanders who are suffering from a mental illness get the support and the help they need.

The member for Maryborough yesterday asked me to update the House on the health practitioner reclassification process. I am glad to provide some more information for him. The implementation of a new classification structure for health practitioners has been a significant undertaking involving the assessment of approximately 10,000 positions across 50 disciplines. Key outcomes include implementation of the new eight-level classification structure—40 per cent of the workforce remained at the same level, 52 per cent of the workforce moved one level and approximately eight per cent of the workforce moved two levels—and the conversion of approximately 1,000 employees from a 36.25-hour to a 38-hour working week with resultant productivity efficiencies. As a result, there has been a 25 per cent increase in the health practitioner workforce over a three-year period, significantly easing attraction and retention difficulties. Eighty per cent of the health practitioner workforce agreed with the outcome of the reclassification process while a further 20 per cent sought a review or appeal of the initial outcome.

Queensland Health has worked with the unions and the QIRC to develop a formal appeal process. A guide to the process was published and distributed in August 2010. Staff have been given until the end of October to formally advise of their intention to seek a review. Of the approximately 2,000 who initially indicated that they sought a review or appeal, I am advised 1,450 remain unresolved.

Any staff member who was reclassified either in the first instance or as a result of a successful appeal will be back paid increased wages to 1 September 2007. The hearing of appeals will commence in November 2010. The parties are committed to completing the appeal process by February 2011.

While it has taken some time to design, implement and commence the appeals process, I am advised that it is now progressing well with the full support and cooperation of the relevant unions. Today the unions representing our allied health practitioners will march in support of their claims for a wage rise. That is their right. I wish them well in their demonstration.

However, this matter has to be put in context. Our health practitioners are the highest paid health practitioners in the nation. At the highest pay points our health practitioners earn \$30,000 more than the same workers in New South Wales and \$55,000 more than the same workers in Victoria. As a result of the last EB, over the last three years on average our health practitioners have had pay rises in the order of \$30,000 each.

In that context, our offer of a further 7.5 per cent over three years is fair and reasonable. In the last week I have met with the leaders of both the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union and the Queensland Public Sector Union to discuss this process. We have all indicated that we will continue to meet and work towards a solution. Of course, Queensland Health will also remain at the negotiating table with the unions. I look forward to continuing to work with the unions and our workers towards a resolution. Our allied health practitioners do a top job.

### QR National

**Hon. AP FRASER** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development) (9.50 am): Sunday will see the launch of the share offer document for QR National—Australia's new transport giant. This will be a historic moment for QR, for Queensland and indeed for the nation. Queensland Rail has a history going back 145 years in this state. It has in many ways been the backbone of our economic development across Queensland, and it will be for generations to come.

It is important to look at the story of QR to now to understand its story going forward. In 1999, after 135 years, QR hauled 100 million tonnes of coal. A decade on, and haulage has doubled to 200 million tonnes. Some 135 years to haul 100 million tonnes and just 10 years to double that growth.

This is the growth story that will be as critical to Queensland's economy over the coming decades as it has been in the past. Ensuring our export infrastructure can expand in a timely and efficient manner, aligned to demand from the private sector, is vitally important for the resources sector and the Queensland and national economies. We are creating a top 50 Australian company based right here in Queensland. A great Queensland company with a national footprint, taking the next step to be an Australian giant. It is a threshold moment for Queensland, for the QR National workforce and investors across Australia and indeed around the globe.

Almost three weeks ago preregistration for the share offer was launched. Since then we have seen strong levels of demand from both retail investors, brokers keen to ensure their clients have the opportunity and institutional investors here and around the globe. Preregistration is scheduled to close tomorrow. Anyone interested in the offer has until 11 pm tomorrow night to register either through the call centre or through the website at [qrnshareoffer.com.au](http://qrnshareoffer.com.au).

The offer document will obviously fulfil all the reporting requirements of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. It will include a suite of incentives for retail investors—a common feature of IPOs of this kind. These arrangements typically include a discounted price per share for retail or mum and dad investors to the price charged to banks or other institutional investors; a maximum price per share to ensure mum and dad investors are not disadvantaged by strong demand from institutions; and a loyalty issue of bonus shares, including a scheme that gives additional rewards to Queensland investors. I urge all investors to seek their own financial advice when considering the QR National share offer.

In the lead-up to Sunday, I can inform the House of another couple of important milestones that have been cleared on the road to listing. On Tuesday, Standard & Poor's assigned a BBB+ long-term corporate credit rating to QR National, with a stable outlook. This assessment of QR National's balance sheet declares it to be an investment grade entity and reflects our determination to ensure it makes it to market with the capacity to invest in the future expansion that the resources demand will require and that will require so many people to work for QR National into the future.

I am also pleased to announce to the House the finalisation of further measures to support competition in the coal rail market. Last Friday, the Queensland Competition Authority approved QR National's rail access undertaking. One only has to look at the market share of QR National and its competitor to see that there is strong competition in the Queensland market. This has been endorsed recently in the draft National Competition Council ruling.

This government said it would take steps to enhance our pro-competition measures further. It has sought to enhance competition in the state's access regime through stronger ring-fencing requirements and offering network users a blueprint for delivering its future growth and expansions. We have done just that.

This decision provides clarity for QR National, its competitors and the resource companies that are its main customers. QR National is a proud company with a strong future. I am entirely confident we will get a value for money result for the taxpayer.

### Construction Industry

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (9.54 am): The Queensland building industry continues to struggle following the global financial crisis. All indications are that this financial year will continue to be a very difficult one for the Queensland construction industry. During tough times, unqualified and unlicensed persons often decide they can make some money in the building industry, competing unfairly against licensed operators. These unlicensed rogue contractors also put consumers at risk.

Once the GFC began, the BSA ramped up its compliance program to protect licensed contractors and consumers. As part of the BSA's compliance program targeting unlicensed contractors, more than 100 inspectors will visit randomly selected building sites throughout Queensland over the next month to ensure all persons conducting building work are licensed or otherwise operating lawfully. I am giving them fair warning. Anybody out there who is trading unlicensed can expect a knock on the door.

These audits receive strong support from licensed contractors and industry associations. In 2009-10, BSA staff interviewed 9,594 contractors at 2,604 building sites across the state and 123 people were suspected of working without the appropriate licence. Any person caught unlawfully performing building work may be prosecuted and fined up to \$25,000 for an individual and \$125,000 for a company. If a builder is caught engaging an unlicensed subcontractor, the builder may be fined up to \$8,000 for a first offence, \$12,000 for a second offence and \$16,000 for a third or subsequent offence.

I am pleased to say that as the number of work site compliance investigations by the BSA has increased, the number of unlicensed contractors detected has decreased. The BSA has also increased its compliance investigations into advertising by unlicensed contractors. Unlicensed contractors must state in any advertisement the maximum value of work they can perform without a licence while BSA licensees must state their name and licence number. In 2009-10 the BSA conducted 2,632 investigations, issuing 482 infringement notices to unlicensed contractor advertisers and 34 fines to licensees for non-compliant ads. I repeat the warning that we will have 100 investigators out on site in the next couple of weeks. People have been warned.

### Mining Industry

**Hon. S ROBERTSON** (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Minister for Trade) (9.57 am): The mining industry employs more than 40,000 people in Queensland and is linked to more than 160,000 other jobs across the state. This means more Queenslanders owe their job to the industry now than was the case before the global financial crisis. Employment opportunities in the sector continue to grow and the industry is providing job security and a sound future for thousands of Queensland families.

I am pleased to report that the resources sector is also looking to build a talented employment pool for the future by nurturing a skilled workforce from today's school leavers. On Tuesday, on the Speaker's Green, I had the opportunity, along with the Minister for Education and Training and the member for Callide, of welcoming three new schools—Miles State High School and Wandoan and Taroom state schools—into the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy. They join 25 other schools in the academy, which provides clear paths for those interested in careers in the mining industry in roles ranging from underground to corporate offices. This fine initiative is possible thanks to a generous \$720,000 contribution by Xstrata Coal. I commend the company for its support.

One of the keys to getting keen young workers interested in the mining industry is to show them that it is a safe occupation and a career that will allow them to follow their dreams without undue risk. To that point, I am pleased to announce that 2009-10 has seen a significant improvement in safety and health in the mining industry in Queensland.

Queensland continues to have the best safety and health record in the world, according to the first annual report by the Queensland Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health. Our successes are reflected in the safety and health statistics for 2009-10. In particular, there has been a significant improvement in the coal sector in a very important measure of safety performance—injury severity. Severity is a measure of the days lost to injury, and this has improved by 40 per cent. My department has implemented several new initiatives which will facilitate further improvement in this already excellent safety record. I am proud of the safety and health record in the Queensland mining industry. However, I emphasise the words of the Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health that—

... we are still not at the stage where we can say, 'Every miner home safe and healthy every day.'

This is our ultimate goal, and it must be our only goal.

## Kindergartens

**Hon. GJ WILSON** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training) (10.00 am): The Bligh government is committed to giving every young Queensland a flying start to learning and life by providing every Queensland parent with access to a kindergarten service. As part of this process, I am pleased to announce the appointment of additional central governing bodies to support kindergarten services around Queensland. Creche and Kindergarten, a well-respected not-for-profit organisation with a long track record of providing high-quality kindergarten programs, will now be joined by four other central governing bodies—Independent Schools Queensland, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, Queensland Lutheran Early Childhood Services and The Gowrie (Qld) Inc. The government already enjoys strong relationships with each of these organisations, and I commend them all for their ongoing commitment to improving the early childhood education sector in this state.

The five central governing bodies will each play a key role in supporting the provision of quality kindergarten programs by distributing public funding to their member services, working with services to increase enrolments of eligible aged children, and supporting the professional development of teaching staff and providing administrative issues advice. I am also pleased to announce that the Queensland Studies Authority has finalised the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline to be implemented from 2011. This guideline ensures that kindy-age children will enjoy a consistent educational experience and is the first learning framework of its type for the kindergarten sector. Notably, kindergarten program providers will need to deliver a program in line with the guidelines to be eligible for funding.

Over the last 18 months the government has undertaken the most significant kindergarten reform agenda in this state's history, supported by the Labor federal government. We stand proud of the progress we are making in establishing up to 240 extra kindergarten services around the state in regions where they are most needed. We also stand proud that we are providing operational funding to long day care services to assist them in delivering kindergarten programs. The Bligh government does indeed stand proud of knowing that, as far as we have come, we have the resile, energy and enthusiasm to continue delivering a world-class education system.

## Ambulance Service

**Hon. NS ROBERTS** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services) (10.02 am): The Bligh government has a clear and focused commitment to protecting and creating jobs. We stand for jobs, not cuts. The Queensland Ambulance Service's vehicle replacement strategy is just one way we are meeting our jobs commitment. This year 165 new and replacement ambulance vehicles will hit the streets across the state at a cost of \$18.5 million. Included in these 165 vehicles will be the next generation of ambulance vehicles, the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519 ambulance. The 519s will have a dual-stretcher capacity while the Mercedes Sprinter 319s, which currently make up the bulk of the QAS fleet, carry only one stretcher.

Importantly, two Queensland companies—Emergency Transport Technology and Varley—have been appointed to fit out the new vehicles into state-of-the-art ambulance vehicles. That means Queenslanders will be employed building the next generation of ambulance vehicles. The fit-out process for ambulance vehicles requires a specialist skill. Emergency Transport Technology and Varley are employing skilled workers to transform these new vehicles into modern ambulance vehicles, with all the mod cons and life-saving equipment.

The new Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519 ambulance vehicles are expected to be in production early next year and hitting the roads soon after. The Queensland Ambulance Service operates a two-year rolling vehicle acquisition and fit-out program to ensure a continuous flow of new and replacement vehicles. This enables the target number of commissioned vehicles to be achieved. The 165 new and replacement ambulance vehicles funded in this year's budget brings the total number of new and replacement vehicles commissioned by this government over the past four years to 600. With a two-year rolling plan, the government is able to provide companies like Emergency Transport Technology and Varley with the certainty they need to hire staff and to provide more secure employment opportunities. The Bligh government's ambulance replacement strategy is also helping the Queensland Ambulance Service to maintain its position as the best-performing ambulance service in the country.

## Western Queensland, Road Infrastructure

**Hon. CA WALLACE** (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads) (10.04 am): Last week I hit the highways out west with the member for Mount Isa—right in the heart of Betty Kiernan country. We are rolling out almost half a billion dollars in roadworks west of the Great Divide and I wanted to see firsthand what is being spent and where. In the north-west we are delivering \$148 million in roadworks, and that means jobs for more than 1,400 local workers. On the Gulf Developmental Road road crews are hard at work on two new bridges, one over the Einasleigh River. It is \$18 million well spent, and all going well it should be signed, sealed and delivered by Christmas. I want to pay tribute to Etheridge Mayor Warren Devlin, whose brainchild this new bridge was. It is great to see that bridge under construction.

**Mrs Kiernan:** Hear, hear.

**Mr WALLACE:** I take the interjection from the member for Mount Isa. It is great to see those bridgeworks underway. We have just completed a \$6.5 million upgrade of the Gulf Developmental Road—a 24-kilometre stretch widened and sealed to an eight-metre standard. Road crews are also busy on the final stage of the \$6.7 million upgrade to pave and seal a big section of the Hann Highway. Further works are planned to pave and seal a stretch between The Lynd and Hughenden. The member for Mount Isa and I met with residents—good people—at Clothes Peg Station to talk to them about further works on the Hann Highway. I want to congratulate those residents on the Hann Highway who formed an action group to lobby for further works on that road. I personally want to thank Flinders Mayor McNamara, who gave me and the member for Mount Isa a tour of his shire and that highway. We are going to be fighting for further dollars for that particular section of road.

We have \$47 million in roadworks underway on the Kennedy Developmental Road between Hughenden and Winton, and the state has also stepped in with a \$40 million safety boost for the Warrego Highway. With federal Labor back in the saddle in Canberra, I am leading the charge once again for \$950 million over 12 years with \$380 million upfront right now to deliver urgently needed work on this federally funded highway. I want to thank the members for Ipswich West and Toowoomba North, who have joined with me in that fight. They know that our roads suffered after 11 long years of neglect by the former Howard government. Well, not anymore!

**Mr Rickuss:** We've got to drag you kicking and screaming!

**Mr WALLACE:** In Queensland today roads mean jobs. He pipes up now, the member for Lockyer! He pipes up now, but he sat there mute when his mate Howard was in power. He pipes up now but sat there mute. We had a deliberate plan. We have a deliberate plan to protect jobs, and that is why we are able to deliver 30,000 jobs for roadworkers this year alone. Under Labor Queenslanders are facing a brighter future—a future as bright as those cat's eyes on the highway at night!

### Small Hive Beetles

**Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries, Fisheries and Rural and Regional Queensland) (10.07 am): We are calling on all Queensland commercial growers and backyard gardeners to take part in a bee pollination survey to help fight a serious pest. Small hive beetles have been responsible for more than \$2.1 million in beehive losses in the last year alone. Beetle larvae feed on baby bees, pollen and honey and totally destroy the hive when large numbers build up. This is very serious when two in every three mouthfuls of food consumed need pollinating by bees. Without pollination, our food supply chain would effectively collapse. This would have drastic ramifications for Queensland's economy, with one in eight jobs in the Queensland workforce either partially or entirely supported by the agricultural supply chain. This equates to more than a quarter of a million Queenslanders employed throughout the food supply chain who would be affected. This is why we are keen to gather data to accurately assess the wider impact this hive beetle pest is having on our food production.

This is part of the Bligh government's commitment to protecting Queensland jobs and strengthening the value of regional economies. Up until now we have had only anecdotal evidence to demonstrate the degree of impact the hive beetles are having on the pollination of our crops throughout Queensland. The online survey is open now until November, and collected data will provide scientists with a clearer picture of the damage being caused by the small hive beetle. We are asking all growers, including backyard growers, to participate, especially if they have noticed a decrease in the number of bees or in their yields in recent years. We also want to know if growers have sought paid pollination services over the past two years because of declining yields. I urge all growers to get involved and help scientists gather the data that they need, which will help fight these pest beetles, secure the food supply chain and protect hundreds of thousands of Queensland jobs.

### Aurukun

**Hon. D BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.09 am): Last week I was in Aurukun as part of a visit to Cape York communities, along with the member for Cook, Jason O'Brien. The mayor was absent from Aurukun but we met with the deputy mayor, Phyllis Yunkaporta, and other members of the council. We met with the Family Responsibilities Commission and residents to listen to their issues and to see what progress is being made in this community. I am pleased indeed to report that things are going well in Aurukun—so well that the deputy mayor said—

Everything is going in the way we want it to go.

That does not mean that there is not more to do, but Aurukun is on the way. While we were there we visited the arts centre and the sewing centre, where there are impressive plans for a business expansion already taking shape. Also, while there, I happened across a large group of children who were all working under a big old mango tree outside the general store. They were there with spanners,

pumps, tyre tubes and bits and pieces everywhere. What they had was a bicycle workshop where the kids, elders and parents came together to fix bikes as part of a very successful independent holiday initiative run by the Red Earth Foundation. The foundation's Rahm Adamedes says that he makes the long trek—some 768 kilometres—from Kuranda to Aurukun with all his equipment because he wants kids involved and learning about the joys of biking.

Step 1 in the program is to gather the young offenders in the community and they take a trip with Rahm to the dump, where they retrieve all the bikes and parts of bikes that have been dumped there because they are not in working order. Step 2 is sorting, cleaning and dismantling the old bikes and the bits and pieces. Step 3 is learning how to put them together and to make repairs along the way. These kids have been taught skills that will stay with them long past the workshop under the mango tree.

There was no doubt, in seeing many of them ride the bikes, that their sense of achievement and pride was tangible. Children of all age groups—from six to 15—take part, with younger ones watching on and learning from the older ones, three and four kids at a time with tools in hand working on a wheel or other bike part. They then went on from there to use the remainder of their school holidays to build a local BMX track. I give my sincere congratulations to Rahm, the Red Earth Foundation and the children of Aurukun for a wonderful program. Well done.

### Wyaralong Dam; Airport Link

**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Infrastructure and Planning) (10.12 am): I am pleased to advise the House that the construction of the \$348 million Wyaralong Dam project is more than 50 per cent complete and has generated 685 jobs. This figure is well in excess of the original jobs target of 420. In total, more than 600 businesses have been involved in the project—many of them local—and more than 50 per cent of the staff employed on this important water infrastructure project are locals. In addition, unemployed Queenslanders taking part in the Bligh government's \$57 million Green Army initiative have learnt practical trail building and environmental mitigation work skills on the job. The latest wave of Green Army recruits graduated last month after spending 22 weeks learning valuable skills on the dam project. Not only will Wyaralong Dam, in conjunction with the nearby Cedar Grove Weir, supply enough water for 300,000 people but also it is providing opportunities for locals to break the unemployment cycle and help the environment.

Green Army recruits have been engaged in a variety of work, including identifying and removing weeds, collecting seeds, building trails, protecting habitat and planting. They have developed a range of new practical skills such as basic construction, landscaping and plant identification, all backed up by on-site accredited training delivered by Bremer TAFE. Ninety-two per cent of participants involved on the project have graduated and found work in the building and environment industries and almost half of these graduates are Indigenous. The dam construction workforce peaked in August, with 425 workers on site, 232 of whom live locally. This project, built between Beaudesert and Boonah, is a prime example of how the Bligh government's \$17.1 billion infrastructure spend is supporting 106,000 jobs.

In addition, the combined \$4.8 billion Airport Link projects have now created more than 14,000 direct and indirect jobs. Right now, more than 3,400 people are directly employed in these congestion-busting initiatives, surpassing predicted peak employment by more than 800 jobs. The Bligh government is focused on Queensland's future through the creation of much needed infrastructure and jobs. We are creating a modern Queensland.

### Go Cards

**Hon. RG NOLAN** (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (10.15 am): The Queensland government's 'go ready' education campaign continues to go from strength to strength. TransLink has issued 1.3 million go cards since the system was rolled out in 2008 and they are now used on more than 60 per cent of trips across South-East Queensland. TransLink is continuing to work closely with customers to assist them to make the transition to go card. After the successful 'go ready' information sessions for seniors, TransLink has now extended the program to include people with disabilities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The 'go ready' information sessions explain how the go card system works, how to top up the balance on a go card, how to touch on and touch off correctly and how to transfer between services using a go card.

I hosted a 'go ready' session at the Ipswich Civic Centre, along with the member for Ipswich West, earlier this year, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank members who have organised 'go ready' sessions for their constituents. This year alone, TransLink has hosted or booked more than 420 sessions and distributed almost 19,000 go cards through this program. These sessions are important to ensuring that all commuters are comfortable with using a go card and are able to enjoy the safety and convenience of a go card.

Disability groups who have already received go card information sessions include the Endeavour Foundation, the Leukaemia Foundation, the Sunshine Welfare and Remedial Association, the Red Cross and the Redlands Hearing Impaired Support Group. TransLink has also presented sessions to Indian seniors, Chinese seniors, HAND—the leisure and learning for adults with disabilities organisation—and the Western Suburbs State Special School. I encourage all members and disability and cultural community groups to contact TransLink if they would like a representative to visit and provide information about go card. Go cards make it easier to use public transport for all groups in our society and TransLink's 'go ready' sessions help ensure that everyone is comfortable with Australia's leading smart card ticketing system.

### **Tourism Industry**

**Hon. PJ LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (10.17 am): The Premier has already updated the House on the exciting new Tourism Queensland global brand, 'Queensland, Where Australia Shines'. I want to take this opportunity to talk about other things happening in the Tourism portfolio that the Bligh government is delivering. Last Wednesday I held a meeting with key tourism industry leaders to discuss strategic challenges facing Queensland's tourism industry. The tourism strategic round table was an opportunity for industry participants to share their views and ideas on issues affecting their industry. The meeting was also an opportunity for me to launch a new Bligh government funding program, the Tourism Projects Pre-feasibility Grant Program. Under this grant program, regional tourism businesses, community organisations and local governments can apply for up to \$30,000. It is an outcome of the state government's Tourism Action Plan to 2012 and will help facilitate the progress of priority regional tourism projects.

Priority will be given to those applications that contribute to job creation and economic development, deliver a high-quality tourism project, enhance the existing character of a destination or fill a tourism infrastructure gap identified in a destination's Tourism Opportunity Plan. The Bligh government is delivering what we said we would. We are also delivering on the \$4 billion drive tourism market. I am pleased to announce the next round of the minor tourism infrastructure grants today, which are part of a \$1.8 million election commitment. These grants are used to deliver important roadside infrastructure projects like road and heritage signing and public facilities like picnic tables and barbecue facilities.

Those grants include \$50,000 to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council; \$12,000 to the Central Highlands Regional Council; \$50,000 to the Tablelands Regional Council; \$50,000 to the Theodore Chamber of Commerce; \$45,000 to the Taroom District Development Association; \$40,000 to Advance Cairns; \$5,000 to the Moura Chamber of Commerce; \$13,000 to the Western Downs Regional Council; \$47,000 to the National Trust of Queensland; \$15,000 to the Douglas Shire Historical Society; and \$50,000 to the Townsville City Council. These grants are in addition to the three I announced last week during my western trip which were awarded to the Balonne Shire Council, the Barcaldine Regional Council and the Bulloo Shire Council. This is another great example of the how the Bligh government is delivering for the tourism industry.

### **Sport and Recreation, Funding; Child Safety Services, Mistake**

**Hon. PG REEVES** (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (10.20 am): Earlier this year I announced a significant revamping of how the Bligh government provides funding for sport and recreation. It followed a review of funding programs in 2009 which showed how we could involve more organisations at the local level to get a greater mix of Queenslanders to get up and about. I announced the allocation of \$38 million for a three-year jobs plan that would support up to 150 full-time coordinator positions in the first year and potentially 250 full-time positions for the second and third years of funding to help organisations with grassroots fundraising, promotional activities and sponsorships.

I can now report that we have approved funding to successful organisations for a total of almost \$5.4 million over the next three years for an initial 37 positions to get this work underway. We had a plan to protect and create jobs, and we are delivering on that promise. Last week I was on the Sunshine Coast to advise five organisations that they had been successful in receiving funding to employ local sport and recreation coordinators to work with 34 clubs and schools across the region for the next three years. Last month I was at Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast passing on the great news to three organisations who will employ coordinators to support 19 local clubs. On that same day the member for Toowoomba North was handing over similar funding to two Toowoomba organisations to employ coordinators for 10 local clubs.

I am pleased to announce today that the Tablelands Regional Council is amongst the 37 successful organisations to receive funding through this program, as is the Maranoa Regional Council and Warrego Pony Club. These positions will directly work with 14 clubs in those areas. These coordinators will work with local sport, recreation and community organisations and councils to assist with creating better links between clubs and schools. Our funds amount to \$52,000 a year for three years for each coordinator. They will be working with local organisations run mostly by volunteers who

just do not have the time to devote to the marketing and fundraising activities needed to help them grow. Each coordinator will work with a number of groups promoting their activities, applying for grants, and pursuing sponsorship opportunities and corporate partnerships. Of course, as organisations build capacity this will also mean increased employment opportunities within the sport and recreation industry. I look forward to announcing more successful applicants in coming weeks.

I have spoken in the House previously about a child safety case in Toowoomba. It led me to ask for a review of the case file of a grandfather after it became apparent that incorrect information had been released to him in response to a right to information application. An independent external reviewer was engaged to undertake reviews of the department's processes and has now reported back to the department. The reviewer has made some recommendations to improve some areas where the administrative side of the complaints and RTI management processes can be strengthened, and all of those recommendations will be implemented. The reviewer found that none of the mistaken identity information was held on the grandfather's case file and none of the decision making in this case was influenced by any of this information. The mistake occurred only when compiling information for the RTI application and the grandfather's complaint about the original case decision. A copy of the report and the department's response will be provided to the Ombudsman.

### Schoolies Week

**Hon. KL STRUTHERS** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (10.23 am): Work is well underway to keep school leavers safe and to minimise disruption to the communities of the Gold Coast, Airlie Beach, Magnetic Island and Yeppoon as we gear up for schoolies week. We cannot stop school leavers celebrating the end of year 12, but we are absolutely determined to make sure they are safe and that local residents and businesses are not disrupted. We are expecting a slight increase in numbers this year on the 35,000 that attended last year. Last year's response ran smoothly so we are following a similar model.

On the Gold Coast, the Department of Communities will again work with Crime Stoppers Queensland to coordinate about 250 local volunteers and manage schoolies headquarters. Crime Stoppers Queensland has put out a call for more volunteers to help with the response. There are only about two weeks left to register, and I know that all my Labor colleagues on the Gold Coast are getting behind this great volunteer effort. Rosies Youth Mission, Drug Arm Australasia and Christian Youth Council will also be at Surfers to support young people with three recharge zones. The well-known Surfers Paradise chill out zone will operate with extended hours this year. Whether it is for a bandaid, a bottle of water or a bucket, the staff and volunteers at the chill out zone work into the early hours of the morning to help vulnerable young people when they need it most. This is the same highly valued service that the member for Surfers Paradise said was offering nothing to tackle serious alcohol related problems.

Around 100 staff and volunteers from these organisations will work on the Gold Coast during schoolies. They will be joined by more than 600 Red Frogs volunteers.

**Mr Reeves:** Hear, hear!

**Ms STRUTHERS:** I know that the member for Mansfield is the No. 1 fan of the Red Frogs organisation. The RACQ has also agreed to continue its long association with schoolies and will run free2go buses. Our program of keeping school leavers safe does not stop there. In Airlie Beach we are providing \$40,000 to the Whitsunday Regional Council to keep young people safe. On Magnetic Island we are providing \$20,000 to Red Frogs to keep young people safe. In Yeppoon we are providing \$20,000 to the Rockhampton Police Citizens Youth Club to keep young people safe. While we are delivering real solutions to keep young people safe, the best the LNP can come up with is a policy to taser them—what a shameful policy!

## SCRUTINY OF LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

### Call for Submissions

**Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (10.26 am): I table a paper from the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee. It invites Queensland people to make submissions on the operation of part 8 of the Statutory Instruments Act. The paper begins a review by the committee of forms authorised by legislation. Submissions are invited by 10 December 2010 including about requirements as to the content, notice and accessibility of forms. The committee will convene a public forum in February 2011.

*Tabled paper:* Scrutiny of Legislation Committee: Review of part 8 of the Statutory Instruments Act: Forms Authorised by Legislation—Call for submissions [3323].

## INTEGRITY, ETHICS AND PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

### Report

**Mr SHINE** (Toowoomba North—ALP) (10.26 am): I table report No. 111 of the Integrity, Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee titled *2009-10 Annual Report* for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

*Tabled paper:* Integrity, Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee: Report No. 111—Annual Report 2009-10 [3324].

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### Report; Notice of Motion

**Mr MOORHEAD** (Waterford—ALP) (10.27 am): I table report No. 4 of the Economic Development Committee, *Inquiry into the road safety benefits of fixed speed cameras*, an executive summary and related information paper. Reducing Queensland's road toll has been a commitment of successive governments in Queensland for decades. Road safety reforms such as seatbelts, the introduction of BAC testing for drink driving, safer vehicles and safer roads have reduced Queensland's road toll. These initiatives have seen Queensland road deaths fall from a peak of 638 in 1973 to 331 in 2009, with predictions of a lower road toll than this in 2010. The number of deaths per 100,000 people has reduced from 32 per 100,000 in 1970-71 to eight deaths per 100,000 in 2008-09.

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development Committee: Report No. 4—Inquiry into the road safety benefits of fixed speed cameras [3325].

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development Committee: Report No. 4—Inquiry into the road safety benefits of fixed speed cameras—executive summary [3326].

*Tabled paper:* Economic Development Committee: Information Paper No. 1—Inquiry into the road safety benefits of fixed speed cameras, study tour—Melbourne, 29 and 30 March 2010 [3327].

Speeding remains a significant barrier to reducing Queensland's road toll even further. Crashes where speeding was a factor accounted for 75 fatalities in 2009, or 23 per cent of the road toll. The dilemma facing Queensland is that, while 66 per cent of drivers believe that it is not okay to exceed the speed limit, 58 per cent of people expressed a preference to exceed the 100-kilometre per hour limit. This speed paradox unfortunately shows that too many people are speeding, despite being aware of the risks.

Queensland introduced fixed speed cameras in 2007. Like many other road safety measures, it was accompanied by some controversy. While 71 per cent of Queenslanders support fixed speed cameras, some members of our community remain concerned about the motivation of our fixed speed camera programs.

The Economic Development Committee sought public submissions, met with road safety experts and held a public hearing to examine the question of fixed speed cameras. The committee has found that fixed speed cameras save lives and reduce the costs of road trauma for Queenslanders. The committee heard research that for every dollar that is spent on road safety cameras the community saves between \$2.40 and \$3.70 in road trauma costs.

The committee also found that fixed speed cameras remain a relatively small part of the Queensland government's speed enforcement measures. Police enforcing road safety in patrol cars remains the largest means of enforcing speed limits in Queensland. The criteria for fixed speed camera locations require significant crash history or crash risk and the exhaustion of other means of enforcement.

However, the submissions to the committee have shown a need for better communication with the community about speed cameras. More information could be provided to the community about the effectiveness of speed cameras and the laws restricting speed camera revenue from being included with general government revenue.

The committee has supported the RACQ submission for the creation of a website that publishes fixed camera locations, the crash history and crash risk of the location. The committee believes that government should better explain that revenue from camera-detecting offences does not go to consolidated revenue but rather is required by law to be spent only for road safety projects.

The committee has also identified opportunities for cooperation with local government in the area of road safety. The committee has recommended that the current limit on roads below 60 kilometres per hour being considered for speed cameras be removed to allow local streets around schools and kindergartens to be considered. Local governments before the committee expressed a willingness to play a role in road safety and the committee has identified opportunities for local government to play a greater role in the road safety camera program.

The committee process is an important opportunity for public participation in the parliament. I would like to particularly thank the submitters and witnesses who gave of their time, expertise and experience to assist the committee's deliberations. I would like to thank the members of the committee for their deliberations and work in compiling this report. I am heartened that members of both sides of this House can work together on reducing Queensland's road toll.

I would also like to thank the committee research staff who have assisted the committee through this inquiry—Lyndel Bates, Joanna Fear, Alistair Maclennan, Margaret Telford, Liz Sbeghen and Anne Fidler. I commend the report to the House and give notice that I will move that the House take note of the report.

## ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

### Annual Report

**Mrs SULLIVAN** (Pumicestone—ALP) (10.31 am): I lay upon the table the Environment and Resources Committee's 2009-10 annual report.

*Tabled paper:* Environment and Resources Committee: Report No. 3—Annual Report 2009-10 [3328].

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Queensland Health

**Mr MESSENGER** (Burnett—Ind) (10.31 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes—

1. Twenty-one months ago (January 2009) an A&E nurse whistleblower from the Bundaberg Base Hospital, Christine Cameron complained that she lodged approximately 100 official complaints, or Prime reports, which were ignored by Queensland Health, including allegations that:
  - (a) An elderly woman over 70 years of age was tied to a chair over part of a weekend and forced to urinate and defecate in her clothes, which lead led to the carpet under her chair being professionally removed;
  - (b) The same woman for the later part of the weekend was then tied to a bed;
  - (c) A nurse denied a sick elderly man a resuscitation bed. The elderly man then did not receive the intensive care he deserved in a timely manner, which resulted in his death;
  - (d) The same nurse had previously denied treatment to a young man, who left the hospital and was found dead the next morning.
2. The CMC referred the matter to the Ethical Standards Unit of Queensland Health.
3. Ethical Standards produced an interim report which was discredited by a 125-page whistleblower assessment.
4. Queensland Health and the Ethical Standards Unit, despite repeated requests, have refused to release a final report.

And calls on the Premier, in the interests of patient safety, to direct the health minister to order the release of the final ESU report into Nurse Cameron's allegations and support a call for the CMC to conduct an investigation.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I would ask you to rule on this matter. There are certain personal references to the honourable member where he is demanding a certain action, not that this parliament demands some action. This is a psalm, not a motion, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Let me take the point of order. I want to see what the notice of motion is. I do not get any advance copy of these things. I would like to get back to the House and give a ruling in due course.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### School Group Tours

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call question time, coming to the House this morning will be students and teachers from the Rochedale State School in the electorate of Mansfield, from the Warwick Central State School in the electorate of Southern Downs and St Luke's Anglican School in the electorate of Bundaberg.

## DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I would like to welcome the Clerk of the House of Assembly in Tasmania, Mr Peter Alcock, who is visiting Queensland to liaise with our committee system for the next couple of days. Would all honourable members please make him welcome.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Question time will end at 11.33 am. I call the honourable the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr Fraser:** Any appointments?

### Public Expenditure, Advertising

**Mr LANGBROEK** (10.33 am): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**Mr Fraser:** No appointments?

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I have advised the Speaker.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my right will cease interjecting. I have called the Leader of the Opposition. I would ask you to extend him the courtesy while he has the call.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. My first question without notice is to the Minister for Transport. I refer to yesterday's revelations that the minister and her cabinet colleague had rorted taxpayer funds for illegal advertising. I now table a second brochure for the Inala electorate which breaches the advertising rules by featuring two photos of the member for Inala in her capacity as a local MP.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland government brochure: Darra to Springfield Transport Corridor—Stage 1—Issue 8 March 2010 [3329].

I ask: what possible explanation does the minister have today for yet another example of Labor ministers rorting the public purse?

**Ms NOLAN:** The judgement that was made, correctly, was that the brochure that was placed on the table of the House yesterday breached the guidelines in that it presented a member of parliament essentially in a promotional role of a government project. The guidelines are not about any photograph appearing at all, which is what happens in this brochure. Therefore, there is a clear distinction between the brochure that the member presented to the parliament yesterday and that which he presents today.

Yesterday, when it became clear that the original document was in breach of the guidelines, which have recently been tabled in the parliament, I, in my capacity as the responsible minister, accepted responsibility for that, because, while I had not seen the brochure myself, it had been approved by a staffer in my office and therefore—

**Mr Horan:** You're the minister.

**Ms NOLAN:** That is exactly the point.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting. The minister has the call.

**Ms NOLAN:** Therefore, just as I accept responsibility for the work of my agency, I accept responsibility for the work and in this case the error of my office. I accept that responsibility and so, along with my colleague, the Minister for Disability Services, I paid that money for the printing and the distribution of that brochure out of my own pocket. That, in my view, was the proper course of action that represents genuine taking of responsibility—not arguing the case, not getting someone else or the party to pay, but accepting responsibility for the work of your agency and of your office.

That is the right thing to do. That is what I did yesterday promptly and, in my view, that is not a standard which this opposition has shown to this parliament over many years of frankly diminished accountability on that side of the House.

### Public Expenditure, Advertising

**Mr LANGBROEK:** What an interesting reinterpretation of the guidelines.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Come to the question.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My second question without notice is to the Minister for Main Roads. I now refer to another rort of taxpayers' funds by a Labor minister and table two newsletters from the department of main roads—each of which breach the advertising rules—targeted for the Mount Ommaney and Inala electorates which feature photos of Labor's Julie Attwood in her capacity as local MP for that area.

*Tabled paper:* Main Roads Community Newsletter 5, September 2009—Ipswich Motorway Upgrade, Wacol to Darra [3330].

*Tabled paper:* Department of Main Roads Newsletter, August 2008—Ipswich Motorway Upgrade, Wacol to Darra [3331].

I ask: how has the minister allowed yet another Labor MP to rort the public purse and will the member for Mount Ommaney be paying back the rorted money?

**Mr WALLACE:** I have asked my department to run the ruler over the newsletters we have produced. They have advised me that, to the best of their knowledge, there have been no breaches of advertising since the new policy began in August. Indeed, the policy does not say that there cannot be any photographs of members of parliament or ministers. It is about the content, and quite rightly so. There is a clear distinction between the brochure that was tabled yesterday and those brochures tabled today.

Newsletters play a very important role in the delivery of key infrastructure across our state. They let the community know what is going on around them, what we are building, when we are building it, when it will be finished, what roads will be opened and what will be closed. The brochures I produce also carry very important safety messages.

One of the things I took on board when I participated in the 'Walk a day in my shoes' initiative was that our roadworkers are worried about motorists driving too fast through roadworks. They wanted us to tell local motorists and local constituents to be very careful when driving around those roadworks. Newsletters carry important safety messages for communities and motorists about the various roadworks that are going on around them.

Let me talk about our record \$18 billion program. It is delivering better roads and 30,000 jobs for Queensland roadworkers. That is why we need to put out these newsletters—to advertise to local motorists and local constituents what is happening on their local roads. I make no apology for looking after the safety of local roadworkers—those good men and women who work very, very hard to keep our roads safe. Again, I make no apology for keeping local communities informed through these newsletters about traffic switches, changes to road conditions and changes to road speeds.

The advertising policy does not mean there cannot be photos of ministers or local members. It is about the message that is implied in those newsletters, and these newsletters are valuable tools to tell local communities what is happening in their areas. Again, I say to the House that I make no apologies for advertising the need for safety around the record number of roadworks that are happening across Queensland. They are important messages and we will continue to deliver them.

### **Green Army**

**Ms STONE:** My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier please update the House on the government's Green Army program and how it is delivering jobs and training opportunities to Queenslanders?

**Ms BLIGH:** I thank the honourable member for her question. The member for Springwood is someone who knows well the benefits of this program. For example in her area, in the Daisy Hill Koala Centre already this month we have 13 Green Army workers. I notice that she is nodding; as a hardworking local she is aware of this project. These 13 Green Army workers are this month replacing timber walkways, laying new pathways and doing revegetation right throughout the park. The project includes industry training focusing on construction, landscaping, recycling and weed control. They are working alongside Department of Environment and Resource Management rangers. That is just one example of what I think is a great Queensland success story.

This is a program as part of our government's economic and employment strategy. It is a \$57 million commitment over three years to create 3,000 Green Army placements. As at 30 September, 1,929 Queenslanders had participated in this initiative and we expect to reach the 2,000 milestone in October. This month we will also see the 100th Green Army project. So far 99 approved work placements have occurred, with an investment of nearly \$25 million. We are well on target to meet the commitment we made. We are doing what we said we would do.

The unemployment figures which have just been released this morning by the ABS indicate that unemployment remains stable in Queensland. That tells us that we have to continue to make jobs our No. 1 priority. While unemployment has not risen, nor has it seen any significant drop this month and that reinforces the need for the government to maintain our focus on jobs and keep going with programs like this. It is simply far too early to walk away from dedicated jobs programs. This one does not just deliver jobs; it also delivers a great environmental legacy to the communities in which it works. When these programs are finished, we see recreation areas and environmental projects making a difference out there right across Queensland.

I want to thank the councils which have worked with us right across the state to make this project work. I also thank the community groups that have done the same. They have got behind it, and it is those people who are giving the on-the-job skills to people. That means that, as we recover, they can pick up the jobs and drive a growing economy. The jobs figures this morning are a very timely reminder that, while we are seeing the beginnings of recovery in some sectors of the Queensland economy, there are other parts that are still to see the recovery we want them to see. That is why we are going to keep focusing on these sorts of employment programs—because jobs are our No. 1 priority.

### Public Expenditure, Advertising

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. I now refer to yet another rort of taxpayer funds by a Labor MP. I table this Main Roads newsletter, which breaches the advertising rules, targeted at the Ipswich community.

*Tabled paper:* Main Roads Newsletter, July 2009—Western Corridor Transport Newsletter [\[3332\]](#).

This newsletter features a photo of Labor's member for Bundamba, Jo-Ann Miller, in her capacity as local MP for the area. As the minister is trying to justify this rort with his own personal interpretation of the rules, will the minister advise whether he has confirmed this interpretation and has the blessings of the Premier?

**Mr WALLACE:** I refer to my earlier answer. Yesterday I asked my department to run the ruler over newsletters that my department has produced, and they have advised me that to the best of their knowledge there has been no breach of the advertising—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting. The minister has the call. I will hear the minister.

**Mr WALLACE:** There has been no breach of the advertising guidelines, and that is the advice from my department. Again, I refer to my previous answer. The advertising guidelines do not preclude photographs of ministers or MPs in newsletters. It is the content of those newsletters that is important. Indeed, in much of the funding which my department expends it is a requirement of the federal government, which partners with us in many of these programs, that these newsletters be produced and produced regularly. Again, it is an important aspect of—

**Ms Simpson:** Caught out!

**Mr WALLACE:** The one who has been caught out is you, member for Maroochydhore. You have clearly misled the House this morning, because if you were on this side, member for Maroochydhore, I take it that you would not inform residents about what is happening in their local area and I take it that you would not inform motorists about what is happening in their local area.

Let us not forget that my department's No. 1 priority is the safety of motorists and the great men and women who are building roads in Queensland today. That is why it is so important that we put out these newsletters—to inform motorists in local areas, to inform local constituents, to inform the men and women who are building our roads about what is happening with local road conditions. Take the Ipswich Motorway, for instance. There is around \$2 billion worth of work there, with 100,000 vehicles a day moving through job sites—

**Ms Bligh:** And they opposed it.

**Mr WALLACE:** And they opposed it. That is right, Premier. They opposed those important works. We have 100,000 vehicles a day moving through very, very busy job sites. Should we put those workers at risk? Should we say to the good men and women of Ipswich, 'We won't tell you what's happening. We're going to keep you in the dark'? That is what the member for Maroochydhore wants to do. That is what opposition members want to do. They want to keep motorists in the dark. They want to keep workers in the dark. They want to put workers at risk.

Again, I make no apology for informing the community about what is happening in their local area. I make no apology for that because it keeps my roadworkers safe and it keeps motorists safe. It helps me in my job when I go back to Canberra and ask for more funds for the Ipswich Motorway, ask for more funds for the Bruce Highway and ask for more funds for the Pacific Highway, because it shows that we are doing our job.

### Employment

**Ms CROFT:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Employment and Economic Development. Can the Treasurer update the House on how the Bligh government is helping Queenslanders with special needs move into the workforce?

**Mr FRASER:** I thank the member for Broadwater for her question and for her commitment, shared by other members of the House, to making sure that young people and people with special needs can get an opportunity in the workforce. I am pleased to announce today that the Bligh government is releasing another \$1 million to the Mental Health Association, which will assist 100 Queenslanders with mental health issues to get placements in the workplace, to get an opportunity, to make sure that they can participate as productive members of society and to gain the dignity of work that they deserve. Earlier the Deputy Premier spoke about our budget initiative to reduce the stigma that attaches to mental health. This other commitment that the government is progressing, part of a five-year commitment with the Mental Health Association, shows the hallmark of a true Labor government—there to break down barriers, overcome disadvantage and give people the dignity of work.

The ABS unemployment data that came out this morning showed that unemployment in Queensland has remained unchanged at 5.4 per cent. It shows that employment growth was largely flat over the last month. Nevertheless, we added another 200 jobs, which now means that there have been 14 straight months of job creation in the Queensland economy—14 straight months under this government of jobs-generating growth. That 14-month streak brings the total to over 66,000 jobs. Of course, because of the tough stuff we faced at the start of the term, that means we are now in a position where there are 44,800 jobs to go to reach our jobs target. This is a government that remains 100 per cent committed to delivering on that jobs target and to continue to drive our program and to continue to support projects like Get Set For Work, like the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program to give young people a chance, to give those with a disadvantage a chance and to keep thousands and thousands of Queenslanders employed through our building program.

All those people out there in the community concerned about the effects of where the recovery is at and worried about the prospect of unemployment should just look again to those opposite, who want to cut the building program. They want to reassess the building program, they want to get into it. So much do they care about the building program that they have abolished the position of shadow minister for infrastructure. However, we found out this morning that they now have a secret shadow infrastructure minister, about whom none of us are allowed to know—

**Ms Bligh:** Except the Speaker.

**Mr FRASER:**—except the Speaker, who has been advised, according to the Leader of the Opposition. Why do they need a shadow infrastructure minister if they do not believe in the building program? There is no secret when it comes to the LNP. Everyone else in Queensland knows the truth. There is no secret. They want to pull down the building program; they want to hack into the public sector; they want to cut jobs from the people who provide services to Queensland families. That has always been their way and they can try to keep the plan secret. They can try to have a secret shadow minister. The people of Queensland deserve to be told the truth by this, the best resourced and laziest opposition in Australia.

### Public Expenditure, Advertising

**Ms Simpson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable member for Maroochydore, you will withdraw that remark. It is unparliamentary.

**Ms SIMPSON:** I withdraw.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. I refer to the advertising rort of taxpayer funds by Labor MPs and I table—

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** I rise to a point of order. I have noticed that there is a similar trend to every question here this morning. Mr Speaker, I draw your attention—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** You have to obey the standing orders of this parliament. Have some respect.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** I refer to standing order 112, which states—

In asking a question, no argument or opinion shall be offered, or any fact stated, except so far as is necessary to explain the question.

There has been no substantiation of rorts whatsoever. There has been no substantiation, yet this House has had to tolerate that imputation on three occasions this morning. Mr Speaker, I ask you to rule accordingly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Reword the question.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I refer to the allegations of abuse of taxpayer funds by Labor MPs regarding advertising and I table more Main Roads propaganda that does not mention road safety workers and which breaches the advertising rules—

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, again, I draw your attention. A question cannot make an imputation. An imputation is being made here that is not substantiated. This is not a debate. This is question time.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will allow the question.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** This advertising targeted the Gold Coast community and features a front-page photo of the Labor members for Southport and Broadwater in their capacity as local MPs for the area. Will the minister ensure that this Labor minister and Labor parliamentary secretary repay taxpayers' funds?

*Tabled paper:* Main Roads Newsletter, Project Update November 2008, Gold Coast Highway, Government Road to Stevens Street [\[3333\]](#).

**Mr WALLACE:** What does the brochure talk about?

**Mr Horan:** It's against the rules.

**Mr WALLACE:** It is not against the rules. You have no idea. You should read the rules and you will know it is not a breach.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr Horan:** Read the rules.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause for a moment. The member for Toowoomba South, you have had a good run this morning. That is my last warning for you. After that you will be outside for a few minutes.

**Mr WALLACE:** The brochure tells the people of the Gold Coast about the joint study steering group set up in—

**An opposition member:** Political advertising.

**Mr WALLACE:** It is not political advertising to tell the people of the community that the member for Southport and the member for Broadwater are representatives on the joint study steering group for those local roads. That is not political advertising. It is telling the local community about what is happening in their community.

**Mr Hobbs** interjected.

**Mr Dickson** interjected.

**Mr Horan** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Those on my left, the honourable member for Warrego, the honourable member for Buderim, you have been quite persistent this morning. That is my last warning. It is impossible for me to hear what is going on up here. That is a warning to the member for Warrego, member for Buderim and member for Toowoomba South.

**Mr WALLACE:** As I said, this specific brochure is talking about the member for Southport and the member for Broadwater and the important role that they have played in a study group to make sure that the roads—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Those on my left will cease interjecting.

**Mr WALLACE:** This morning we have seen an attack on our roads program and on informing the people of Queensland about what is happening. That is what it is. It is a naked attack—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Resume your seat. I will wait for the House to come to order.

**Mr WALLACE:** It is a naked attack on informing the motorists and local residents about what is happening in terms of road construction in their local area—no more and no less. I will continue to go out and inform local residents about what is happening in their local communities. I will tell them about traffic switches and I tell local residents how they can be involved in building better roads in their local communities because I have nothing to hide. I have nothing to hide with a \$3.3 billion program aimed at delivering better roads for Queenslanders.

We will continue to tell motorists about traffic switches. We will continue to tell local residents how they can be involved in designing better roads for their local communities because gone are the days when Main Roads refused to talk to local residents about what was happening in their local communities. Gone are those days. I repeat that my department has advised me that there have been no breaches of the advertising guidelines since the amended policy came into effect on 23 August this year. We will continue to deliver.

### Urban Land Development Authority

**Mr WATT:** My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier update the House of the progress of the ULDA in the areas that have been declared?

**Ms BLIGH:** I thank the member for the question. I was very interested to hear the member for Clayfield make a number of comments in this House yesterday about housing affordability. What did he say? He said that one key factor behind increasing house prices in South-East Queensland is the failure of the supply of new housing to keep up with demand. What was the problem with land supply? Uncertain and increasingly unrealistic local council approval processes.

**Mr Nicholls:** And increasing fees and charges.

**Ms BLIGH:** I am very happy to take the interjection. He also blamed infrastructure charges which are, of course, put in place by councils.

**Mr Nicholls:** And land tax.

**Mr Lucas** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Clayfield and the Deputy Premier will cease interjecting. The Premier has the call.

**Ms BLIGH:** I can only assume that the member for Clayfield is a great supporter of the Urban Land Development Authority because it is doing exactly what this parliament intended it to do. It is bringing houses to market much sooner than under the previous planning arrangements.

At Fitzgibbon we have 75 homes and people moved in. This housing started at \$200,000. That is way below the median price. We now have 14 sites being delivered. When fully developed, these areas will see 160,000 new homes for more than 320,000 Queenslanders. What will they do? They will create 270,000 jobs. I am very pleased with the work the ULDA is doing. It has the complete support of this government. I thank the member for Clayfield for recognising the importance of it.

While I am on my feet I will say a little about advertising. I have looked at the material that has been paraded here this morning. I concur with both of the ministers that all of this material meets the guidelines. It is information for residents about major projects in their areas. There is nothing in the guidelines that precludes a photo of a member if it is in context. I table for the interest of the House a copy of a community cabinet newsletter.

Who does it have a photo of? The member for Warrego, Howard Hobbs, is in that photo. Where was it distributed? It was distributed in his electorate.

Compare what this government did with what happened with the vanity boards of 'Mr Vanity', the Leader of the Opposition. It took three days to sort out. On day 1 he said that he had approval but he could not prove it. On day 2 he sacked his chief of staff. On day 3 he said that he would go to 'Uncle' Clive and the LNP would have to pay for it.

Yesterday, within three hours the ministers and I had acted decisively, appropriately and responsibly. The hide of the member for Surfers Paradise to come in here and talk about advertising rorts when he invented them!

*(Time expired)*

### Public Expenditure, Advertising

**Mr McARDLE:** My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to this propaganda from the department of main roads paid for by taxpayers. It features a photograph and an interview with Labor's Betty Kiernan in her capacity as the MP for the area. Given that Labor's advertising scheme has now embroiled six ministers representing one-third of the cabinet and embroiled half of the eight parliamentary secretaries, will the Premier show a skerrick of leadership by sacking each and every Labor member involved?

*Tabled paper:* Newsletter, Main Roads Local Links, In and around Cloncurry, July 2008 [3337].

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will wait for the House to come to order before I call the Premier. I call the Premier.

**Ms BLIGH:** If you want propaganda, you cannot go much further than that. If you want propaganda, it was invented by the member for Surfers Paradise, the Leader of the Opposition. When it comes to pure party political, taxpayer funded rorts, that—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable the Premier, I would ask you to put that down.

**Ms BLIGH:**—is the propaganda of the member for Surfers Paradise.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Premier, I have asked for the prop to be put down.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Both sides of the House will come to order. The Premier has the call.

**Ms BLIGH:** As I have outlined, there is nothing in the guidelines that prohibits the use of photographs. They have to be in context. It has to be determined whether or not the material has been developed for the purpose of information. I table for the information of the member—

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Caloundra. I call the Premier.

**Ms BLIGH:** I table for the information of the member for Caloundra three government newsletters that contain photos of Mike Horan, Lawrence Springborg, Ian Rickuss, Jack Dempsey and Vaughan Johnson.

*Tabled paper:* Newsletter, Community Cabinet News, Highfields and Gatton, April 2009 [3334].

*Tabled paper:* Newsletter, Community Cabinet News, Bundaberg, August 2009 [3335].

*Tabled paper:* Newsletter, Community Cabinet News, Barcaldine/Longreach, November 2009 [3336].

I know there are some over there who would like to sack all of them.

**Mr Hinchliffe:** Have they airbrushed it out?

**Ms BLIGH:** It is too late; it has already been distributed in their electorates.

Let us be very clear about this. There is nothing inappropriate in this. In fact, as the Minister for Main Roads has pointed out, it is entirely appropriate and important that people who are living in and around major roadworks are advised of deadlines, time frames, progress and what they can expect in and around their roads.

**Mr McArdle** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Caloundra, I have asked you twice now. There will not be a third time. I warn you under 253A. I call the Premier.

**Ms BLIGH:** I think the best interview is the one the member for Caloundra did on Madonna King's program. I recommend it to everybody.

What is absolutely clear in the guidelines is that government has a responsibility and an obligation to provide information to people. That is what all of these brochures do. The one yesterday did not comply with that requirement and that was why it breached the guidelines. Nothing prohibits the judicious use of photographs, but the guidelines have to be read in context.

What happened yesterday? My ministers did the right thing and they did it within three hours of the matter being drawn to their attention. In stark contrast, we saw what the Leader of the Opposition did when these billboards started going up around Queensland. He started off by claiming that he had approval but could not prove it. He then sacked his staff. It took him three days to find a scapegoat. He has never taken responsibility for it. He doctored the email. We did the right thing. That is what leadership is.

*(Time expired)*

### Health, Infrastructure Projects

**Mrs SMITH:** May I firstly acknowledge in the public gallery student leaders from Miami State High School.

**Mr SPEAKER:** And then you will ask your question.

**Mrs SMITH:** My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health. Can the minister please inform the House how the government's \$7.33 billion health infrastructure program is delivering expanded health services and securing local jobs on the Gold Coast?

**Mr LUCAS:** I thank the honourable member for her question. I say to the students: welcome, and I am pleased to sit alongside my leader, who is, of course, a past student of your great school.

The Bligh government's \$17 billion infrastructure program is securing more than 100,000 Queensland jobs. Our \$7.3 billion Health capital program is locking in 40,000 construction jobs over the life of the projects. Our strong economic policy is securing jobs in construction and jobs in health, and that is why we are sticking to it.

The Gold Coast University Hospital is massive. This new 750-bed hospital is the largest social infrastructure project underway in the Southern Hemisphere. The site covers nearly 20 hectares and a total floor space of 170,000 square metres. That is roughly the same size as 25 rugby fields. It has eight concrete placement beams pouring 1,200 cubic metres of concrete every day. The completed structure will have 80,000 cubic metres of concrete and 15,000 tonnes of reinforcement—the equivalent of two Q1 high-rise buildings. This month will mark a major milestone when they hit two million of 6.5 million construction worker hours estimated to build the hospital. On average there are 800 workers on site a day, peaking at 2,200 at the height of construction.

When complete, the project will have secured nearly 9,800 construction jobs. We took the tough decisions. People like the member for Clayfield do not want to have construction workers with jobs. When construction workers have jobs, they build things that we can then provide services out of. They pay tax. That tax then recirculates through the economy to pay for other things. They go to the local shop and they create jobs for other workers. A fundamental aspect of Labor's philosophy is that we will create jobs through building meaningful infrastructure, and that is what we will continue to do.

The Gold Coast University Hospital will deliver world-class health care, a 66 per cent increase in the number of beds, nine levels and room for future expansion—two big areas for future expansion—new cancer services, expanded cardiac care, cardiac neurosciences, neonatal intensive care and trauma services.

At the other end of the coast, the Robina Hospital expansion is securing more than 1,500 jobs. Some 675,000 construction hours have been expended on the project so far, with an expectation of 820,000 when complete. Robina will be the fifth largest hospital in Queensland. To date, electricians—and Peter Simpson note—have installed 331 kilometres of power cables and 521 kilometres of communications cables. The secretary of their union would rather them not do that and just have QR owned by the government. We know that the opposition will reassess projects. We will not reassess them; we will continue to build them. Everyone creates jobs. The Labor way is to create jobs. The Labor way is to build infrastructure. The Labor way is to build a future.

*(Time expired)*

### Wild Rivers Legislation

**Mr SEENEY:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. I refer to advertisements which have been prepared for the government and leaked to us this morning which attempt to argue the government's political position on the wild rivers legislation, and I ask: will Queensland taxpayers be required to pay for this blatant political advertising or will the minister pay for it from his own modest means?

*Tabled paper:* Queensland government advertisement titled 'Traditional Owners ask to be listened to' [3338].

**Mr Lucas** interjected.

**Mr ROBERTSON:** Exactly. I am just reminded by my colleague the Deputy Premier that given your support for wild rivers perhaps we could go fifty-fifty on it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The minister will speak through the chair, thanks.

**Mr ROBERTSON:** No approval has been granted in terms of any advertisements with respect to wild rivers, but government always reserves the right to take out advertisements in terms of alerting the community to government policy. If such adverts were to be approved, then they would go through the normal approval processes with the committee that sits alongside the Premier's department as to whether they meet the government guidelines and if an appropriate budget was allocated to them then they would be published. That is the process that is in place to ensure that—

**Ms Bligh:** And it hasn't gone through that process?

**Mr ROBERTSON:** And it has not gone through that process, and that is the process that has been in place. But of course we would not have to engage in such expenditure if individuals like Tony Abbott did not conduct dishonest campaigns about Queensland government legislation.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr ROBERTSON:** For example, I do note that Tony Abbott in his crusade against wild rivers has been promoting this issue of consent—consent as determined by the UN Commission on Human Rights. What I find particularly galling in Mr Abbott's campaign to have the notion of consent as outlined in the UN human rights declaration is that he was part of a government that time and time again refused to accept the UN human rights declarations in their various forms throughout the term of that government. In fact, it deliberately went down the path of attacking the UN for its interference in sovereign matters of this nation. But of course consistency has never been Tony Abbott's strong point. What I find amazing is that an intelligent person like Noel Pearson would put his eggs in Tony Abbott's basket on the issue of protection of human rights when Abbott's own record has been to campaign over the period of time that he was in government against the United Nations human rights declaration. Hypocrisy when it comes to Tony Abbott? You can cut it with a knife!

### Public Works Projects

**Mr RYAN:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Public Works. Can the minister inform the House about jobs created on the Bligh government's Public Works projects?

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I have been around long enough to remember what the Tories were like in government. When we came to government 12 years ago—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** You do not want to hear this, but you are going to! What was the story then? Nearly double-figure unemployment, a capital works freeze of \$500 million and no minister for employment. Those opposite are the last people to be believed when they say they are concerned about employment. The evidence of that of course is the shadow Treasurer letting the cat out of the bag the other day when he said that the opposition would reassess building projects.

I just heard the Deputy Premier give a very extensive explanation about what is happening on the Gold Coast. I was there on Monday night and that project is currently putting \$25 million a month into the Gold Coast economy. That is the cash flow now and that will rise to about \$54 million or \$55 million in the next three or four months. It is a gigantic project that will deliver 7,000 rooms, and there are 850 blokes on site at the moment. There would be more electricians, I would venture to suggest, working there at the moment than in the whole of Queensland Rail and I do not think Mr Simpson has ever been near them! Comrade Simpson really needs to go and talk to those people, because when I talked to them they told me they are worried about the future of their jobs.

The bottom line is that it has now been over 40 days since the reassessment notice was made but not a word has been said. Jesus Christ sat in the garden of Gethsemane weeping for 40 days. What has the honourable member over there been doing? He has been sitting mum for 40 days making sure that nobody knows about his dirty little secret. But of course I am out there telling people all of the time, and on Monday night I was talking to representatives of the Master Builders on the Gold Coast. I would encourage honourable members on the Gold Coast to get to know their Master Builders representatives because they are not very impressed with the idea that projects that they depend on will be reassessed.

They were particularly keen to know how the Premier got on in our bid for the Commonwealth Games to be hosted on the Gold Coast because, as they pointed out to me, they are desperate for work. They are desperate for work in the future. What they desperately want to know from the opposition is what it means by reassessment. Will it continue this program that we have which will run after the next election? Will it continue to borrow money to have that project finished on the Gold Coast that we have started, or is it one of the reassessed projects? The blokes on the job on the Gold Coast with nail bags and hammers are bringing home an income into those 850 families and homes. They are paying tax in Queensland. They are the people that those opposite want to put out of work. They are the people—

*(Time expired)*

### State Procurement Policy

**Mrs STUCKEY:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology. The State Procurement Policy lists as its objectives advancing priorities of the government, seeking value for money, and purchasing with probity and accountability. I ask the minister: how does Project Services meet these objectives when it awards contracts such as the \$20 million Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE Cairns campus to a company whose tender was over \$1.6 million more expensive than its nearest rival?

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** That just shows us how ill prepared the honourable member is to be the minister for public works, because what we got rid of 10 years ago was the notion that the cheapest price is the best price. The whole notion of value for money does not revolve around price necessarily. It is one of the factors that is taken into it, and how embarrassing for those who sit opposite to make the most fundamental error in terms of what buying is all about.

If the average family wants to hang a couple of pictures on the wall, they will go down to Bunnings and they will buy a \$26 cordless drill. That is about as long as it will last them. But a tradesperson will go and buy the top of the range titanium Makita for about 600 or 700 bucks. I bought one the other day. The reason for that is that a tradesperson is going to get plenty of work out of that drill. The member would never be able to use one. The member could not drive a nail into soap.

The fact of the matter is that that genius of a shadow minister, who I am surprised can even get her own name right given the number of errors that she has made recently, such as in relation to Boggo Road overtime and losing \$15,000—absolutely disastrous. Here is another example. How she manages to get out of bed in the morning unassisted I would not know.

The fact is that, if you look at the procurement plans of this government, you would see that we represent value for money.

**Mrs Stuckey** interjected.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** Listen to her squawking like some sort of ancient cockatoo who is out of its branch. I will debate this issue with anybody. It is great to have the opposition finally discover—

**Mr Fraser:** You would always purchase from the top shelf.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** Exactly.

**Mr Fraser:** Do you know where the bottom shelf is?

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** She would not know anything about Lowes, that is for sure. The reality is very simple. Buying things according to price is not what you do if you are a responsible government. There are many reasons we chose the procurement policy that we did. They keep people employed in Queensland. The government can make a choice. Otherwise, we would just import everything from China. If you want to get the cheapest price, that is the reality. I am delighted to have the first policy ever announced by the opposition by this genius over here—the shadow minister—that they will always buy the cheapest product in this state. That will run a shiver down the spines of every business in Queensland, because the lowest price is not the best result. With all the local employment that we have, I am going to make sure that we get this message out as well. It is the one big issue that every business in Queensland talks to me about—to not just buy on price—

*(Time expired)*

### Social Housing

**Ms van LITSENBURG:** My question is to the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women. I ask: could the minister advise the House about what steps are being taken within her portfolio to increase the availability of social housing in Queensland?

**Ms STRUTHERS:** The former minister for housing is always a hard act to follow but let me give it a go. I thank the member for Redcliffe for the question, because it was only yesterday that she came to see me, yet again, proudly supporting social housing in her area and wanting more—not like that mob opposite. What do they want? Not in their backyards.

I have good news for the member for Redcliffe and good news for the people of Redcliffe. In the Moreton Regional Council area, \$44.85 million is underway and under contract for social housing—new houses, new units in her area underway now. That means jobs for that area. That means a roof over the heads of people who need a bit of a helping hand.

There is more. Our \$17 billion plus building plan right across the state is seeing great benefits. With the help of the federal government, we have a big building program. Members have heard me say it before. How many units of social housing do we have underway? How many have we signed up to? Four thousand. That is how many are underway or coming their way. If we have not turned the first sod on them already, we will be there to do that. I will put on the pink hard hat. I will be there myself at many of those sites. All up, our social housing construction program this year is expected to support more than 3½ jobs and provide around 2,000 homes for people who need them the most.

We know also that every dollar counts to households around Queensland. We understand that. Guess what the dollar value of social housing to households is? Around \$10,000 worth of concessions. That is what it is worth. Individual households get about a \$10,000 leg-up by being in our social housing program.

But what do those opposite want us to do? They want us to reassess our program. They want us to cut this investment. They want us to cut the jobs. They want us to cut these homes from people who are doing it tough. That is what they stand for. I have said it before but I will say it again: if they had their way, what would happen in North Queensland where there has been a 50 per cent decline in the construction industry? There would be a bigger decline—700 jobs gone. In Mackay, 70 jobs gone. On the Gold Coast, the LNP's policy—or so-called policy, their reassessment policy—would mean more than 500 jobs gone in our social housing program alone. We have \$587 million. Under their policy, that will be ripped out of the social housing program in Queensland.

*(Time expired)*

### **Forest Glen Energex Power Corridor, Platypus Habitat**

**Mr DICKSON:** My question is to the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability. A proposed Energex power corridor at Forest Glen threatens a platypus habitat. The minister's email on 10 September advises that the environmental concerns on this project were outside her portfolio responsibilities. I table those documents.

*Tabled paper:* Email, dated 10 September 2010, from David Shaw, office of the Hon. Kate Jones MP, to Buderim electorate office regarding a meeting request response from the minister regarding Energex power [3339].

*Tabled paper:* Transcript of interview, dated 30 September 2010, with the Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, Channel 10, 7PM Project [3340].

*Tabled paper:* CD identified as 'Platypus videos and Channel 10 coverage, News and 7PM', 30 September 2010 [3341].

Yet on Thursday the minister said—

Unless the company can demonstrate that they are going to protect the platypus and its habitat ... it can't proceed.

How can these words from the minister have any credibility when three weeks earlier the minister wanted nothing to do with this potential environmental disaster?

**Ms JONES:** It was a bit hard to hear the question asked by the honourable member. I have not seen those documents, but I am very pleased to answer this question because, under the Nature Conservation Act in Queensland, iconic species such as the platypus are protected. That means that the proponent, whether that be Energex or any other company in Queensland, must comply with that law, which means that they must submit a species management plan to the Department of Environment and Resource Management. When they submit that species management plan to the Department of Environment and Resource Management we assess that plan to ensure that we believe that it meets the standards in regard to not only protecting that individual animal but also protecting its habitat. For example—and this will happen in this case—we are currently in negotiations with Energex to ensure that they comply with the Nature Conservation Act in regard to the platypus that has been found in this creek next to this project.

But to give another example of where we have seen a resolution to such an issue, in recent times we saw the development of a supermarket in Maleny. We found the original proposal for this development to be near a platypus habitat. So they had to go through this process as well, which is to submit a species management plan.

I note that the honourable member is actually not listening to the answer. Would you like me to continue answering your question?

**Mr Dickson:** Yes.

**Ms JONES:** Right.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I would like you to talk through the chair, thanks.

**Ms JONES:** It is very interesting that this is one of the first times I have been asked a question like this from the LNP. I am answering the member's question and he is having his own conversation. That just highlights that the LNP does not care about native species in Queensland. Not one of them care about it.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my left, it is impossible to hear the minister.

**Ms JONES:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. As I was saying, I was answering the question. I was giving the honourable member an example of where the Nature Conservation Act has come into play in another project on the Sunshine Coast. As a consequence of the Nature Conservation Act, the project had to be changed. They had to use sonar technology to identify where the habitat was and the project had to be changed as a consequence. That is what the Nature Conservation Act does.

The behaviour of the honourable member highlights exactly where the LNP is when it comes to the environment. They do not care about it. They have opposed every single piece of legislation that we have brought into this House to toughen up laws to protect the environment, most recently legislation relating to the Great Barrier Reef. They go out there in their electorates and pretend—

**Mr Fraser:** Present yourself.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Treasurer, it is impossible to hear the minister.

**Ms JONES:** This highlights the hypocrisy of the LNP when it comes to the environment. They go into their communities and pretend that they care about the environment, but every time we put a bill into this parliament to introduce greater protection, they vote against it. They pretend that they care about the Great Barrier Reef but they vote against it.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The honourable minister's time has expired.

**Mr Lucas** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The honourable the Deputy Premier.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Noosa, you have had more than a fair go today as well. If there is another repeat I will take action under the standing orders.

### Discrimination

**Ms O'NEILL:** My question is for the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations. Could the minister please outline to the House some of the various types of discrimination and their impacts?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the honourable member for her question. I know that in many capacities and in many occupations prior to entering this House she has fought long and hard against discrimination in the workplace. That is central to the mission of Labor.

Discrimination is wrong because it seeks to advantage some and disadvantage others over certain personal behaviours and traits. For example, a person can be discriminated against on the basis of physical impairment or there can be sexual discrimination or racial discrimination. One other form of discrimination is age discrimination. It is a very serious problem in the workplace so I was surprised to read two weeks ago in the *Brisbane Times* that the Leader of the Opposition was seeking to move on some members of the opposition because he did not want experience on the frontbench. I was not the only one who was surprised. So were the members for Gympie and Gregory. The member for Gympie is too competent. He had to go. Off to the backbench he went. The member for Gregory, the only one amongst them who has a skerrick of integrity about him, is in the crosshairs of the Leader of the Opposition and he will be moved on.

When one reads the article a bit further what does one see? The person who has been on the frontbench, the backbench, the frontbench—he has been a benchwarmer for 21 years—the member for Southern Downs, is going to get enhanced powers. If the Leader of the Opposition has his way, he will be the shadow Attorney-General, the shadow minister for justice, the shadow minister for industrial relations, the shadow minister for trade, the shadow minister for infrastructure, the shadow minister for planning, the shadow minister for regional development and the shadow minister for state development. He is not a deputy leader; he is a leader who is waiting to take over the top job.

In two weeks we have seen nothing from the Leader of the Opposition. This is a leader of the opposition who is weak, a leader of the opposition who is indecisive, a leader of the opposition who is unpredictable and a leader of the opposition who does not know what he is doing. If you thought managing growth in Queensland was the most serious problem facing public policy—as our leader, the Premier, does—you would have immediately named a shadow minister for infrastructure and planning. You would have come into this House and listed your shadow ministers. He has not done so. Why? Because he is vulnerable and he is weak. He knows that he cannot make a choice because it places him in jeopardy. Perhaps he is waiting for the call from 'Professor Dr' Clive Palmer. Perhaps he is waiting for the LNP state office to ring him and tell him what to do.

The Leader of the Opposition is happy to come in here and pick on judges and magistrates who cannot defend themselves, but he cannot pick his own team. It is a disgrace. He has demonstrated his weakness. Queensland's state budget is a \$40 billion budget. The state's economy is \$230 billion. This is a state with 4.5 million people. If you cannot run your party room and you cannot run your shadow cabinet, you are unfit to run Queensland.

### **Energex, Loganlea-Jimboomba Network Upgrade**

**Mr McLINDON:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. This question is in support of the VETO protest outside parliament today. Logan City Council has funded a report into Energex's controversial Loganlea-Jimboomba upgrade by consultants Cardno which found numerous shortcomings in Energex's final assessment report. Does the minister propose to take into account Logan City Council's Cardno report when considering community infrastructure designation of the Loganlea-Jimboomba network upgrade?

**Mr Lucas** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Deputy Premier, that is the second time. I now warn you under standing order 253A(1). The honourable the minister, you have one minute.

**Mr ROBERTSON:** I thank the member for the question. I am aware of the protest outside today from residents concerned about the Jimboomba line upgrade. In fact, they will be meeting with my colleague the member for Albert and, as I understand it, they will be presenting a petition to her. I will also be receiving a delegation from that group to talk to me about that petition.

This is a matter that I have taken appropriate interest in. However, it has not yet reached my desk in terms of the designation that is required for me to approve such a project. I expect Energex, in terms of their assessment of this project, to take all submissions on board, whether they come from community groups or from the Logan City Council. I have met with the mayor of the Logan City Council on a couple of occasions. I can assure them and the residents outside that all of these submissions will be taken into account.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The honourable minister's time has expired. Time for question time has expired.

## **PRIVILEGE**

### **Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by the Premier**

**Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.34 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. Yesterday following question time the Premier made a ministerial statement which acknowledged that the advertising rules had been broken. In that ministerial statement the Premier stated the following—

I am advised by the minister that she did not approve the material herself. Nevertheless, in my view it is unacceptable. I am further advised that there are no more of these—

A check of *Hansard* this morning reveals that the Premier's words have been altered. Specifically, the words 'I am advised there are no more of these' have been removed. This is an outrageous abuse of power—an outrageous abuse of parliament. The Premier is now trying to change history. If the Premier misled the parliament she should have come into this House at the earliest opportunity and corrected the record, not try to defraud the parliament by erasing the phrase. Mr Speaker, I ask that this matter be referred to the Integrity, Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee and I will be writing to you about this matter.

**Ms BLIGH:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The words that the member is referring to were words used by me at a press conference yesterday. You will find that in the transcript of the press conference and that is why it is reported in media reports. I made absolutely no change to *Hansard*.

## **PRIVILEGE**

### **Opposition Appointments**

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (11.36 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. This morning I clearly heard the Leader of the Opposition indicate that he had advised you of the nomination that he had placed forward or the appointment that he had made to the shadow ministry.

**An opposition member:** It is a different issue.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** It is a matter of privilege.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Let me hear this matter of privilege.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** As that would constitute an expenditure by the state in terms of that person receiving extra remuneration, I would ask you whether or not you thought it was appropriate to advise this chamber of that appointment.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am advised that it is a matter of entitlement that you have raised; it is not a matter of privilege. Unless there has been a letter delivered to my office that I am not aware of I cannot—

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** Have you?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am not aware of a letter.

**Mr SEENEY:** Point of order, Mr Speaker. No member can ask the Speaker a question. You can ask the Speaker to make a ruling.

**Mr SPEAKER:** And I have given my ruling and I cannot give you any other advice other than that. Leader of the Opposition, you had a further matter?

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by the Premier

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My point of order is that I am happy to have the Hansard tape examined, as we have done. I am confident that it proves my point.

**Mr SPEAKER:** When you put the matter in writing to me you will ask that of me.

## PRIVILEGE

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister

**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.38 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. I have just become aware that in yesterday's *Record of Proceedings* the Attorney-General has attributed a 39-word quote to me that I did not say. Not only did I not say this quote, I never said anything resembling these words. I feel that it is unacceptable for government ministers to continually attempt to verbal other members in this House in order to reinforce their own misguided arguments.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Put it in writing, please. I do not want to hear a debate.

**Mr DICK:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Let me hear the member out and then we will hear the debate.

**Ms BATES:** I will be writing to you on this matter.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you. Under the standing orders, let us not debate it right now.

**Mr DICK:** On a point of order, the comments I made were in debate on the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill last night. It was not possible for me to quote back in correct and entire terms what the member said during the debate. It was not possible. She is misleading the parliament.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Resume your seat.

**Mr DICK:** It is a reflection on me to say that in the course of a debate, when I say what I believe she said honestly, I misled—

**Ms BATES:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No. Let me me just rule on this straight up.

**Mr Dick:** It is a personal reflection.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am not going to have a debate on a matter that is going to be referred to me. Let us get it quite clear. The honourable member will write to me. In the course of that, under the standing orders, I will write to the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General will then be given a chance to explain his position. That is the correct procedure and that is the one I am going to abide by. You have a point of order. What is the subsequent point of order?

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw the point of order, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you.

## SPEAKER'S RULING

### Notice of Motion, Queensland Health

**Mr SPEAKER:** I have now had a chance to look at the notice of motion that was given this morning by the honourable member for Burnett. The motion is in order. I note that the terms stated by the member are slightly different to the written notice given to the Clerk in the sense that the member stated 'I call' rather than 'the House call', but that is not fatal given the written notice provided. However, there is a trend developing where notices of motion are effectively becoming short speeches. I will be writing to all members of the Standing Orders Committee today recommending a change to the standing and sessional orders to curtail what I think is becoming a developing problem.

## HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 6 October (see p. 3648), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.41 am), continuing: It is great to be able to continue this debate today where I left off yesterday on the Holidays Amendment Bill introduced by the government. Obviously I support penalty rates on public holidays, but, if members recall, I was making the point about the additional burden and costs that the additional two days would have on businesses. Unfortunately, just as I was making those points yesterday and the government was getting very excited about it, we adjourned the debate. So it is great to be able to continue the debate today.

As I indicated yesterday, potentially the big losers of the fallout of this will be business—the employers—and in particular small business who always struggle to absorb additional costs where no revenue is applied. I made the chamber quite aware yesterday that of course I support penalty rates on public holidays. I was simply making the point that an additional two public holidays is going to have an impact on how small businesses operate and how they budget.

It is incumbent, in my view, on all members of this place to rise in this House on all issues associated with bills, not just ones that are going to be popular with certain aspects of the electorate, and represent both sides—the case of the employees and the case of the employers, because the reality is that without the employers the employees will not have jobs. This addition will have a negative impact to a certain extent on business owners. They will be paying penalty rates for two additional days. They will be adding that cost to customers, who again suffer—it is the consumer eating on those public holidays who will suffer the cost of the additional penalty rates.

The point I made yesterday is that certainly some people do enjoy working on public holidays. I worked for five or six years at a KFC restaurant. I was a young lad at the time. I always wanted to work on a public holiday because it assisted me in buying my first \$3,000 yellow Corolla.

**Mrs Miller:** A canary car.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It was a canary car; I admit it. My first \$3,000 car was a yellow Corolla, and working on the public holidays, receiving the penalty rates at KFC, helped me to achieve my dream of owning a Corolla for my first car.

**Mrs Miller:** And you are still skinny after working at KFC.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** And I still eat KFC, member for Bundamba. Getting back to the bill, during the Sunshine Coast's busy tourism period—tourism of course is a huge industry in our region—additional surcharges will be applied now on four days as opposed to two, and the hospitality industry in particular will certainly discourage, I believe, additional patronage on those four days. This will be at the time of the year when our local tourism industry on the Sunshine Coast makes the bulk of its income, and to penalise it to a certain extent by the addition of two public holidays I think will be detrimental to the industry at a time when it can least afford it given the current economic environment in which we live.

Mr Scott Driscoll from the United Retail Federation, which is a national industry body in Australia which represents thousands of businesses across the country and is based in Brisbane, said on 14 September this year—

"This will now see a further cost burden on small businesses in particular and they will be forced to pass on these new costs to consumers across the Christmas period and beyond,"

...

"This is a double-whammy that will see higher prices across the board.

"The Bligh Government is the Grinch that stole Christmas for many Queenslanders,"

I reiterate that this government has flip-flopped on this issue—one position today; another the next day. Given the current economic environment in particular, the business community would appreciate certainty and consistency so if it is dealt a cost imposition it can determine some strategies to help deal with this issue, which will continually arise from time to time in the future.

I would like to endorse the contribution of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in his speech yesterday. In closing my contribution today, mixing it with yesterday's contribution, if the Labor Party really wanted to stick up for their so-called support base of working families, do you know what they would be doing? They would be seriously looking at ways to ease the cost of living pressures on working families. They would look at working families' fuel bills. They would look at working families' electricity bills. They would look at working families' car registration costs. They would look at implementing a public transport system in Kawana that would get people out of their cars on to public transport. And do you know more so what they should be looking at? The Labor Party members who sit on that side of the House, with the hypocrisy of it all, should be looking at people's water bills. They should be looking at working families' water bills.

People are struggling. Businesses are struggling. People need every penny they can get. But when they go about their daily lives—when they pay huge amounts for their fuel, their groceries, their rates, their car registration, their electricity and their water—let it be known that the fault lies at the feet of this Labor government and no-one else.

**Ms STONE** (Springwood—ALP) (11.47 am): It gives me enormous pleasure to stand up and speak on the bill before the House. Having been a 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week shiftworker—so that did include Christmas Day, member for Kawana—for many, many years, I know what it is like to work Christmas Day. I know what it is like to work New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. I know what it is like to work Easter. I know what it is like to work all the public holidays. However, I never accepted a shift for Labour Day—never. Labour Day was always the public holiday that I had off.

**Mr Powell:** Did you march this year?

**Ms STONE:** Yes, I did march this year. I marched with the firefighters union and had a great day. When I accepted that job and knew I was doing shiftwork, I accepted it knowing that I would be working on days when the rest of my family or friends and the rest of the community would be out enjoying themselves and having a day off. I accepted that. I also accepted a job at Expo 88 knowing that I would be working weekends and other holidays when people would be having time off and enjoying themselves.

**Ms Grace:** And you wore your jacket.

**Ms STONE:** And, yes, I wore my Expo jacket for Loud Shirt Day. I also worked at the international airport knowing that I would be working weekends and 4 am shifts and so forth. So when it comes to working strange hours and knowing what it is like to leave the family when they are celebrating to head off to work, I have done it. For every letter that I get in my office that asks me, 'Would I enjoy missing Christmas or would I enjoy missing whatever it was with my family?', I can answer, 'I know what it feels like, because I've done it.'

I did that work knowing that I would be paid penalty rates for it. I knew that the extra money I was going to get was compensation to make up for those hours with my family that I would miss. I accepted that, but I do not accept these workplaces today that try and average out those allowances and make it for everyone on a seven-day flat rate because that is not fair. You get paid that money because you are missing out on something. It is there to compensate you for that.

**Ms Nelson-Carr:** That everybody else has got.

**Ms STONE:** That everybody else is out there enjoying; that is right. I do not accept that that is the best way to go when it comes to pay and negotiations.

I was quite surprised to receive one letter from one worker in particular, and I think these workers would have been quite shocked when they went to do their rosters and found out they would be working on Christmas Day. I got a letter from Carolyn Hansen. Carolyn is a receptionist at a doctors surgery—the sort of doctors surgery that you would find in your local shopping centre. When she went to her after-hours and emergency GP arrangements, the provider told her that they would not be doing that because it was not classed as a public holiday. It would be classed as a normal Saturday and they would take over providing that service after midday, like they normally do every other Saturday. You could imagine what it was like telling the other receptionists—I am not talking about doctors here, although I am sure they would have to work too—that they would be working on Christmas Day.

She wrote to her local MP, which is me, and I am very happy to say that I wrote to the Premier and the Attorney-General and had a meeting with the member for Yeerongpilly, the parliamentary secretary, to ask them to look at this. While we all stand here and talk about our emergency workers and our other state government employees who accept the conditions of their jobs, I do not think anyone has stopped to think about those receptionists in those medical centres in our shopping centres. I was able to put their concerns to the Premier and the Attorney-General, and I am very happy today to stand up here and say that those concerns have been heard and the appropriate action has been taken. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms NELSON-CARR** (Mundingburra—ALP) (11.51 am): I rise to support the Holidays Amendment Bill. I note that the Holidays Act 1983 continues to evolve to meet the needs of Queensland's ever-changing workforce and with recent developments in federal legislation. As from 1 January this year, Queensland's private sector industrial relations jurisdiction was referred to the Commonwealth. Aside from workers in the public sector and local government, industrial relations entitlements for Queensland workers are now determined under the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009. The Fair Work Act is intended to apply to the exclusion of all state or territory industrial laws. One exception to this application is laws dealing with the declaration, prescription or substitution of public holidays, except in relation to the rights and obligations of an employer and worker in relation to public holidays, as we have just heard.

The Holidays Act 1983 still determines what days are public holidays. Even though Queensland's laws cannot directly determine the industrial entitlements of workers in the private sector that apply on a public holiday, such as penalty rates, the prescription of a day as a public holiday under the Holidays Act

1983 activates private sector workers' public holiday entitlements under the Fair Work Act on that day. Therefore, the Holidays Act 1983 continues to have a significant role in the determination of industrial entitlements of Queensland workers, while also playing an important role in determining standards of respite and rest for workers and creating opportunities for workers to better balance their work and family life.

The bill before this House today ensures that the Holidays Act 1983 meets the needs of a changing Queensland workforce. With a highly flexible workforce, Queensland needs to ensure that employees who do not work the 'normal' Monday to Friday nine to five week are accommodated. This amendment ensures that workers who are employed on weekends at a time of the year when we all look forward to a chance for rest, reflection and celebration receive a public holiday that they otherwise would have missed out on.

The member for Springwood just told us exactly what happens to people who have to work on public holidays which the rest of us take for granted. This bill is all about working Queensland families and giving them standards of leisure that we all take for granted. It reminds me of the now gazetted show holiday in Townsville which actually gives us a long weekend. The person who is responsible for that is the Townsville Show Society boss, Chris Condon. He did that to make it better for Townsville families by giving them a long weekend. We now have a show holiday on the Monday that is gazetted. Prior to that, it was in the middle of the week. Whilst we enjoyed having that day off as families, having a long weekend is a much better proposition and people in North Queensland absolutely enjoy that and of course take part in the show.

I wanted to add my note of support for the Department of Justice and the Attorney-General for undertaking a review of Queensland's Holidays Act 1983. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.55 am): I too rise to speak on the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010. It seems that for at least one of my constituents in the seat of Glass House good things do come to those who wait. Mrs Wilma Denholm of Palmwoods first raised this issue with me back in November 2009. Mrs Denholm wrote—

As you are aware in 2009 Boxing Day falls on a Saturday. Unfortunately, in Queensland, the public holiday has been declared on the following Monday. This means for people who work in industries that go beyond Monday to Friday will be paid ordinary Saturday rates when working the actual Boxing Day on Saturday.

I work in retail ... I now find out I must work Boxing Day at normal rates. For me this is \$16.92 ph. Tell me, would you work this day or like your spouse or other family member to be working this day for that paltry amount? I appeal to you to seek to make amends to this decision and any other similar in the future. Some other states have declared both days to be paid penalty rates if working. Insist that Queensland workers also be treated more fairly.

On behalf of Mrs Denholm, I wrote to the Attorney-General and I do thank him for the response that he provided to me and to Mrs Denholm in February this year. Unfortunately, back then it was deemed a bridge too far. The Attorney-General wrote—

The Holidays Act 1983 ... provides for the appointment of public holidays in Queensland. The Act also provides that, in respect of certain days, a substituted day is to be appointed as the public holiday.

...

Of the other State and Territory jurisdictions, in 2009 only Victoria and Western Australia declared both 26 and 28 December as public holidays. In Queensland, the Act allows for the substitution of another day for a public holiday, but not for the appointment of an additional day.

The Attorney-General continued—

The legislative position regarding the appointment of holidays in Queensland has been developed over a number of years taking into account issues such as historical precedent, public expectation and uniformity with other State jurisdictions and has been adopted by the various Governments over this time. Following deliberations of a Council of Australian Governments Working Group on Uniformity of Australian Public Holidays in 1993, it was determined that the current public holidays observed in Queensland were appropriate.

It is interesting to note that something has obviously changed from when the Attorney-General wrote that in February this year and now in October as we debate this amendment. It is worth noting that the Attorney-General subsequently put out a media statement in relation to this bill, where he said—

This change finally puts right a situation that has been wrong for some time.

The Attorney-General certainly cannot claim that he was not aware of it. His media statement continued—

Under the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010 ... people who work on Christmas Day this year and New Year's Day 2011 will be entitled to receive penalty rates.

This puts us in line with our counterparts in New South Wales and Western Australia in relation to Christmas Day, and New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria in relation to New Year's Day. In his media statement, the Attorney-General made this comment—

The government has made this decision after workers and unions outlined to the government how the existing arrangements disadvantage many people.

I would like to note that I hope it was Mrs Wilma Denholm who also helped to convince the Attorney-General to make these changes. The Attorney-General did say that there will be some costs to businesses, and the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee also raised that in its *Legislation Alert*.

**Mrs Miller:** Hear, hear!

**Mr POWELL:** I take that interjection from the member for Bundamba. The committee raised concerns about the rights and liberties of individuals. It stated—

The committee draws the attention of the Parliament to clause 3 which would increase costs to individuals to employ staff to work on Christmas Day 2010 and New Year's Day 2011.

I think it is fair to say that the outcome is a good one for workers and it is certainly a good one for Mrs Denholm.

I want to pick up some comments made by the member for Mundingburra regarding show holidays. I know this is not covered by this bill, but it is a concern for people on the Sunshine Coast, where we have seen, through amalgamation, the loss of two holidays. The council has put forward the proposal that the Nambour show holiday be the one recognised by the entire Sunshine Coast Regional Council area. That certainly puts the town in which my electorate office is located, Maleny, in a difficult situation.

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** There are great people in Maleny and they certainly do deserve a Maleny show day. They formerly represented the whole of the Caloundra city council. It is a great show. Last year the Governor of Queensland came to open the show. It was the 100th show. I attended the AGM of the Maleny Show Society recently.

**Mr Ryan:** Was Ivan there?

**Mr POWELL:** Ivan Hankinson, the president, was there and he will continue to serve in the coming year. It is disappointing that we had to have the conversation. There were already expectations within the group that the council would be putting forward a proposal to go to one show holiday for the whole of the Sunshine Coast. They certainly wanted to object to that. There was some realism in the room that this would be the case. I can assure honourable members that the Maleny Show Society, proudly led by Ivan Hankinson, will push forward regardless of the final decision. There will be a Maleny show next year. It will continue to start on Friday. We will continue to make sure that it is one of the most successful shows not only on the Sunshine Coast but in all of South-East Queensland.

**Mr Roberts:** There was a great quilting exhibition up there two weekends ago.

**Mr POWELL:** I take the interjection from the member for Nudgee. There was a great quilting exhibition up there. We utilise those facilities up there in Maleny extensively for all sorts of shows and exhibitions, and quilting is just one. I would ask the member for Nudgee if he reached into his pocket and purchased a quilt while he was up there in Maleny.

**Mr Roberts:** I bought some raffle tickets. They weren't cheap.

**Mr POWELL:** The Maleny community does thank the member for Nudgee for his contribution. They are not cheap, but neither is the petrol to get up the range to visit Maleny.

**Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—LNP) (12.01 pm): The Gold Coast is Australia's holiday capital and arguably one of the most beautiful parts of the world. Over 10 million tourists—

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Yes, I think it competes with Maleny. Maleny is a beautiful spot. Over 10 million tourists come to the Gold Coast annually to do everything from surf to dream and maybe just recharge the batteries. I am privileged to represent one part of this amazing region in Gaven, in particular the Gold Coast Hinterland, Nerang State Forest and the Nerang and Coomera river regions, cruising right through what is probably the most breathtakingly beautiful part of the country. For many who drive past it day by day, it becomes just the norm. But in a world that is overpopulated, polluted, drab and grey, we are indeed very fortunate. It is very close to Brisbane for those who are Brisbane dwellers.

This bill today is about designated holidays for Christmas and new year. Specifically, this bill deems the dates 25 December, 28 December, 1 January and 3 January 2011 as public holidays. The member for Glass House has actually stated the reason: the adjustment in the calendar. These will be deemed to be public holidays.

This bill has significant financial implications for Gold Coast businesses because over Christmas and new year we expect our population to swell to 1.3 million. A potential group of 600,000 international, local and interstate guests and 50 per cent of our own population will be on holidays at the same time. We have a population of roughly 750,000. We would actually have nearly a million people in tourist mode. This does put enormous pressure on businesses to respond, and that is difficult. For many, Christmas and new year is the time of the year when the bulk of the tourist driven income is derived. In fact, most Gold Coast businesses would derive 80 per cent of their income and profits during December and January. After a very tough two years, those surviving businesses are really hoping for a bumper Christmas. I welcome all honourable members to come this year. They will certainly find that things are very good. Most of the theme parks are very affordable and have some new rides.

The initial signs are not good due to the 0.1 per cent decline in retail sales in Queensland, despite an enormously extended sales period throughout all the shops. There has been a 13 per cent decline in tourist visa applications from Asia Minor and a significant upswing in the Australian dollar that appears to be driving an excess of purchases of overseas holidays by Australians. The figures on that are not out, but we expect that up to 40 per cent of those who might normally come are actually in the process of considering overseas holidays. Christmas is predicted to be wet, and Virgin Blue has just formally shut down its tourist booking system. This has a significant impact on the Gold Coast as Virgin Blue has a 50 per cent split in the provision of services. It has provided 85 per cent of our incoming services to Coolangatta since Qantas actually exited the market. So basically Jetstar and Virgin are the major providers.

The shadow minister has clearly detailed why this bill needs to be delivered. As he correctly stated, it is because of the sell-out of Queensland's industrial relations system by the Rudd-Gillard government at no material advantage to Queensland workers. The minor anomaly is that the Fair Work Act 2009 recognises a public holiday declared or prescribed under Queensland law to be prescribed as such. There seems to be a problem here since public holidays can be seen as a Clayton's holiday: the public holiday you are having when you are not really having a public holiday.

This year on the Gold Coast show holiday—a non-gazetted public holiday on the Gold Coast which was not in sequence with the Brisbane show holiday—travel on the Gold Coast rail system was charged at normal weekday rates because TransLink and QR did not recognise that as a public holiday. Similarly, that affects Brisbane people coming down on show holiday to the Gold Coast, who are charged weekday rates, about which they complain excessively. I have raised the issue about these gazetted days with the minister. Unfortunately, the difficulty is that there seems to be a view that outside Brisbane on these non-gazetted show holidays, which does affect the Gold Coast significantly, we are actually charged normal weekday rates. I would ask the government to seriously consider looking at this and changing it.

The proof for all to see is that the current government, the Bligh Labor government, is not respectful of both the law and the intent of the law. Gold Coasters already have to pay a surcharge on public holidays because staff are paid at higher rates. This is the major difficulty of excessive public holidays: increased wages and double-time penalties for staff. To then charge them transport fees at higher rates is actually capricious and unfair. The government needs to be fair in its observance of public holidays, including those regional holidays, especially in Australia's tourist mecca. Brisbane is but one part of our great state. Remember, we have 10 million tourists a year and we are expecting 15 million by 2014. That is a lot of people. If we get that growth, that will result in a lot of income to the state.

I would like to quote from Paul Burton, who wrote an article in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* on 1 December last year. He reflected on what the global financial crisis might teach us. In fact, like everything, it is appropriate to review these things. He states—

This experience of the Gold Coast emphasises that place matters: that a global crisis will impact differently on the Gold Coast compared with Brisbane, Sydney or Melbourne. The differences reflect different trajectories of economic development and local economic structures. A city based on tourism and building for an expanding population will have a different exposure or risk profile to one based primarily on manufacturing or financial services—

as could be said compared to Brisbane. The article goes on—

However, the differences are also a product of local governance structures and how local councils ... respond to major threats to their local economy.

These things are relevant. In fact, we need to consider those kinds of things with respect to the issue of allocating public holidays.

Some honourable members may be unaware of how we actually developed the issue of calendars as such. The issue was raised here. Members may be unaware that there were customary secular and non-secular calendar directives to include the critical dates based on what was previously the Julian calendar that was used and now the Gregorian calendar. Julian comes from Julius Caesar and Gregorian comes from Pope Gregory XIII. It is the solar calendar.

**Mr Shine:** What was TJ Ryan's attitude?

**Dr DOUGLAS:** I am sorry? We have collectively moved from the Julian to the Gregorian and partially back to the Julian. That is why 1 January is the start of the year. In Christian times, Christmas Day was the start of the year. The ancient Roman calendar started on 1 March, and that was corrected because there was a solar correction. So we actually moved to a solar correction because the Gregorian calendar actually corrects for the solar calendar, which is actually only 26 seconds out. Christmas Day is 25 December, which is obviously the historic birthday of Jesus Christ 2,010 years ago. By convention, we use this as the beginning of the modern calendar because it is the most approximate. It follows that three full moons after new year we have Easter. The arithmetic correction between the calendars is actually called the secular correction because it corrects the difference between the Julian calendar, which is secular, and the Christian, which is non-secular.

The reality is that these holidays are historic. Christian values and ceremonial dates are at the core of our Constitution and system of government. In an increasingly secular world these dates may have reduced significance to many. For non-Christians and atheists, Christmas and new year have equally become a time for family, rest, reflection and giving. It does not imply that they are forced to participate in traditional Christmas or new year vigils, and nor should it. It is akin to Ramadan in those countries where there are fundamental Muslim beliefs. By decree their holidays are at different times.

It is more than a little trite for some who claim aggressive secular values and atheism to not speak out against this decision here today. If we were all true to our beliefs we could see a conga line telling us what would really be declared formal public holidays. Christmas and new year is a sacred time for most Australians.

Honourable members, we need to clearly understand that there is no historic significance to the date 28 December or 3 January other than this year they fall on the other side of the Christmas and new year weekends. That is why they have been decreed. In other words, they allow for a long weekend. Australia has regularly been described as the land of the long weekend. Some say it in very disparaging terms. We need to be careful about drafting laws that sometimes are hypocritical and reflective more of indulgence than contrition. One adds this to the problems created for the public by public holidays.

I am a general practitioner and also a politician. I endorse the comments made by the member for Moggill. Specifically, I would like to discuss some of the issues raised by the member for Springwood a little earlier. What occurs in medical practices is that we actually do open on public holidays. We do work at night and we do work at weekends because people get sick at all hours. It is a privilege to look after people.

It was raised by a member earlier that people get sick out of hours. It may be inconvenient but a medical practitioner has to attend to them. Unfortunately, rosters have to be made and staff have to be placed on those rosters. It is very difficult and it is often unfair. This occurs at Christmas. When the population increases and people are on holidays accidents occur and people need to be seen. We have to have rosters and people have to be available at certain times.

There are arrangements that are formally made like after-hours services, and it is difficult for those staff. By and large, most people do not work every Christmas nor do they work every new year. If one works a new year, in general terms they do not work Christmas Day or Boxing Day. Most people tend to rotate. That is what happens in general practice.

That is not to say that general practitioners get it any better than others. General practitioners are not allowed to charge a patient if we attend a call-out other than for a normal day. The Commonwealth does not recognise a pay fee for the general practitioner. They are paid as they would be on any other day of the week yet they must pay their staff on a public holiday or out of hours as they are due under their awards. Most of them are covered under federal awards. They are very generous and most people do not disagree with those.

Equally, people need to understand there is a cost. Whilst it is a privilege to look after someone, if it is actually costing that general practitioner money people should not begrudge the service that is being given. If they provide the service it is a holistic one. All staff participate in it. I have rarely heard people complain about it. I think this point was well made by the member for Moggill. These are the true effects of public holidays.

What we as politicians must accept is that there are costs to any decision. The public ultimately have to wear those costs. The LNP will always do what it can to reduce the unnecessary costs that are a burden to the community. I believe Labor should do the same. A little understanding of these points would actually make that a little easier.

The gazetting is fair to those families needing a certainty of family time with income. It reflects values of sharing and community demand. The LNP supports the bill, but personally I can only emphasise the significance of the values lying behind its gazetting. Holidays are not just a reward for hard work; they are unique days that allow the community to celebrate how lucky we are both as individuals and collectively.

**Ms O'NEILL** (Kallangur—ALP) (12.15 pm): I rise to support the Holidays Amendment Bill. The bill before the House today is about guaranteeing that employees in sectors that operate seven days a week receive penalty rates in accordance with the applicable award or agreement for working Saturday, 25 December, Christmas Day, and Saturday, 1 January, New Year's Day.

When a day is designated a public holiday employees are entitled to be absent from their employment on the day and still be remunerated their base rate of pay for their ordinary hours of work. If a worker agrees to an employer's reasonable request that they provide labour on a public holiday, they must be paid any penalty rates prescribed in the applicable award or agreement. Previous public holiday arrangements for when Christmas and New Year's Day fell on a Saturday resulted in workers working on Saturday, 25 December and Saturday, 1 January and not receiving public holiday penalty rates but only their usual payments for those days.

In the private sector there are a number of industries operating seven days a week where workers will potentially work on 25 December or 1 January if they are Saturdays. These industries include heavy industries such as the mining and manufacturing industries as well as service industries such as

hospitality, airlines, accommodation, tourism and retail. In the public sector many health workers, firefighters and ambulance officers will also work on these days diligently serving the people of Queensland. It is only reasonable and fitting that these workers who ensure Queenslanders receive essential services be rewarded for being absent from their families and friends at a time frequently used for the most special family, religious and cultural celebrations of the year.

As result of this bill, employees will receive public holiday penalty rates in accordance with the applicable award or agreement for work on each of these prescribed days—25 and 28 December as public holidays for Christmas Day and 1 and 3 January as public holidays for New Year's Day. In particular, workers working on Saturday, 25 December or Saturday, 1 January will typically receive penalty rates of double time and a half instead of the normal Saturday rates payable under the previous public holiday arrangements. A penalty rate of double time and a half is far more fair and appropriate for workers who want or are required to work on these two important days. The declaration of a public holiday usually provides further flexibility in rostering and therefore more choice for workers to swap shifts et cetera.

This bill ensures that individual workers will be treated equitably whether working a Monday to Friday week and some other rostered hours or shiftwork that includes weekends, and will receive consistent public holiday entitlements in respect of public holidays for Christmas Day 2010 and New Year's Day 2011. It is not only fair but it makes logical sense that all workers should receive a consistent entitlement to public holiday penalty rates.

I congratulate the minister for introducing this amendment. It is a great example of listening to workers' concerns and taking steps to address them. Queensland workers should not only receive their appropriate industrial entitlement, but they are entitled to a work/life balance and recognition of the value of their time away from their families and friends. Workers have never been able to accept that important holidays and family occasions like Christmas Day and New Year's Day are not recognised as such just because they fall on a Saturday. This has never been simply about the number of public holidays; it has been about accessing or being compensated for traditionally important events with friends and families. This amendment rights a long-term wrong. I am proud to commend it to the House.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (12.18 pm): I rise to speak to the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010 and to support the initiative to give a public holiday on 28 December and 3 January. There are very few opportunities throughout the year for families to get together. As a person of faith, the celebration of Christmas and Easter is important to me. There are other religious observations around this time as well. They are not only opportunities to celebrate and remember those important occasions but also usually the times when the longer public holidays are available for families to get together and to build that family relationship, and they are getting few and far between. It has usually been Easter, and this Christmas will afford the opportunity for families to be able to get together. The member for Gaven gave a very detailed speech about the holidays and the establishment of the calendar and talked about Australians being seen by some nations as indolent. While that may be the opinion of some, there are plenty of surveys around that indicate that Australians work very long hours and that they are hard workers. Those people who are in the workforce would feel that they do an honest day's work for an honest day's pay and that that needs to be recognised.

As other speakers have indicated, there is a cost to the passing of this bill. Many of the areas that will be affected, particularly the hospitality industry, will have a cost and a benefit—that is, there will be increased costs in order to have staff on duty but there will also be, particularly in the hospitality area, increased patronage that will help cover that cost. I would not make light in any way of the cost of running a business, particularly a small business. However, this is a high traffic time, if you like, in terms of many small businesses and therefore one would hope that that will recoup the cost of paying these penalty rates.

My husband has been a shiftworker—not in the hospitality area but in the heavy industry area—for many years and has worked many Christmas days and many new year's days. If an employer is worth his salt, he will give his employees recognition for working those days. QAL where John has worked has been good. Workers get a special Christmas dinner on the day, but it is a recognition that it is a special day and that these workers are absent from their families. That is a great way for a business to recognise the sacrifice of those people who are working on the day. Again, I commend the bill to the House. I support it. I recognise the costs attached to it, but I also recognise the importance of this period of the year for the observance of religious occasions—the birth of Christ, in my case. However, it is also an important time for family to get together and I wish each family which does make the effort to get together a wonderful time, a time of enjoyment and a time of safe travelling.

**Mr McLINDON** (Beaudesert—TQP) (12.22 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010, introduced by the Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations, and welcome this straightforward piece of legislation which will recognise the substitution of other days as public holidays. As the current act does not permit the appointment of any additional public holidays, this amendment bill is required, which will allow Christmas Day 2010 and New Year's Day 2011 to be appointed as additional public holidays. It creates a natural justice for those employees to enjoy either a

day off receiving the base wage or the benefit of receiving penalty rates if one is required to work. This will fall in line with the Commonwealth Fair Work Act 2009, which will enact all due public holiday entitlements.

When I was employed in the hospitality industry I missed many public holidays and I understand that with that sacrifice fair and just compensation to those who give up their time for others to enjoy should be in place. I understand that time constraints have not allowed this bill before the House to activate this legislation indefinitely, and as the Holidays Act is 27 years old I look forward to those necessary requirements coming before this House in the near future to save the parliament time and give surety to all Queensland employees. Naturally, this will result in an increase of costs to employers, but rightfully so, and that choice to trade in most instances is their own decision. We also have to bear in mind that in some cases there is a public holiday surcharge on goods and services.

On 6 June 1859 something occurred of historical significance—Queen Victoria signed documents granting Queensland the right to its own representative government and appointed Queensland's first Governor, Sir George Bowen. Queensland was born and became a self-governing colony. This momentous occasion calls for a public holiday. I would strongly advocate to the government that 6 June from hereon in also become a public holiday. I understand that the Queen's birthday holiday falls within the week of this date. I am not promoting a national day of Sundays, but my suggestion is we could either create a whole new public holiday or combine the two on 6 June. This would keep both the republicans and the monarchists happy. I believe it is time to install a bit of state pride back into Queenslanders and create a day where families and friends can kick back and celebrate the Sunshine State with a coldie in one hand and a snag in the other. I have requested this once via the Premier in a question on notice without success, but I will attempt to put it on the agenda again. Queensland Day needs to be given the necessary importance it deserves, and a public holiday should be set aside in commemoration of the birth of this great state. I have put my idea on the table and I hope that in time it will become a reality.

**Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (12.24 pm): I rise to speak to the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010, and I have certainly listened to the contributions by members who have spoken on this bill. I want to put on the record my understanding of the impacts of this proposed bill when it becomes law in Queensland on not just workers but employers—the very people who provide employment to the people who will directly benefit from this proposal. One of the important things in my mind is to make sure that governments and ministers have consistency in what they say and what they actually do. I use this bill by way of a comparison to previous decisions that previous state governments have made, and I go back to the amalgamation of councils where the state government went out of its way and the Premier of the day went out of his way to say that, by supporting the amalgamation of councils in Queensland, it would give those councils greater strength, greater capacity and greater clout to lobby for their respective areas with the state government of the day.

What we are seeing now on the Sunshine Coast is this state government taking away from our Sunshine Coast Regional Council the capacity to plan and develop and approve and be involved in the development of a significant Caloundra South development. We see the government today giving all the reasons why it claims it is justified to take this power away from our duly elected Sunshine Coast Regional Council.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr O'Brien): Order! Member for Nicklin, the provisions of the bill before the House are quite specific. They deal with public holidays. They have nothing to do with the matter that you are addressing the House on. There is a time and a place to talk about what you want to talk about. This is the time to talk about the provisions of the bill before the House, and I urge you to do so now.

**Mr WELLINGTON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The issue of public holidays has a direct impact on state government employees, council employees and employees throughout all of Queensland—whether they work and live on the Sunshine Coast, North Queensland, Central Queensland or the Gold Coast. It affects everyone, and this bill will affect everyone in some capacity, even if it is in our capacity as taxpayers. What I am trying to say is that governments and ministers need to show consistency in what they say and what they do, and what we are seeing here is consistency from this minister. This minister made a decision and we are actually seeing it acted on in this bill. What I am trying to draw by way of a very clear comparison is what has happened in the past by previous state governments to show there is inconsistency, and we need other governments and other ministers to follow the lead of this minister to ensure there is consistency in the process of decision making and actions that follow from those decisions.

My comparison is that we have had previous ministers and previous premiers saying why there needed to be amalgamations of councils in Queensland, and we have now seen this government go out of its way to take away the very powers of those local councils. On the Sunshine Coast we have seen this state government take those powers away from the council and in particular the Caloundra South development that goes to the core and to the heart of local council representation in Queensland on the Sunshine Coast. My comparison is that we need to make sure ministers are consistent in what they say and what they do. I congratulate this minister on his consistency and I hope other ministers of this

government will take a cold shower and have a think about some decisions that have recently been made in relation to the proposed Caloundra South development on the Sunshine Coast. We as representatives of the Sunshine Coast do not support that.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WELLINGTON:** We think it is wrong, it is appropriate and it is out of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr WELLINGTON:** I resume my seat.

**Mr FINN** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise to—

**Ms Jarratt** interjected.

**Mr FINN:** I take that interjection. I might not get as excited about this bill as the member for Nicklin, but I do frequently enjoy and welcome the passion that he brings to this place. I rise to make a few brief comments in relation to the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010. It is timely that this bill go through the House now as Christmas approaches to ensure that Queensland workers who are required to work on Christmas Day and New Year's Day will be appropriately remunerated.

I support this bill. The one consistency that we are getting in this place is an opposition that stands up and says 'We won't oppose'. This is the wild rivers defence—'We will not oppose'—which means that they will support it, but they will not say that they will support it. They will come in here and vote for it and then in the future when they are ever asked they will say that they did not support it. We are seeing that happen again here today. The opposition wants to tread the line. It does not want to take responsibility for a position. It wants to come in here and say that this bill is going to cost business too much but it does not want to be painted out there as denying workers what it knows is a fair and reasonable entitlement for working on Christmas Day. So we are seeing the opposition trying to tread that fence. I find it fairly weak and fairly pathetic.

Without the amendment that we are debating today, workers who are required to work on Christmas Day will not receive penalty rates for doing so and will be paid ordinary rates for working on a Saturday. This is because the act provides that, where a public holiday falls on a Saturday or a Sunday, a substitute public holiday can be appointed. However, there is not a power to appoint an additional public holiday, that is, the provisions require that when a substitute is determined, the substantive date cannot also be a public holiday. The purpose of this amendment bill is to enable there to be an additional public holiday.

For those Queenslanders who work on Christmas Day while the rest of us are enjoying a Christmas break, it is only fair and reasonable that they receive adequate remuneration for doing that. They may be doctors, nurses, ambulance officers, police, firefighters, those who work in restaurants and hotels, or bus and train drivers. I take the point raised by the member for Nicklin that there is a taxpayer implication here. A number of those people who work on Christmas Day will be state employees. The state, as a good employer, is quite prepared to bring in this legislation, make the amendment and pay the fair going rate for its workers, as should anybody else. If it is necessary for all of those state employed people to be at work over Christmas and the new year to ensure that everyone else has a safe and enjoyable holiday, it appears to me that it would be unfair to say, 'If you work on the substitute holiday you can be paid the additional rates but you cannot if you work on Christmas Day or New Year's Day.' Other members have mentioned the importance of Christmas. I will not go into that in too much detail, but it is a holiday period and it is a family time. Workers who are working on Christmas Day are not enjoying what is a significant family time in Australian culture and the Australian way of life. I think that that fact gives additional weight to the importance of this amendment.

I would like to say that, as the Parliamentary Secretary for Industrial Relations, I have had representations on this matter, most significantly from the member for Springwood, who wrote to me on behalf of some people in her electorate. They were receptionists in doctors' surgeries who were going to be working on Christmas Day without adequate penalty rates. So I acknowledge the advocacy that has come from the member for Springwood. That made it very clear to me that there was a range of people who I had not considered who were impacted by this issue. So I thank her for raising this matter directly with me and for the work that she has done to support workers in her electorate.

These amendments change only the holiday arrangements for Christmas 2010 and new year 2011. The Attorney-General indicated in his second reading speech that further amendments will be introduced to ensure that these arrangements are made a permanent fixture of the holiday calendar and I welcome that. But I might also take this opportunity to say that one of the other responsibilities that I have is as the Premier's nominated representative on issues affecting the veterans community. I would like to draw to the Attorney-General's attention—but I am sure he is well aware of this in any case—that next year Anzac Day will fall on Easter Monday. A number of ex-service organisations have spoken to me about their concerns, primarily about ensuring that Anzac Day is given the due recognition that it is a part of the Australian way of life and a part of what we expect Anzac Day to be about. I draw this matter to the attention of the Attorney-General and say that I will be speaking further to him about this issue as it arises at Easter next year when we have two public holidays that are important to many Australians falling on the same day.

Most importantly, this amendment brings Queensland into line with other states. We have heard quite a bit from the opposition about the impacts on business. One of the things that is most important for business is that there is consistency of holidays across the nation. At a time when people are travelling across the nation, consistency is also important. So I welcome the amendment and I look forward to further amendments that ensure that when this situation arises we will not be back here in the House talking about it, because workers will have enshrined security and certainty.

**Mr WETTENHALL** (Barron River—ALP) (12.35 pm): I am very pleased to speak in support of the Holidays Amendment Bill 2010 which, as the member for Yeerongpilly has noted, achieves consistency with other states in regard to public holidays. That is very important, particularly for businesses.

The approach adopted by this bill is the observance of two public holidays for Christmas Day 2010 on 25 December and on Tuesday, 28 December 2010 and two public holidays for New Year's Day 2011 on Saturday, 1 January 2011 and Monday, 3 January, 2011. Therefore, for this special time of the year, this bill gives employees the enjoyment of a four-day break from work at Christmas and a three-day break from work at the new year, or an entitlement to penalty rates on each of those prescribed public holidays if they choose or are required to work on those days. The bill also brings Queensland into line with other states in regard to public holidays for Christmas and New Year's Day.

Ensuring consistency with some of Australia's major states in regard to public holidays will remove confusion for employers and their workers. It will make certain that hardworking employees and sectors who work seven days a week, such as people who work in retail, hospitality, tourism, mining, health services, firefighting, ambulance and other emergency services, receive the same days off or entitlement to public holiday penalty rates that workers in Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria receive.

I mentioned among those industries tourism and retail. As I have said many times before in this House, tourism is the lifeblood of the Far North Queensland economy. One in five workers in my region are employed in the tourism industry and they will be among the many who I am sure will be very pleased with these amendments. Also, interestingly, in my electorate of Barron River the single largest category of workers by industry is retail. In the 2006 census, nearly 3,000 people nominated the retail trade as their industry employing sector. No doubt there will be a few more of them in 2010 than there were in the 2006 census. They will also certainly benefit from these changes.

For Christmas Day 2010, New South Wales and Western Australia have arrangements in place maintaining a public holiday on 25 December as well as appointing an additional public holiday on 27 December or 28 December. All other jurisdictions have standing legislative arrangements to substitute Monday, 27 December, as the public holiday for Christmas Day. For New Year's Day 2011, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia have arrangements in place maintaining a public holiday on 1 January as well as appointing an additional day on 3 January. All other jurisdictions have standing legislative arrangements to substitute Monday, 3 January as the public holiday for New Year's Day.

The bill creates a simpler, fairer public holiday entitlement for working Queenslanders and achieves consistency with certain states, especially neighbouring New South Wales, which will ensure a less confusing and fairer public holiday entitlement for Queenslanders for Christmas Day in 2010 and New Year's Day in 2011. I commend the bill to the House.

**Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (12.39 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the debate on the Holidays Act Amendment Bill. I particularly want to thank my colleagues in the government for their support, and I acknowledge the support expressed for this amendment by the members for Gladstone, Beaudesert and Nicklin.

The Christmas-new year period is a special time of the year. It is a time for families to come together to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and to spend some valuable down time together. While many workers enjoy the benefits of public holidays over this period, a number of occupations are required to work through the holidays. For the inconvenience of being separated from their families, particularly on Christmas Day, workers have normally been eligible to receive extra financial reward through penalty rates, but in the past this benefit has been denied to workers when Christmas Day and New Year's Day have fallen on a Saturday. This bill by the Bligh Labor government will right this wrong. It means that this summer Queenslanders who have to work on these special days and who are required to be away from their families will get the pay they deserve.

You would have to be channelling the original Christmas grinch, Ebenezer Scrooge, to object to workers being paid their proper entitlements on public holidays. This move is particularly good news for those seven-day occupations where workers have to work over the Christmas-new year period. This includes many health workers, firefighters and ambulance officers, hotel and hospitality workers who work at Christmas Day functions, bus and train drivers who provide public transport, staff at fast-food outlets and even workers at suburban medical centres. These are the occupations that make our lives easier, safer and more enjoyable over Christmas, so it is only fair that they get paid the penalty rates that they are entitled to. In a busy world, when so many people are trying to balance work and family commitments, it is important to ensure families are given the opportunity to spend important occasions such as Christmas and New Year's Day together.

The Holidays Act 1983 lists the days that are public holidays including 25 December, Christmas Day, and 1 January, New Year's Day. Although the act provides for the substitution of other days as public holidays, it does not provide for the observance or appointment of additional public holidays. As we know, this year Christmas Day falls on a Saturday. It is not a public holiday because Tuesday, 28 December was appointed as the substitute Christmas Day public holiday. In 2011 New Year's Day also falls on a Saturday. In these circumstances a substitute public holiday is usually appointed on Monday, 3 January and Saturday, 1 January ceases to be a public holiday. Without this bill's amendment of the act, many members working on the actual date of observance of Christmas Day and New Year's Day would receive no additional entitlements for work that would normally attract public holiday penalty rates, particularly double time and a half. To this end the bill provides for the observance of two public holidays for Christmas Day this year—on Saturday, 25 December and Tuesday, 28 December 2010—and two public holidays for New Year's Day next year—on Saturday, 1 January and Monday, 3 January 2011.

The bill does not directly prescribe particular entitlements on public holidays. Such entitlements are determined by the relevant award or agreement. However, the bill bestows the status of a public holiday onto each of the days: Saturday, 25 December 2010; Tuesday, 28 December 2010; Saturday, 1 January 2011; and Monday, 3 January 2011. This activates entitlements in awards and agreements such as the typical double-time-and-a-half penalty rate for workers on each of those public holidays.

In the private sector there are a number of industries operating seven days a week where workers will potentially work on Saturday, 25 December or Saturday, 1 January. These industries include hospitality, accommodation, tourism, retail, and heavy industries such as mining. In the public sector many health workers, firefighters and ambulance officers will also work on these days. It is only fair and appropriate that these workers are compensated for being away from their families and friends on days traditionally used for the most special family occasions of the year.

The government believes that any increased costs to employers, including the government, through the potential for payment of public holiday penalty rates on the additional public holidays will more than be offset by the benefit to hardworking employees who would otherwise receive no additional benefit for working on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. This Labor government believes that Queensland workers who have received inferior public holiday entitlements in the past should not continue to suffer a loss of those entitlements this Christmas.

It is important to note that this bill will achieve consistency with other states. For Christmas Day 2010, Western Australia and New South Wales will observe a public holiday on Saturday, 25 December 2010 and an additional public holiday on 27 or 28 December. For New Year's Day 2011, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia will observe public holidays on both Saturday, 1 January and Monday, 3 January. Although this bill changes public holiday arrangements for Christmas Day 2010 and New Year's Day 2011 only, I reiterate that the government will introduce further amendments to the act in 2011 to ensure that this changed public holiday arrangement is made permanent for subsequent years when Christmas Day and Boxing Day fall on a Saturday and we will also consider further amendments to the act.

This is an important reform for workers in Queensland by a Labor government and I am proud to have introduced this bill into the parliament. In conclusion, I thank all honourable members for their support for the bill and this legislative reform. I would also like to thank all departmental officers involved in the preparation of this bill and I commend the bill to the parliament.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—

**Mr BLEIJIE** (12.45 pm): With respect to clause 3, which inserts the only sections—section 9 and 10—into the Holidays Act 1983, I ask the Attorney to table any costings provided to him that detail how much these public holiday declarations will in fact cost the Public Service.

**Mr DICK:** As was indicated in the debate, it is difficult to assess the cost to business in Queensland for the imposition of these additional public holidays. That was acknowledged in the debate by the shadow minister, the member for Southern Downs. It is difficult to accurately assess that. For the public sector in Queensland the indicative costings are approximately \$19 million, but we make no apologies for that. I certainly hope that the opposition will not be making an issue of that in the community. It appeared to me during the debate that they supported this legislative reform. I certainly hope it is not the each-way bet the opposition always likes to put on legislation. It would be nice to have a bill in this House that came in and was subject to definitive support by the opposition.

I have indicated that that is an estimate that I have been provided with. It is an advice that we have been provided with and we make no apologies for that. We make no apologies for the public sector workers in this state being paid appropriate compensation for being away from their families on some of the most special days in the year. It is a cost that is incurred this year. It is not a cost that will be incurred every year. It will be a cost incurred perhaps once every seven years. We will be changing the law to ensure that this is a permanent change to the law in Queensland. We think it is appropriate that firefighters, ambulance officers, paramedics, health workers of all descriptions, rail transport officers, people working in corrective services facilities throughout Queensland and other individuals who make our state work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, including the most special days for families in the year, be appropriately compensated and rewarded for their work.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** In my second question to the honourable the Attorney-General I seek the Attorney's feedback in terms of the types of consultation undertaken, specifically consultation with the private sector, prior to announcing these new declarations. Following that consultation, what, if any, feedback was received by the Attorney-General from the private sector?

**Mr DICK:** We do know that former endorsed candidates of the LNP have come out and condemned the bill—

**Mr Moorhead:** Unsuccessfully.

**Mr DICK:** Unsuccessfully. I take the interjection from the member for Waterford. That is the only person in Queensland frankly who has spoken long and loud about it. We made this decision. This was a clear decision by the government. We made a decisive decision. This is in complete distinction from the vacillation, the indecisiveness, the unpredictability, the weakness of the Leader of the Opposition who, two weeks after he moved on one of his shadow ministers, can still not make a decision about who will be—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance under the standing orders. I specifically asked the minister what consultation he sought and what feedback he received as Attorney-General.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr O'Brien): Order! There is no point of order. The Attorney-General is in order in answering the question.

**Mr DICK:** The member for Kawana would be the last person in this place who would be lecturing anyone about relevance. It is a complete distinction between the weakness and vacillation of the Leader of the Opposition, who cannot even determine one of the 18 positions on his front bench two weeks after the vacancy was created. In one of the most important shadow portfolios that deals with growth in our state, he still cannot make a decision, and that is because he is fundamentally an indecisive person and captured by those individuals whom he relies on for support. He is not a decisive leader; he is the complete opposite.

We made a clear decision. We made a decisive decision on this. We have advised industry groups. We have advised trade unions of this decision. I would indicate to those members opposite, who seem to support the bill but now they are seeking to undermine the purposes of the bill—

**Mr Lawlor** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the minister. They constantly place each-way bets because again they cannot be decisive in their position. They take positions solely on the basis of political advantage and political opportunity. We make no apologies for making this decision in the best interest of Queensland workers. It is Labor governments who always put Queensland workers first. That is our history. That is what we do, and that stands in complete contrast to those members opposite.

Clause 3, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (12.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

**Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (12.51 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY SECURITIES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS) BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 5 August (see p. 2503), on motion of Mr Lawlor—

That the bill be now read a second time.

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.52 pm): I rise to speak on the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010, which follows on from the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009, which passed through this parliament last year. This is very much a consequential bill of that legislation, and we are pleased to support it. As I say, from the outset the opposition will be supporting the bill, as we did last year when the main bill was introduced into this House. Unlike the Labor Party on many occasions, when we take a stance on an issue we stick with it, whereas they can change their position depending on the spin and the political gain they may achieve in partaking in sideswiping.

At the outset, I reiterate that a personal property security is defined as a security for a finance institution with an interest in property other than land under Torrens title to be used as security for a loan or for other obligations. According to the explanatory notes and the minister's second reading speech, flaws in the existing system of Australian laws governing security interest in personal property have resulted in this legislation coming forward. This means that there are many pieces of legislation which refer to this particular subject and issue across Australia.

The objectives of this bill are to follow on and implement procedural reforms that have been indicated in the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009. The Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010 seeks to implement three main legislative reforms. The first is to allow for the finalisation and closure of Queensland's personal property registers and repeal the acts that established and created them. The Queensland registers to be closed will include the Register of Encumbered Vehicles, commonly known as REVS—which, as indicated previously, I have used myself to very great advantage when buying one of my younger family members a car; the Register of Cooperative Charges; and the Bills of Sale Register, including the Register of Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane.

According to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission website, the Register of Encumbered Vehicles, REVS, for Queensland is currently under the jurisdiction of the Office of Fair Trading. It provides access to a database of vehicles that have money owing on them, and that is actually one site that the government is operating that does operate.

When a bank, finance company or individual takes out an interest in a vehicle—that is, provides a loan to the owner—they should advise Fair Trading, which adds the information to the database. If you buy a vehicle from a licensed motor dealer, by law you must be provided with a REVS certificate. If you are buying privately, it is your responsibility to get that REVS certificate. The certificate protects the buyer against repossession provided you buy the vehicle before midnight on the day the certificate is issued.

The Register of Cooperative Charges is a list of cooperatives which are autonomous associations of persons who voluntarily join together to meet common economic, social and cultural needs. They are administered under the Cooperatives Act 1997 and the Cooperatives Regulation 1997. There are 180 registered cooperatives in Queensland where members can pool resources to achieve greater economic benefit than they could otherwise achieve as individuals.

The Bills of Sale Register is currently administered by the Queensland Office of Fair Trading where the register records the borrower's and lender's name and agreement details. The Register of Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane is another register that will be transferred to the Commonwealth. Under the current Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931, which will be repealed, a lien means the charge, made enforceable under the act when registered and while subsisting, whereby any crop and the proceeds thereof become security for the discharge of any debt or obligation.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by the Premier

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, this morning the Leader of the Opposition rose on a matter of privilege alleging that words spoken by the honourable the Premier in a ministerial statement after question time had been removed. It was at least suggested that the honourable the Premier had caused these words to be removed.

Because this matter involves the work product of Hansard and the application of internal editorial policies, I have decided to take the unusual step of making this statement before receiving correspondence on the matter, although—and I stress—this does not preclude correspondence being considered.

Since the matter being raised this morning, both the Clerk and the Chief Hansard Reporter have listened to the tapes and the *Hansard* proof has been viewed. I table a copy of the proof.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from *Hansard*, dated 6 October 2010, relating to public expenditure on advertising [3342].

The words 'I am further advised that there are no more of these' were said by the Premier but were not included in the record as they were considered to be a false start to the sentence which was subsequently restated by the Premier. As such, they were a redundancy and, therefore, under the parliament's editing policy were not included in the record. I emphasise that the words were considered a false start, were removed by Hansard, were not included in the proof sent to the Premier's office and no correction was made to the proof by the Premier or her office.

The principles upon which corrections to the record are accepted are expressly contained in the *Members' Information Manual*. The relevant section reads—

On each proof copy is a time (30 minutes after delivery) by which any suggested alterations should be returned for incorporation in the *Daily Record of Proceedings*. Such alterations, however, must be confined to correction of obvious errors or clarification of statements that may otherwise be misinterpreted; they must not alter the sense. A decision will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Chief Hansard Reporter.

These are longstanding principles within Westminster parliaments and are based on the overarching principle that the *Record of Proceedings* is a report of the proceedings of parliament and is not a verbatim record.

## DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, would you please acknowledge in the public gallery His Excellency the Chilean Ambassador.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr SPEAKER:** On that happy note, the House will adjourn and resume at 2.30 pm.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY SECURITIES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS) BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3723, on motion of Mr Lawlor—

That the bill be now read a second time.

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (2.30 pm): I will continue the speech I was giving prior to the lunch break. These registers will be closed in May 2011, when the national Personal Property Securities Register is established. I would like to take the opportunity now to prevail upon the minister to advise in his summing-up how the other states and territories are progressing in relation to their commitment to the national register.

Information from the Queensland registers will be migrated over to the new Commonwealth register. I would like to state here that confidentiality and the protection of this migration of information and data needs to be completed with the utmost care, diligence and protection of consumer information. I am sure that will be the intent of the minister and that will be high on his list. The migration of information on the commencement of the new Personal Property Securities Act must be protected for the preservation of consumer rights. Consumer rights in regard to data being moved from one jurisdiction to another, from a state register to a national register, need to be systematically preserved obviously for confidentiality reasons. This confidentiality of the migration of data is fundamental to protect Queenslanders' rights. In Queensland, the closure of these registers will be achieved by repealing the Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act 1995, the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931, the Motor Vehicles and Boats Securities Act 1986 and the register provisions from the Cooperatives Act 1997.

The second change this bill has proposed will allow for opting out of certain statutory licences and rights from the new national Personal Property Securities Register. This reform came out of the COAG meeting in 2006 and the following 2008 intergovernmental agreement between the states and the territories. The agreement allowed for—

... the States and Territories to continue to regulate any licence, right, entitlement or authority (a statutory right) created pursuant to their legislation.

Therefore the Commonwealth PPS Act allows State or Territory legislation to expressly exclude such statutory rights from the application of the PPS Act.

As stated in the explanatory notes, those statutory rights are—

- tenements and authorities granted under various Acts administered by the Mines and Energy service delivery area of DEEDI, relating to the mining, petroleum and gas, greenhouse gas and geothermal energy Industries;
- licences and authorities under the *Electricity Act 1994* (i.e. electricity generation, transmission, distribution and retail authorities, and special approvals) and the *Gas Supply Act 2003* (i.e. gas distribution and retail authorities);
- casino licences under the *Casino Control Act 1982*;
- operating authorities and gaming machine entitlements under the *Gaming Machine Act 1991*;
- liquor licences under the *Liquor Act 1992*; and
- wine producer licences and merchant licences under the *Wine Industry Act 1994*.

As the minister stated in his second reading speech, the third proposed change in the bill—

... provides for prioritisation of cost recovery where property is seized or acquired under law.

This will mean rights will remain for certain statutory authorities and government organisations to recover costs of seizing, storing and selling abandoned or seized personal property. I take it, Minister, that those rights will stay with the states involved.

The background of the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010 stems from the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Act, which was passed in this parliament last year. The history of the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Act comes out of the COAG reforms where all reforms regarding personal property securities across Australia are to be implemented by May 2011, with Commonwealth legislation to support the reforms in place by 2009, which we have seen go through. In Queensland, the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill was passed through the state parliament in September 2009. There is agreement from the opposition with the government on these COAG reforms that will hopefully deliver a better and more streamlined manner in which these issues can be addressed throughout the community, providing cheaper costs for business and a better system that can be regulated more effectively right across Australia.

There is another bill in the parliament—the Australian consumer law—which is coming along these grounds. It is slightly different, in that this is passing powers and regulation across to the Commonwealth, where the new act will be following on from the COAG recommendations in terms of pointing us in a better direction. Quite clearly, we will still have our own control and our own legislation with that particular law, where this one is passing across to the Commonwealth.

Reforms in the personal property securities area are welcomed by the Liberal National Party, as any legislated policy and procedures that protect the consumer yet let the industry grow are very important for this side of the House. This is a priority by the Bligh Labor government that we are pleased to support, as opposed to what normally comes from the Bligh Labor government. The act to be amended in this bill is the Cooperatives Act 1997. The acts to be repealed are the Motor Vehicles and Boats Securities Act 1986, the Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act 1955 and the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931.

The following acts that are amended are to opt out of statutory rights, licences, entitlements and authorities and to preserve the rights to benefit from the sale and disposal of abandoned or seized personal property. This is very droll and quite perfunctory, but it must be highlighted to show how many areas are affected. Those acts are: the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, the Motor Racing Events Act 1990, the Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990, the Central Queensland University Act 1998, the Griffith University Act 1998, the James Cook University Act 1997, the Queensland University of Technology Act 1998, the University of Queensland Act 1998, the University of Southern Queensland Act 1998, the University of the Sunshine Coast Act 1998, the Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Act 1966, the Alcan Queensland Pty. Limited Agreement Act 1965, the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968, the Commonwealth Aluminium Corporation Pty. Limited Agreement Act 1957, the Disposal of Uncollected Goods Act 1967—

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** That is my concern. I take the interjection of the member for Everton. I do hope that the government has carefully considered all of the acts that will be affected by this particular piece of legislation, because some of the acts go back to 1957. I would hate to think that the government has missed something that we will have to come back to this House to address another day. I will have great pleasure in pointing out the fact that I and the member for Everton have brought these matters forward to the House.

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** The member has not stopped my list. It also includes the Disposal of Uncollected Goods Act 1967, the Electricity Act 1994, the Gaming Machine Act 1991—

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** It took me a long time to study all of these. There is also the Gas Supply Act 2003—

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Brisbane Central.

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** There is nothing about finding keys for cars in here at all. I cannot see anything affecting the member for Everton.

**Mr Shine:** You're a gas supplier. You're a gas supplier if ever there was one.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Toowoomba North, you have just come into the chamber.

**Mr STEVENS:** There is also the Geothermal Exploration Act 2004, the Gladstone Power Station Agreement Act 1993, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Liquor Act—

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** In response to the member for Everton, I stayed up all night writing these matters to get it absolutely correct, as we should in this House. There is the Liquor Act 1992, the Manufactured Homes (Residential Parks) Act 2003, which will also be changed shortly, Mineral Resources Act 1989, Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement Act 1995, Offshore Minerals Act 1998, the Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004—going back to 1923; we are affecting that—Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982—

**Mr Watt** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** We are all going to go through them individually later on when the clauses are called. There is also the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act 2000, or PAMDA, and the regulation 2001, Queensland Nickel Agreement Act 1970, Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003, Storage Liens Act 1973, the Thiess Peabody Mitsui Coal Pty Ltd Agreements Act 1962, the Wine Industry Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and City of Brisbane (Operations) Regulation 2010, the Local Government Act 2009—this one might interest the member for Everton—the Burials Assistance Act 1965, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, Legal Aid Queensland Act 1997, the Property Law Act 1974, the Succession Act 1981, Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1995, Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, Libraries Act 1988, Queensland Art Gallery Act 1987—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, the constant interjections are making this into a very long speech.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Mermaid Beach, as riveting as it is, I would also like to follow your particular speech and the theme that you are adopting. Can you please help me in relation to where in the bill you are referring.

**Mr STEVENS:** I am pleased to help you because, quite clearly, the legislation—and I am explaining to you, other members of the House and people who are watching this matter—that we are debating in this House today directly affects every piece of legislation that I am mentioning. As we will go through in the clauses later on, you will see how it affects every piece of legislation that I am referring to.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** So whereabouts in this list are you up to?

**Mr STEVENS:** I am almost to the end of the list. I am referring to the final matters of legislation that it is all very relevant to. I thank you for your indulgence, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am not sure where I got to.

**Mr Watt:** Start again!

**Mr STEVENS:** The Libraries Act 1998—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! He is not going to start again. Please continue.

**Mr STEVENS:** Thank you for your protection. There is the Queensland Art Gallery Act 1987, Queensland Museum Act 1970, the Queensland Performing Arts Trust Act 1977, the Queensland Theatre Company Act 1970, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994 and Transport Infrastructure (Rail) Regulation, the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 and the Financial Intermediaries Act 1986. Mr Deputy Speaker, you can see how important and relevant these changes are and how they will affect a large section of the legislation and regulatory controls of the Queensland parliament.

The history of the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2009 comes from the COAG reforms, and all the legislative reforms are to be implemented by states and territories by May 2011. The national Personal Property Securities Bill was passed in the Commonwealth parliament last year. In Queensland the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2009 was passed through the state parliament, as I said, in September 2009. All the reforms are to be uniform across all states and territories. Reforms in the personal property securities area are welcomed by the LNP. Any legislative change that protects our consumers and lets the industry grow is a very important priority for this side of the House.

Consultation on this bill has been solid and effective and has been in process for quite a number of years. It started back in 2006 when the bill was part of the Commonwealth legislation process. This bill, which is obviously part 2 of the original personal property securities Commonwealth bill, has been given necessary community exposure for feedback from members of the business and general community upon which it will have a very vibrant and relevant effect. This consultation has been extensive since the conception of the development of the national personal property securities scheme and register and has been undertaken by the Australian Attorney-General's Department from 2006 until 2009.

As I commented in my speech on the personal property securities bill back on 16 September 2009, there were a few concerns from Liberal senators that came out of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee of the federal parliament. It is very hard to hear.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I am having difficulty hearing the member down here.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Brisbane Central, the member for Mermaid Beach has the call.

**Mr STEVENS:** One of these concerns was the requirement to table a report on the implementation of national personal property securities legislation in the first year of operation and the scheme itself within the first 18 months, which should include views and feedback from stakeholders including industry, governments, lawyers, consumers and academics. This was rejected and has been reviewed in three years. I believe it will be well and truly implemented and operational within that time frame. So the review probably should have been done in a shorter period.

Apparently, the costs are expected to be met within the agencies' existing budgets. I ask the minister: has this been allocated in this financial year's budget that was handed down in June of this year? The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee has expressed concerns in its *Legislation Alert No. 9 of 2010* about the following areas: rights and liberties, immunity from proceedings or prosecution in relation to individuals' rights, operations of certain statutory provisions and substantial uniformity with legislation of another jurisdiction.

In regard to rights and liberties, the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee is concerned with clause 6, which authorises the chief executive to give the Commonwealth, the personal property securities registrar or any other officer of the Commonwealth information recorded in or concerning the use of a Queensland register that the chief executive considers appropriate in order to assist the PPS registrar to establish the PPS register. This will allow for the transfer and migration of the appropriate data to the Commonwealth. The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee is concerned that this may affect information privacy rights whereby personal information flows from agencies to this new authority.

Clause 6, which allows the chief executive to give the Commonwealth authorisation to Queensland's personal property registrar, may affect the information privacy rights of individuals on that register. Another issue with regard to rights and liberties that it raised is that a large number of clauses would regulate the order of priority of securities. In other words, that is claims on any property or estate that are required to be put into a certain order.

The next reservation with regard to rights is immunity from proceeding or prosecution which provides immunity from civil liability for Queensland public servants involved in the migration of data but only to the extent that the person has acted with honesty and without negligence. I believe that is a fair and just section of this legislation. The person can still seek damages from the state. The state is certainly not immune, as a result of this legislation, from providing for any loss suffered as a direct result of a person's actions. This issue is addressed in clause 7 of the bill.

In the area of the operation of certain statutory provisions, the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee referred in its *Legislation Alert* to the explanatory notes accompanying the bill. There were no irregularities to be noted. The final area that the Scrutiny of Legislation Committee mentioned in this *Legislation Alert* was whether there was substantial uniformity with legislation from other jurisdictions. It purported that there was substantial information to support that this legislation has significant uniformity with the legislation of other jurisdictions.

I would like to reiterate that the opposition will be supporting this bill. I conclude by saying that streamlining in the area of personal property securities by introducing a national scheme and register can only be of benefit to the community and industry stakeholders. This will alleviate and improve the inconsistencies within the states and territories that have been a problem with individual legislation on this issue in each jurisdiction. This national personal property security register will give certainty and clear direction for all of Australia.

**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.51 pm): I rise this afternoon to address the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010. From the outset, may I commend the shadow minister on his contribution to this debate and for his stance on the bill. We know that it impacts on many things, including a lengthy list of acts. We will hear more about that from the shadow minister at a later date. I will not repeat the list of acts in the House. We have it on the record from the shadow minister.

As stated by the minister in his second reading speech, the bill before the House today is the second piece of legislation introduced into the Queensland parliament to progress reforms to Australia's personal property securities law in Queensland. The establishment of a national scheme was initiated by the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General in 2006 and it was subsequently agreed at a Council of Australian Governments meeting to proceed with the reform of Australian personal property securities law.

As mentioned in the explanatory notes to this bill, the Commonwealth Personal Property Securities Act 2009 will establish a single, national law governing personal property securities. In Queensland, the Bills of Sale Register, which includes the Register of Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane, the Register of Encumbered Vehicles and the Register of Cooperative Charges administered by the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation will all cease existing prior to the commencement of the national scheme. This bill will close Queensland's obsolete registers and repeal the acts that established them in the first place.

The national PPS register will commence in May 2011 and will be made available in electronic format. This will provide for easier searching of the register and certainly, in my view, be more efficient in terms of time for financiers and purchasers. All the data on the relevant Queensland registers will be migrated into the national scheme. The bill before the House includes the appropriate transitional arrangements for current applications between the closing of the Queensland registers and the establishment of the national scheme.

The bill before the House also follows on from the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill that was passed in this parliament last year, as we have heard from the shadow minister. As I stated in my contribution to that debate, the current process in Australia, on a state-by-state basis, is quite complex, inadequate and can be quite costly. This can relate to security interests having to be registered in more than one jurisdiction and required to be recorded on a number of different registers. The national scheme will make the process far more streamlined.

The bill also provides certain opt-out clauses for particular statutory licences and rights from the national scheme that may apply on a state-by-state basis. This is due to the fact that the Commonwealth act does not include licences, rights, entitlements or authorities bequeathed by relevant state laws. Mining leases and exploration permits, energy licences, casino licences and wine producer and merchant licences will all be opted out of the scheme.

There are also provisions in the bill which relate to cost recovery where property is seized or acquired under law. There is an entitlement under these provisions for state and local governments to recover expenses incurred in seizing, impounding or disposing of properties under the act. Any amounts that are owing to secured interest holders can be paid out of the proceeds where it is appropriate to do so.

One national standardised set of legislation is, in my view, far more realistic and efficient in the current marketplace. Interstate transactions will now be far less complicated and make other improvements to risk management and ultimately remove uncertainty around this commercial area of law—all of which is reform that will encourage more economic development, something that will be welcomed in the current economic climate.

There are other amendments contained in the bill that are consequential and technical and are required to complete the transfer of the jurisdictional authority. The bill before the House will finalise the modernisation of this commercial practice that nationally has been some four years in the making. As I said, it will be a brief contribution so in closing I indicate that I support the statements and sentiments made by the shadow minister in relation to this legislative amendment.

**Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (2.56 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Personal Property Securities (Ancillaries Provision) Bill 2010. This is the next step in the personal property securities revolution. This process started last year with referral legislation passed by this House in September 2009. In my contribution to the debate on that referral legislation I stated—

The legislation is a revolution in the treatment of personal property securities. For the first time it will implement a comprehensive, extensive and extrajurisdictional register system for personal property securities in Australia.

Currently there are approximately 70 acts across Australia governing security interests in personal property. There are approximately 40 separate registers which record personal property security interests administered by 30 Commonwealth, state and territory agencies. The current system is complex, piecemeal, deficient and lacks universality.

The differences across jurisdictions impose additional compliance costs on business. Additionally, security interests may also need to be registered in more than one jurisdiction, which also leads to additional costs. These costs are passed on to consumers seeking to obtain finance or otherwise complete transactions.

The current system also creates uncertainty. This is because personal property security law and practice varies according to the location of the secured property, the nature of the secured property, the debtor's legal form and the legal form of the transaction. This uncertainty again leads to higher transaction costs.

To fix this, a few years ago the Council of Australian Governments agreed to reform personal property security law. The reform will see a single national law and a single national register to deal with personal property security law. The policy objectives behind this reform are to increase certainty, increase consistency, reduce complexity and reduce costs. Critically as well, these attributes, these results—the increased certainty, the increased consistency, the reduced costs—will also contribute to a culture of registration and a culture of checking the register. If we do not have that culture, if we do not have that willingness, if we do not have that interest to check the register, why on earth would we want to register something? That leads to greater certainty not only for transactions but also for individuals participating in those transactions. It is critically important as well.

This bill will help fulfil Queensland's obligations under the reform process. The bill ceases the operation of Queensland registers and facilitates the migration of data to the new national register. The bill also makes consequential amendments to a number of other acts. It is anticipated that the national scheme will commence in the middle of 2011. This is historic reform which will remove uncertainty in the law, open up greater opportunities to obtain finance and help consumers by providing easier registration and searching of security interests over personal property.

I want to conclude my comments by commending the minister for his diligence and hard work in getting the bill before the House and, of course, commend his staff and the departmental staff for their hard work as well. This is good legislation. It will improve things for people participating in transactions involving personal property law. It does contribute to that revolution which I spoke romantically about in September 2009, and I further encourage all members of this House to support the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (3.00 pm): I rise to speak on the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010. This is a good bill that puts us in step with the rest of Australia and one that is most necessary and continues the work started last year, as has been mentioned previously in this House.

The bill does three main things. Firstly, it will end the Queensland personal property registers and repeal the acts that established them. I have a burning desire to go through all of those acts, but I will exercise restraint and for the benefit of the House I will not go through them all. I only wish that the member for Mermaid Beach had shown the same restraint and exercised the same control, but maybe that is asking a bit much late on a Thursday afternoon! Nevertheless, I will restrain myself and I will not go through them all for the benefit of the House. Secondly, the bill opts out certain statutory licences and rights from the national scheme where necessary, and I will go into more detail on that particular issue; and, thirdly, it provides for prioritisation of cost recovery where property is seized or acquired under law.

As I said, one of the main functions of the bill is to cease Queensland personal property securities registers. These are the Register of Encumbered Vehicles, established under the Motor Vehicles and Boats Securities Act 1986; the Bills of Sale Register, which also contains Queensland's Register of Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane; and the Register of Cooperative Charges. As part of the Queensland government's commitment to deliver the national PPS scheme, the data from these registers will be migrated into the national register in time for an anticipated commencement in May 2011. The bill also authorises this migration of data to the national PPS Register. This national register will be established by the Australian Attorney-General's Department and run by Insolvency and Trustee Service Australia.

I understand that the minister's department has been working with the Australian Attorney-General's Department to ensure that the migration of Queensland's registered data will occur in a seamless and effective manner, and I know it is doing good work to ensure that happens way before time and it is all in order when this legislation takes effect. I also understand that the minister's department has been working with the department's existing external information brokers and clients that regularly access the Queensland registers so that they are kept in the loop and they know exactly what is occurring. The bill also provides transitional arrangements, for example, to deal with applications received but not finalised prior to the cessation of the relevant Queensland register. It is important that we put our house in order and work closely with the federal department. I applaud the department for taking the initiative to ensure that everything runs smoothly.

It is also important to note that the national PPS scheme allows a state or territory government to opt out of any statutory licence created by state or territory legislation. This means that full state control in relation to that licence is maintained by the state. The bill before the House proposes to opt out of a number of areas—namely mining, energy, resource, gaming and liquor licences—from the national PPS scheme, and I support those provisions in this bill that enable the state to do so and concur that we should be opting out of those areas. This should occur because the legislation which creates or allows for the grant of these licences either restricts the assignment of the licence or prohibits the encumbering of the licence. This will allow the Queensland government to continue administration of these licences unhindered from any operation of the national PPS scheme, and it is important that we maintain our unhindered ability to operate in those areas. For example, licences issued under the Casino Control Act 1982 are governed by a strict licensing process due to the nature of possible risks associated with the gaming industry—an eminently sensible way of going forward. We should maintain control of that area for that reason. It is therefore appropriate, as I have said, to opt out of these in order that the government retains full control over the legislation governing such licences.

This is good legislation. We are wrapping it all up. It is going to enable us to have and be part of a wonderful national PPS scheme and for us to maintain control where we believe the state should maintain control. For those reasons and with that short contribution, I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.05 pm): Today I rise to add to the debate on the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010. The objectives of the bill before the House aim to cease the existing Queensland personal property securities registers and transfer the information in these registers to the new national register. The bill also strives to exempt certain statutory licences from the national scheme and to clarify state interests over abandoned or seized property. In finalising the transfer of information and power to the Commonwealth regarding personal property securities, the bill deals with the arrangements necessary for the transition to provisions created in the Personal Property Securities Act 2009.

As in all parts of Australia, the residents of Mudgeeraba hold their personal information as one of their top issues. People have the right to privacy, and in this ever more technological world gaining information on individuals is becoming easier and easier. I have had a large number of constituents in my electorate voice their concerns over the Bligh government's implementation of the smart licence due to be rolled out shortly. They believe that without proper checks and balances their personal information could be used by criminals.

The laws pertaining to personal properties securities are different from state to state. This led to an agreement by COAG to bring all states in line, hence the current bill. In September 2009 the initial bill was introduced into this House. That bill referred power to the Commonwealth and introduced consistency across Australia. The initial act allowed for rules for registration of security interests, rules of determining priority of competing interests, and enforcement of those interests. A new national electronic register, the Personal Property Securities Register, is being established and will commence operating in May 2011. This bill will close the Queensland registers and repeal the acts that established them.

One of the registers to be shut down on commencement of the new national scheme is the Register of Encumbered Vehicles, otherwise known as REVS. This will be greatly welcomed by all consumers who purchase vehicles and it will give further peace of mind to people purchasing a vehicle no matter what state in Australia it is purchased in. REVS worked reasonably well but was still a little flawed when it came to vehicles that may have been declared a total loss in one state only to be rebirthed in another. Frequently this did not show up on a database search. The bill also provides for prioritisation of cost recovery where property is seized or acquired under law. Under these new laws, state and local governments can continue to recover the expenses of seizing, impounding and disposing of properties under the act. The remaining amendments are inconsequential and are a general tidy-up of previous legislation, and the LNP will not be opposing this bill.

**Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.08 pm): I rise to speak to the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill. Currently there are over 70 acts Australia-wide which govern personal property securities and they are dealt with by 30 different ministerial departments in 40 different registers. This new Commonwealth regime will effectively harmonise, streamline or remove the inconsistencies about the ways securities are taken and provide a national registration regime. The consequence which would hopefully follow is that lenders would be more willing to provide credit, as risk is minimised and controlled. This new regime gives a commercial incentive to potential creditors to re-evaluate their positions on the cost of credit, reducing it in proportion to the decrease in the level of risk.

Professor Jim O'Donovan of the University of Western Australia law school has stated that the lowering of barriers such as risk will also attract entry into this area of secured finance and thus foster more competition, which would also contribute to lowering the cost of credit. Access Economics estimates that the PPSA will reduce interest rates for loans secured on personal property by three per cent to four per cent. However, Professor O'Donovan has stated that this will only be the case when the implementation of the regime has concluded. In the meantime, he expects that there will be significant costs incurred in compliance with the new regime in getting the secured parties' affairs in order. Therefore, the cost savings will not be immediate. In relation to debtors, especially those who are in business, this regime also provides a commercial incentive. As the cost of credit is predicted to decrease, then business will have greater access to credit, allowing them to better provide for and expand their businesses.

There is also the issue of why the government has not allowed fixtures to be an interest to which the Commonwealth PPSA immediately applies. Fixtures are a chattel or personal property other than crops adjoined to land that becomes part of the estate in land. A fixture is a legal concept that includes any physical property that is permanently attached or fixed to real property. If the property is not affixed to real property, it is considered chattel property. Fixtures are treated as part of a real property, particularly in the case of security interest. A classic example is a building which, in the absence of language to the contrary in a contract of sale, is considered to be part of the land itself and not a separate piece of property.

In his second reading speech to the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2009 the then Attorney-General stated that the reason for the exclusion of fixtures was due to concerns about the interaction with land laws and the potential for the Commonwealth law to impact on the state

based Torrens registers, but he gave no particulars or examples of what kinds of problems he anticipates in relation to the Torrens register. Currently, the law regarding fixtures, which includes section 155 of the Property Law Act and the common law surrounding the annexation of land, is described by Professor O'Donovan as messy and that it would be beneficial if the government would refer the matter of fixtures to be treated as personal property to the Commonwealth. I conclude by noting that this bill could have sought to remedy the current fixtures regime by making it simpler and, therefore, easier and more efficient to apply.

**Mr WENDT** (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010. It has been widely recognised and spoken about in this chamber this afternoon that the current system of personal property securities law in Australia should indeed be made more efficient. This is no surprise, given that currently there are more than 70 pieces of legislation and 40 different PPS registers across Australia. The main problems with the current system include incomplete and overlapping regulation, uncertainty in the law, the need to register security interests in multiple registers and the cumbersome registration process itself. These problems create legal and economic barriers to utilising personal property as loan collateral and it is hoped that the PPS law reform will, in fact, provide greater access to finance, particularly for small business and, as such, will reduce transaction costs.

It is also considered that a single national law will also bring greater certainty and clarity, thus minimising legal disputes, particularly in relation to competing priority interests in secured property. Similarly, law reform has successfully been undertaken in the United States, Canada and New Zealand and, as such, it is considered that this reform will not only benefit Queensland businesses and consumers but also Australian businesses and consumers in general.

As honourable members would be aware, this House previously passed the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2009, which referred power to the Commonwealth parliament to legislate in respect of personal property securities. This bill is now the next stage in the national PPS law reform process agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments. As such, as previously noted, the bill will close down the Queensland PPS registers, namely, the Bills of Sale Register, the Register of Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane, the Register of Encumbered Vehicles and, of course, the Register of Cooperative Charges. However, in order to close down these registers the Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act 1955, the Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane Act 1931 and the Motor Vehicles and Boats Securities Act 1986 will have to be repealed. But on the other hand, the Cooperatives Act 1997 will instead be amended by repealing the relevant register provisions.

The bill will also provide for the transfer of information recorded in the Queensland registers to the new national PPS register. In this way, information privacy will be protected as the disclosure of information is restricted only to assisting the Australian Attorney-General's Department establish the PPS register. As such, once the PPS register is established, the privacy principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988 must be complied with and at the same time the Commonwealth PPS Act also contains privacy protections that must be complied with.

An important feature of the bill worth noting is the fact that it exempts certain statutory rights from the operation of the national scheme. These statutory rights include mining leases, energy licences, casino licences, gaming authorities and liquor licences. It is considered that these exemptions are necessary because these rights are created or granted under a number of Queensland acts and it is important that they have an opt-out of the national scheme as the legislation prevents or restricts the rights from being assigned or encumbered. This opting out of the statutory rights also ensures the state's continuing ability to administer the rights.

Another important feature of the bill is that it clarifies state interests over the proceeds from the sale of the abandoned or seized property and this will be done by the bill amending a number of acts in order to provide an order for the application of sale proceeds. Finally, the bill also makes consequential amendments to a number of acts as a result of the closure of the Queensland registers and the transition to the national scheme.

Generally, as members can see, the national scheme has obvious benefits for both businesses and consumers alike. I mean that a single national law and a single national PPS register will eliminate overlapping and inconsistent regulation and will also remove uncertainty in the law. In this way, it is assumed that the national scheme will make it easier for businesses and consumers to register and search for security interests over personal property. In view of that, I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—LNP) (3.15 pm): This bill is the second personal property securities bill. As stated by all speakers, these registers are in transition to the Commonwealth. So it is a consequential bill. In general, the bill introduces consistency across the nation on the issue of credit and property. In a global world that is built on credit, getting the detail right is critical. This bill embraces matters of certainty across borders and enshrines the national electronic register, that is, the Personal Property Securities Register—the PPS register—commencing on May 2011.

The initial bill had some issues raised from it that were quite concerning when one considers what is given up when moving to a national scheme. I made the very fair point that the financial offset to the state was a cheap buyout. I do not say that the state did not bargain hard enough, but when one is in

such a parlous financial position one has to accept whatever bid is on offer. In fact, if you have to put in a bid—and they only accept the lowest bid—you have to take what is on offer. I think that is what happened and the consequences will have to be assessed over time.

COAG has agreed to unified national laws. As a federation of states, we have to be sensible and practical and this bill reflects that. Interestingly, the bill closes down the REVS—that is the Register of Encumbered Vehicles—the Register of Cooperative Charges and the Bills of Sale Register, including the Register of Liens on Crops of Sugar Cane. As one register closes, the other is launched. Data is migrated from the state register to the national register. Critically—and this is in the opt-out clause—mining leases, exploration permits, energy licences, casino licences, operating authorities, gaming machine entitlements, liquor licences, wine producers and merchant of wine licences are not included in the transfer to the Commonwealth. As I say, these are the opt-out groups and I will discuss one of those.

In his second reading speech the minister stated—

The national personal property securities reforms aim to increase the availability of finance and reduce costs by providing less complicated arrangements for securing interests in personal property.

Minister, the evidence in the most significant area of transition to the Commonwealth has shown that this aim of the bill does not deliver on cost savings in its implementation in those areas. If it costs the public more, why are we doing it? Who is getting the extra funds on top of the savings by having all the states in unity? Honourable members, I will tell you. The Commonwealth pockets these funds and it will go on pocketing these funds with annual index-driven increases in perpetuity. That is why the federal government knows that it could offer a sweetener to get the states' attention. And members, yes, where is that evidence? Look no further than the new national medical register—AHPRA.

The transition for the average Queensland general practitioner was a 40 per cent increase in annual fees and a fine of greater than 50 per cent of that fee for not registering on time. You had six weeks to transition. It is no wonder that over 30 per cent of GPs across the nation have neither paid to register nor have logged on to the site, as one has to do in the transition. The AHPRA registrar tried the heavy-handed approach, was rebuffed and is now moaning about how mean GPs are. In other words, they are running a campaign against general practitioners, largely through an advertising program. Have those in charge of the register considered how most doctors feel about having been betrayed by the ministers offering the same platitudes as this Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading is offering today?

Minister, if you state that the charges will fall, they should do so. If they do not, and even rise, it is your job to reconsider your decision or reconsider your position. The experience currently facing all doctors in Australia is an outrageous abuse of power, and every doctor in Australia is currently looking at both you and the health minister—because this bill is on in our parliament at the moment—and at every health minister in the nation on this issue. If the current trend continues, the whole process could and will most likely begin to unwind.

As admirable as the aim is, if the delivery does not match the sentiment then no-one will support that transition process. Specifically, the REVS scheme is uniformly and massively accessed. If we see price gouging by the registry then the industry and the public will find another way or demand change. The PPS Register will be treated in the same manner. The users of the register do not care how good the transition is. They will want to see the cost savings handed on to them and their businesses.

The current evidence from the most recent changes is that they can expect three things: one, higher charges; two, less service; and, three, greater difficulty of access. I am sorry, but I do not understand—nor do the majority of my colleagues—why, if these bills are meant to achieve the opposite of these outcomes, we are pursuing these legislative changes until the problems can be fixed. I do accept that both the credit and the property interests are significant. The current problem particularly is one of having to register in multiple registers. This is unacceptable in a modern world. Theoretically, having one place of register and a reference point would make these instruments far easier to manage and access. We have to trust that the contracting body can deliver that. The Attorney-General feels that it can and will be delivered, but this is a serious risk.

The genesis of the whole bill was with the Attorney-General's committee's proposals in 2006. We have come along and parallel with the transition to Commonwealth registers and schemes formerly administered as state managed, funded and recorded schemes. In general terms these aspirational goals are very worthy, but, as I detailed earlier, if they are not accompanied by less cost, greater service and greater access then they are not worthy of support. Sometimes revolution is not a positive evolution. One might really have good ideas that cannot be implemented. The evidence in a very straightforward area seems to suggest that the Commonwealth are not good at this. They want to be seen as professional, but this is a new area for them and their culture is orientated differently and their corporate knowledge is lacking in the area.

One must never assume anything. I believe we all falsely believe that the ease of access and consistency we seek may take a longer time to achieve. In other words, we do have to be patient, but the transition step does not necessarily allow that. If AHPRA, the new medical registration structure, shows anything to all of us it is that Canberra certainly does not have the answers and certainly it does

not have what it believes are all the answers, and referring all powers and questions and cost recovery to it is potentially dangerous. Until we can achieve those three key goals of less cost, greater service and greater access, good intentions mean nothing without proper implementation.

**Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (3.22 pm): It is a pleasure to speak straight after the member for Gaven. Let me be the first to congratulate him on a wonderful contribution to this debate. He focused on some matters that I think we should all be very aware of at this time when this parliament is considering a review of the committee system as to how the parliament will operate. One of the issues the member for Gaven touched on was costs. Earlier this year we saw the Treasurer bring down the budget. One of the issues that we all spoke about and cast our minds to was the issue of costs. Members of the government were saying that there is not enough money to go around and how we are going to have to save significant costs.

I take this opportunity to urge the government to listen to the member for Gaven's contribution and hopefully my contribution and consider them in terms of the review of the committee system for the state parliament. One of the criteria of the new committee system may be not just having explanatory notes that talk about the estimated cost for government implementation but actually really delving down and getting some facts that the future parliament can consider. When I look at the summary in the minister's explanatory notes about the estimated costs of this national scheme legislation I think, quite frankly, that if that is the best we can do then it is a bit of a disgrace. I believe that we as elected members of parliament should be able to have real information before us as to not just the costs but also what are the likely significant savings that this proposal will deliver to Queenslanders and to future governments of Queensland. That is a paramount criteria that we should all focus our attention on: what are the possible savings that the proposed legislation will deliver to all Queenslanders? I thank the member for Gaven for those very important words.

The member for Gaven also spoke about the impact of this national scheme legislation on doctors around Australia. Can I also pick up on this issue and say that many nurses on the Sunshine Coast have approached me about similar national scheme legislation whereby they also have to be registered under this new proposal. Gone are the days where they are simply registered in Queensland. Now they are registered under the national scheme legislation. It is another bureaucracy and another significant cost, but we are not able to see significant dollar savings for Queenslanders. I think it is paramount, when we here tonight are talking about more national scheme legislation, that all ministers in all governments—be they state, Commonwealth or territory—have information put before them as to the savings of the proposed national scheme legislation.

Only recently on this same topic I attended a meeting with the Minister for Education and Training. I met with some small private training organisations. Do members know what their concern was? Their concern was that the cost of the proposed compliance with the new national scheme legislation was going to effectively close them down. The big operators that receive state government funding, that have a commitment to do what the government wanted, had already reached agreement with the government that the proposed accreditation and compliance requirements were good for the delivery of services. It may have been good but, effectively, it was not going to be viable for the small, private educating entities in Queensland. We put that material before the Minister for Education to say very clearly, 'We want you to go back to your federal colleagues, back to the other state ministers and, more importantly, back to your very department, which is putting forward these recommendations to you, to look at the possible cost implications.' I am disappointed with the response that came back from the minister, from the department. Quite frankly, it was abysmal. I believe that the department could have done better.

I will come back to the matter before the House. I believe it is very good that in 2010 the leaders of this government and other governments around Australia and the territories are sitting down and trying to have a better exchange of information and the same laws. It is great to see that the Northern Territory is involved. After the recent federal election some of the Greens candidates who were successful in their election to the federal parliament said, 'Let's give the Northern Territory some more powers where the Commonwealth cannot override them.' And what did we see from Tony Abbott—the Leader of the Opposition, the alternative Prime Minister of Australia—and some of his outspoken National Liberal Party members? They were saying, 'How disgraceful.' As an Australian and a Queensland, I am happy to share the rights that we have in Queensland with Northern Territorians. They should be able to pass laws without the Commonwealth overriding them. It is good to see in this legislation that the Northern Territory is directly involved, just like Queenslanders, and they are sharing this exchange of ideas so that we can make sure that, no matter where you live in Australia, when you move because of job requirements or retirement requirements, the same laws will apply to you wherever you are going to take up future residence.

On that issue, it is very disappointing that in the lead-up to the last federal election we saw leaders of the community in Northern Queensland saying, 'We want to consider seceding from Queensland. We want to create our own state.' I think that is disgraceful. At the very time when we as leaders of a community are trying to have better laws around Australia because of the rapid movement

of people around Australia, we have leaders in Northern Queensland saying, 'We don't like what's happening so we want to secede.' I think those community leaders were going the wrong way and I think those candidates in the last federal election were very clearly going the wrong way.

Before I resume my seat, I ask the minister in his reply to seriously comment on the issue of what savings are likely as a result of this bill being passed and becoming future law in Queensland. For the benefit of the members of this parliament sitting on that all-party committee which is looking at the way our committee system in this parliament and in future parliaments may operate, I believe this is a real life example that we should take on board and we should say that future committees should require more information about savings. Yes, we talk about what are the costs of the legislation, but what are going to be the likely savings?

Last sitting week I spoke about needing to get more information about savings, instead of just passing more legislation. I think it might have been on the Minister for Education's bill. He was talking about the fact that it was going to cost over \$3 million to pass new requirements. I think this is important, especially when we are talking about so much hardship. There is so much hardship in our community wherever we live in Queensland. There is significant hardship. I believe that we as leaders have a responsibility to show to Queenslanders that there will be significant savings to taxpayers as a result of this legislation being supported. I resume my seat and look forward to the reply from the minister.

**Mr HOOLIHAN** (Keppel—ALP) (3.30 pm): In speaking to the Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill, I wonder how many people—and I know that the minister is a lawyer and that there are a number of lawyers in this House—have had to grapple with the idiocy that arose because every state had its own jurisdiction in relation to bills of sale: the Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act 1955, which was a dog's dinner; the liens on sugar cane crops; and the REVS, although REVS was slightly better than the average. Every state in Australia had their own laws.

We just heard from the member for Nicklin about cost savings. If a person or a financing body only has to do one search across the whole of the states, then there has to be a major financial saving. There has to be a saving to the people who are paying for that—those people who have funding granted and who have securities over personal property. I am not a great fan of the Commonwealth really doing anything. I have a strong belief in states' rights. The Commonwealth have arrogated to themselves quite a lot of power which was never envisaged in our original Constitution. But this scheme makes sense. It is an opt-out type of provision, and Queensland is opting out of certain areas and retaining them for themselves.

In terms of the creation of a single national law and a single national scheme, known as the PPS scheme, it will replace about 70 acts and 40 registers across Australia. If you had to do a search of those 40 registers with a fee in every jurisdiction, what would it cost? The answer in itself should be evident to everyone that there will be a substantial cost saving. It will reduce red tape. It will break down legal and economic barriers to using personal property as collateral, because those financing bodies across all of the states will only have to do one search. It will benefit business and consumers. Financiers will benefit because, as I said, they will only have to register a security interest once and comply with one law. Thereby, we effect a reduction in financing cost.

Small business, which usually is the area of business that uses this type of financing or this type of collateral, will benefit from greater opportunities to get finance, because they will be able to use a larger range of assets as collateral. That will also help lower financing costs.

Consumers will benefit. If anyone here goes to buy a car and they do not know where it has come from, they can go to REVS in Queensland, but they have to go to every other state if the car has been reregistered in Queensland to find out what sort of security is held over that vehicle in another state. Under the reforms, consumers will be able to comprehensively identify any encumbrances but they only have to do it once. Currently they have to know where to go in every state. After practising law for 25 years, this is probably the reason you get white hair—the worry will drive you mad if you have not done all of these searches. It is better than having no hair.

**Mr Lawlor:** Thank you.

**Mr HOOLIHAN:** I really should exempt the minister from that comment. They will only have to do one search. Currently it is costly and it is time-consuming. It is costly to the consumer and it is costly to the financing body.

This sort of law has been successful in other countries—the United States, Canada and New Zealand. Queenslanders and all Australians can look forward to a single national law and a single national register for all of those personal property security interests. It is anticipated at the present time that the national register will go live in mid-2011. From the point of view of practising lawyers and financiers in Australia, I would say: let the battle begin.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hoolihan, adjourned.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### State Procurement Policy

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (3.35 pm), by leave: Following a question from the member for Currumbin this morning, I would like to give the House an overview of the procurement process on the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE trades training facility project in Cairns. Tendering for this project was raised by the member for Currumbin earlier this morning in the chamber, as all members will recall. I will go through the procurement process in detail so that even the member for Currumbin, I hope, can understand it.

As with all projects managed by the Department of Public Works, the contractors who tendered on this project were from a select list from the department's prequalification system. The type of contract used for this project was a lump sum design and construct contract. Tenders were assessed against both price and non-price evaluation criteria in accordance with the capital works management framework. The price criteria was weighted at 70 per cent.

The non-price criteria was used to assess the ability of the tenderers to work within an existing occupied site, demonstrate that they have given considerable thought to the complexities of multistaging the works to enable the TAFE to continue to function throughout the construction phase, and communicate with the project manager and stakeholders to provide resources sufficient to ensure the project is adequately resourced at all times. Those three elements are absolutely crucial if you are trying to construct a project in the middle of a working environment. It was absolutely appropriate, and I endorse it 100 per cent, that it was used as part of the evaluation of tenders.

The project was initially assessed on the non-price criteria by the tender evaluation panel and was separately assessed against the price criteria. This process is in accordance with the department's tender review procedures. It ensures that tenderers can demonstrate the logistical experience necessary to manage the project as well as be financially competitive. The results from these assessments were then combined with the weighted tender prices which resulted in a total weighted score and a tender ranking. The total weighted scores for the lowest three submitted tenderers were close. The lowest priced tenderer from this process was ranked third. I will say it again: the lowest price tenderer from this process was ranked third.

The assessment panel for the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE project comprised representatives from the Department of Education and Training; Davis Langdon, the project manager appointed by DET to manage the project; and Project Services. A schedule of the tenders received by the department, including the tender amounts, was publicly announced via the Department of Public Works website. The successful tenderer for this project was Matrix Projects (Qld) Pty Ltd, a builder with which I am familiar.

Clearly this highly rigorous process is beyond the capacity of the member for Currumbin to understand. This week the honourable member said that 300 jobs had been lost in the Department of Public Works in a month, which is just rubbish. She said that the NBN would send Queensland broke when it is not even a state government project. And she said that the budget for the Maroochydore government office building had been 'slashed' when it was an underspend, with the leftover funds going to other important projects.

In a media release today—and I ask honourable members who were listening this morning to listen to this statement—the member for Currumbin said that I believed the most expensive item was always the best. Can anybody remember me saying that?

**Ms Grace:** No.

**Mr SCHWARTEN:** No, because I did not say that. I am not a fool. I would never, ever say something like that. In fact, I went to great lengths to demonstrate that you buy something for price according to the needs that you have. As I said, that is clearly not what I said. I said that we got rid of the notion of the cheapest price being the best price 10 years ago. Price is only one of the considerations taken into account when we consider value for money, as I have just demonstrated. We do not run government procurement like a \$2 shop, otherwise we would buy everything from China. As the old saying goes, the member for Currumbin knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. The reality is that it is about time the Leader of the Opposition summoned this member in and got rid of her as she is the worst example of a shadow minister that I have encountered in my time in this parliament.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY SECURITIES (ANCILLARY PROVISIONS) BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3734, on motion of Mr Lawlor—

That the bill be now read a second time.

**Hon. PJ LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (3.40 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contributions on this bill, particularly those who were brief. I particularly thank the member for Brisbane Central for the restraint that she showed in not reading out all the acts that would be affected and amended by this legislation, as the shadow minister did.

**Ms Grace:** I didn't have to use up 60 minutes.

**Mr LAWLOR:** No, you did not and I thank you for that. The Personal Property Securities (Ancillary Provisions) Bill 2010 provides for the cessation of the Queensland personal property securities registers and the migration of the PPS data contained in those registers to the new national PPS Register. The bill opts out of the national scheme specific state statutory licences and clarifies existing state and local government powers to seize and dispose of abandoned personal property. The bill also makes consequential amendments to the Queensland statute book in anticipation of commencement of the national scheme, proposed by the Commonwealth to be May 2011.

The bill represents the reaching of a second significant milestone in Queensland's contribution to the reform of Australia's personal property securities laws. Members will recall the referral of powers legislation, which the shadow minister and many other members referred to. That was the Personal Properties Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Bill, which was passed in September last year. I thank the member for Mermaid Beach for his support of the bill and the dedication he has shown to familiarising himself with the legislation, particularly by naming all the acts that will be amended.

The member is correct that the bill will deliver a better and more streamlined scheme for registering interest in personal property securities and will deliver cost savings to businesses and consumers across the state. The honourable member went to great lengths to list the legislation to be amended and asked how much consideration has been given to the effects of the amendments across the Queensland statute book. I assure the member for Mermaid Beach that the government undertook extensive consultation with all government agencies over a period of a year, and consultation was also conducted with relevant industry stakeholders. I can advise the member that the funding to cover the costs of ceasing the registers and transferring the data to the Commonwealth PPS Register has been factored into the Office of Fair Trading budget for this financial year.

I refer to the member for Mermaid Beach's questioning in relation to clause 6, specifically the disclosure of information on the Queensland registers to the national PPS Register. The disclosure is restricted only to assist the establishment of the Australian Attorney-General's Department new national PPS Register by migrating all existing security interests on Queensland registers to the PPS Register for its scheduled commencement in May 2011.

The Commonwealth legislation underpinning the PPS Register has undergone extensive development in response to various consultations regarding personal privacy. These include a Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs inquiry based on the November 2008 Commonwealth exposure draft of the Personal Property Securities Bill and most recently a privacy impact assessment conducted for the Australian Attorney-General's Department. An independent expert undertook the PIA upon the recommendation by the Senate standing committee to ensure that the Australian government is certain that it has done everything necessary to address privacy issues.

The Commonwealth Personal Property Securities Act 2009—the legislation underpinning the PPS Register—was modified to address the personal privacy issues raised during the various consultations on privacy. In addition, the operation of the PPS Register must comply with the information privacy principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988. The retention, security and disclosure of this information will be subject to the privacy protections contained in the Privacy Act 1988 and the Commonwealth Personal Property Securities Act 2009.

The member for Ipswich West also comprehensively covered privacy protection measures to be in place for the operation of the new scheme. The member for Kawana made mention of the national PPS Register commencing in May 2011. I would like to inform the House that the Commonwealth is proposing this as the start date. Public announcements by the Commonwealth Attorney-General will confirm the start date.

The member for Glass House questioned why fixtures have not been included in the Commonwealth PPS Act. The Standing Committee of Attorneys-General is investigating the possibility of requesting the Australian Law Reform Commission to examine whether land fixtures should be brought into the national PPS scheme. I point out that Queensland's referral of power legislation for the national scheme—the Personal Property Securities (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2009—contains a provision to refer power to the Commonwealth parliament to incorporate land fixtures into the national PPS scheme if the states and territories agree to that. I note this uncommenced referral of power will not commence until the Queensland government agrees to a satisfactory national resolution of that issue.

The member for Gaven asked about the cost to use the new register. The Australian government is proposing fees for online applications ranging from \$7 for a security interest to be placed on the PPS Register for less than seven years, to \$130 for a security interest remaining on the PPS Register for an undefined period of time. These fees will be slightly more for applications taken by the Australian government's customer contact centre. The Australian government has advised all jurisdictions and all stakeholders that the register will be run on a user-pays basis. This means the money which comes into the register will be used only for the administration of the register. Therefore, costs will be maintained to what is required to operate the register and nothing else. The users of the new system will effectively be paying for the system itself and nothing else.

Savings for the Queensland government will come with a reduction in the cost of operating and maintaining the registers. As for savings for Queenslanders, the real savings will be for businesses and consumers in Queensland. The government is agreeing to the scheme so that the ultimate winners will be the people of Queensland. Queenslanders will have a one-stop shop for all searches and there will be reduced fees due to the economies of scale of having a single register nationwide.

It would be appropriate at this point to briefly recap why the reform is required. Over time, Australia has developed both statute and general laws governing security interests in personal property that are duplicated around the country. However, this duplication is not consistent from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Businesses and individuals struggle with multiple and complex laws, incurring costs as a result. To address these problems, the Council of Australian Governments has driven the establishment of a national personal property securities system.

The benefits of reforming PPS law will be experienced by many Queenslanders. It will be easier for purchasers to discover whether goods are the subject of an encumbrance. Borrowers will benefit from greater certainty, as will investors considering buying a business. Financiers of businesses or consumer purchases will be provided with clarity when goods are used as security for a loan.

With more than 70 state, territory and Commonwealth acts currently governing security interests in personal property, a single law and single register approach will be much more efficient. Further simplification—and this basically addresses the point raised by the member for Nicklin—will come from closing approximately 40 different registers across the country that record security interests in personal property and replacing these with a single national PPS Register. When we consider, as I said, that there are approximately 40 different registers across the country in the areas of finance, the legal profession et cetera and when we consider that legal fees, search fees and registration fees have to be paid in all of those 40 different registers across the country, it is pretty obvious that there will be a huge saving for consumers with the replacement of these 40 different registers with one register.

As I noted earlier, the bill authorises the chief executive to migrate existing personal property securities interests contained on Queensland registers to the national PPS register. These registers are the Bills of Sale Register incorporating the Register of Liens on Crops of Sugarcane, the Register of Encumbered Vehicles and the Register of Cooperative Charges. The bill will also cease these Queensland registers by repealing the Queensland legislation which establishes them and provides for an effective transition to the national PPS register. The bill also opts out specific statutory licences from the national scheme by making the legislative declarations which are allowable under the Commonwealth PPS act. These declarations mean that existing Queensland legislation will prevail in relation to the encumbering of any of these statutory licences. These statutory licences include mining and energy licences, liquor and wine industry licences and gaming licences.

The bill clarifies the state and local government position when seizing and disposing of abandoned personal property to which the shadow minister referred. It puts beyond doubt the existing situation of state and local government authorities recovering from the sale of the property their costs of seizure and disposal of this property. The bill will also align other pieces of Queensland legislation with the national scheme by making reference to the Commonwealth PPS act instead of the Queensland legislation, which is to be replaced.

I thank all those who have contributed to the development of the bill, including all ministerial and departmental officers who have worked so hard to deliver it. In particular I would like to thank Danny Low, Julia Clayton, Anthony Lim and Damian Sammon from my department for their work on the bill. I thank all honourable members for their support of the bill.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 6, as read, agreed to.

Clause 7—

**Mr STEVENS** (3.52 pm): Before I ask the minister a question about protection from liability of officers in relation to the migration of personal property data, I will point out that I took great exception to the comments of the member for Brisbane Central in highlighting why the opposition spokesperson on

the legislation before us would run through the effects that this important piece of legislation will have on those many pieces of legislation that I referred to earlier in the House. In fact, at this point it is sorely tempting to run through all of the pieces of legislation one more time to show how importantly they will be affected by these issues, but I resist in the interests of the House.

Clause 7 provides for protection from liability in relation to the migration of the information. Quite clearly, there may be matters that are associated with liability through an officer's actions or omissions in relation to the personal property data prior to this migration period. Does this legislation that we are debating end the possibility of that liability being pursued at a state level so people would then have to see the Commonwealth? The Commonwealth may well say, 'Hey, it was not our problem. It was the state way back when.' Does this particular piece of legislation prevent people receiving right and just compensation?

**Mr LAWLOR:** No, it does not. It preserves the existing situation. Basically, this clause continues protection from civil liability for the chief executive or an officer or employee of the department or a delegate of the chief executive. The protection covers civil liability for an act done, or omission made, honestly and without negligence in relation to the giving of information to the PPS register. So any liability which normally, one would say, would attach to one of those would instead attach to the state. So it preserves the existing situation.

Clause 7, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Clause 22—

**Mr STEVENS** (3.55 pm): This clause relates to applications to change particulars in the register. Say the chief executive receives an application after the closing date to change the stated particulars included in the register in relation to an interest and the money is refunded to the person who has made that application; does the application that he has made to change those particulars remain live? In other words, he still has the opportunity to change those particulars that he wanted changed? The fact that it is sent back and his money is returned, obviously he would then have to make an application to the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth may then say, 'I'm sorry, you're too late now.' Does the fact that he has already made that application to the state keep it live?

**Mr LAWLOR:** I think I understand what you are saying. If he is out of time, essentially, it is refused, the money is refunded and the application is refused, as is the existing situation. So it continues the existing situation. The effect of clause 22 is to cease applications to change particulars in the register under section 18G of the Bills of Sale and Other Instruments Act after the application closing time. So if the chief executive receives an application to change particulars in the register after the application closing time, the chief executive cannot deal with the application after the application closing time and must refund the fee that accompanied the application. So the existing situation remains.

**Mr Stevens:** And he has to reapply?

**Mr LAWLOR:** Yes.

**Mr Stevens:** To the Commonwealth?

**Mr LAWLOR:** Correct.

Clause 22, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 169, as read, agreed to.

Clause 170—

**Mr STEVENS** (3.58 pm): This clause amends the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002, one of the very important pieces of legislation to which I referred earlier in my speech. Subclause 17(5) states—

In this section—

boat means a ship within the meaning of the—

This is in relation to the confiscation of property involved in criminal proceedings. There might be a drug dealer with a huge big boat out there—I am just using an example to clarify the question

**Mr Lawlor:** You know this bloke, do you?

**Mr STEVENS:** He is from the Gold Coast, down in the Southport electorate. The subclause states—

In this section—

boat means a ship within the meaning of the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 that—

- (a) is registrable under that Act; and
- (b) has a unique alphanumeric identifier ...

I am worried that the government could lose its opportunity to make a claim on that boat under this amendment if, for instance, the boat was unregistered and it was unregistrable for obviously seafaring reasons. This provisions says that it is 'registrable under that act'.

**Mr Lawlor:** But not registered.

**Mr STEVENS:** Correct. Not registered and not registrable because of flaws when it comes to the requirements to have it registered. So it is an unregistrable boat. It cannot be registered under that act but there are property liens and mortgages over it and it should be confiscated. So in my example if the person leaves his boat in disrepair and removes the ID, whether it be alphanumeric or whatever—which is easy to do—does this provision mean that that boat cannot be confiscated?

**Mr LAWLOR:** I am not too sure whether I really understand the question. So there is a boat that is not registered and not registrable—

**Mr Stevens:** Not registrable because of its faults.

**Mr LAWLOR:** Then it is just like any other piece of property. It has no relationship to this particular piece of legislation. This is about registering personal property. If it is not registered—

**Mr Stevens:** That is what I am saying. You are on the track. It still needs to be confiscated and registered under the act.

**Mr LAWLOR:** Under the Local Government Act or whatever?

**Mr Stevens:** Whatever.

**Mr LAWLOR:** This in no way prevents local government from taking possession and disposing of that particular piece of property, whatever it is. That is the existing situation. The situation is the same.

Clause 170, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 171 to 230, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. PJ LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (4.02 pm): I move—  
That the bill be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

**Hon. PJ LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Fair Trading) (4.02 pm): I move—  
That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## CARERS (RECOGNITION) AMENDMENT BILL

## SENIORS RECOGNITION (GRANDPARENTS PROVIDING CARE) BILL

### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill resumed from 6 October (see p. 3678), on motion of Ms Palaszczuk, and Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill resumed from 6 October (see p. 3678), on motion of Mrs Menkens—

That the bills be now read a second time.

**Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (4.02 pm): I rise to speak on behalf of the many thousands of grandparents in our community who provide primary care for their grandchildren. Single people and couples in their twilight years, often through circumstances beyond their control, are undertaking the responsibilities of raising their grandchildren. The circumstances can be many and varied. The parents of the children may have been tragically killed or become disabled through illness. All too often they have succumbed to alcohol or drug dependency, or even been incarcerated.

Becoming a full-time parent again can be a shock for many grandparents who thought their child-rearing days were over. Grandparents can find the task very stressful, particularly if they are struggling with the unexpected expenses of raising children and a lack of energy compared to when they were younger. Grandparents may find themselves parenting again just after preparing themselves for a quiet retirement.

In many cases, grandparents are given care of the children but are not given the authority to make important decisions. This can make discipline and decision making difficult and confusing. This may be even more difficult if the children's custody arrangements are uncertain or if the parents are repeatedly trying to get their children back. These grandparents are often suffering from illnesses themselves, but endeavour to provide a safe and nurturing environment for the young ones.

In a Southern Cross University paper from 2006 which grandparents contributed to, the financial challenges of raising their grandchildren was the main issue raised. A number of grandparents commented that the expenses escalated as the children became older. Many grandparents found it hard to manage financially, especially if their grandchildren needed expensive medical care or educational assistance. As time goes on they find it difficult enough to cope with their own medical expenses, let alone trying to fund things like orthodontics for their grandchildren. Education expenses, such as fees, excursions, uniforms, are another drain on the grandparents' financial resources.

Grandparents in the study also talked about the problems of parenting grandchildren who are smoking like a chimney, have no basic concept of behavioural skills and have been living on the streets and stealing for food. One grandmother believed that even her experience working with children with behavioural problems had not prepared her for the difficulties she was having with her grandchildren.

Financial considerations are not the only factor impacting on these grandparents. Time and also the ability to undertake certain activities as these children grow is not always a viable option for these ageing carers. There are inevitably physical activities such as coaching sporting teams, activities at the beach and even bicycle riding which some grandparents find difficult.

Then as the youngsters reach their middle teens and obtain their driving learner's permit the grandparents are required to supervise lessons behind the wheel and fill out logbooks. Often, though, the grandparents are no longer driving or do not even own a vehicle. Despite all these apparent obstacles the grandparents provide primary care to their grandchildren. Grandparents see the benefit of second-time parenting as being a life-enriching experience.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2003 family characteristic survey, there were an estimated 22,500 Australian families in which grandparents or a grandparent were the guardians of their grandchildren. These grandparents looked after 31,100 children aged between zero and 17. These families represented around one per cent of all families with children of this age group. These figures are estimates and are likely, given the sensitive nature of domestic arrangements, to underestimate the actual numbers.

Some key characteristics of grandparent families include the following. In some 61 per cent of cases the youngest grandparents are aged 55 years or more. Around two-thirds relied on government pensions, benefits or allowances as their main source of income. However, a significant proportion of those aged 65 years and over had outright ownership of their homes. Almost half were lone grandparent families, with 93 per cent of lone grandparents being grandmothers. That is scary. One-third shared their dwellings with one or more adults, usually related to the grandparent, as did one quarter of couples.

In most cases the youngest child was between five and 14 years. Around 10 per cent of the grandparents had three or more children in their care. A similar proportion lived in major cities as lived in regions—48 per cent compared to 45 per cent—which is markedly different to other families—65 per cent compared to 33 per cent. Over 90 per cent of children in these families had a natural parent living elsewhere. Over a third had face-to-face contact with their parents at least once a fortnight.

Unfortunately in Queensland there is no legislative framework which officially recognises the duties taken on by grandparents in being the grandchildren's primary carer. In that regard, I fully support the introduction of the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill and thank the member for Burdekin for its introduction. It acknowledges those family members who step in to become immediate family for children in the absence of others and who provide care for and love their grandchildren while raising them through their formative years.

Grandparents provide care and deserve the recognition of this parliament and the community for the work that they do. Recognition also requires a promise to consider the effects of decisions on grandparents providing care. The bill introduces a charter of providing recognition for grandparent carers and the framework to support consideration of the charter in the making of relevant decisions. The charter seeks to recognise the efforts and dedication of grandparents in the community and that these grandparents are primary caregivers and deserve the same rights as other primary caregivers. The charter further seeks to recognise that the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren should be honoured and respected.

Additionally, the charter recognises that the community show respect towards the care-giving grandparents and that they be supported by all levels of government and other bodies. The objectives of this bill will be achieved through the implementation of this charter and providing a framework allowing consideration of the subject items in the 'relevant decision' process. A 'relevant decision' within the bill is a decision that may affect children who receive full-time care from their grandparents or affect the ability of the grandparents to continue to provide full-time care for their grandchildren. These provisions will be administered by the Carers Advisory Council, established under the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008. The

council must work to advance the interests of grandparents who provide full-time care to their grandchildren, promote compliance and make recommendations to the minister on enhancing the compliance by decision makers. The Carers Advisory Council comprises of 10 members appointed by virtue of signed notice by the minister. Four members must be Public Service employees, three members must be representatives of different carers associations and, most importantly, three members must be carers.

In Queensland the Department of Communities Time for Grandparents program provides respite and support for grandparents raising children by funding and facilitating access to camps and recreational activities throughout Queensland. The Time for Grandparents program is delivered by the Seniors Enquiry Line. All activities in this program are provided free of charge and the grandchildren can participate in a range of recreational activities according to their age, their interests and their abilities. Free grandfamily overnight support and respite camps for grandparents and their grandchildren are also available. The grandfamily camps are attended by grandparents and their grandchildren and provide safe and enjoyable recreation based activities for both the grandparents and grandchildren, facilitated by suitably qualified and culturally sensitive experienced indoor and outdoor instructors. Opportunities for grandparents to access information sessions, which may include information on legal, financial and parenting issues as well as individual counselling and therapeutic group sessions, are also provided by suitably qualified staff.

It is imperative that this parliament recognises the role of grandparents who take on these duties of being parents to their grandchildren. This bill seeks to in some way acknowledge this, and I commend this bill to the House. A very close friend of mine who is in their late 70s has the care of their granddaughter, whose mother was affected by drugs and alcohol and who spent time in prison. The grandfather passed away last year. He was a very good friend of mine and I spoke at his funeral. We in this House have to take seriously the pressure that is placed upon these people. It does not matter where a bill like this comes from, but it matters to all of the people of Queensland what we implement and how we help these people.

This particular family that I am talking about is reasonably well heeled, but the pressure on a single grandmother looking after this child is very high when you are in your 70s in terms of driving from A to B getting the child back and forth to school and taking them to sporting events. This is a really tough life, and this particular lady has arthritis in her knees and her hands. It is just so hard for her, but when one sees the love, care and compassion this woman has in looking after this child one can only admire her. I ask this parliament to please consider these people. I am sure members know one or two or maybe a dozen of them. We have to do everything we humanly can to help these people. I commend this component of the bill to the House and again thank the member for Burdekin for bringing it forward.

**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (4.13 pm): This afternoon I rise to contribute to the cognate debate of the government's amendment bill, the Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill, and the opposition's legislative amendment, the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill. For the record, I want to commend the outstanding work done in this place and across Queensland by the shadow minister for community services. The member for Burdekin is certainly a leading advocate for carers recognition in this state, and that is evidenced by the Carers (Recognition) Act that she introduced in 2008, which was passed with a government amendment, and the introduction of this private member's bill some three months before the introduction of the government's own bill. It is clear through our shadow minister that the LNP is leading the advocacy for carers and support of carers in this state, and the leadership of the member for Burdekin in this area should not be understated.

For ease of reference and for the benefit of my colleagues opposite, I will speak on each bill separately, commencing with the opposition's legislative amendment. The Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill deals with the issue of recognising grandparents who care for their grandchildren in the absence of the parent as the primary carer. This bill provides a legislative framework for the recognition of this care, something that I am certainly happy to support. The bill will institute a charter giving grandparents who provide primary care to their grandchildren official status as immediate family members and the rightful recognition of their efforts.

Legislation always needs to be reviewed to maintain currency with societal standards and expectations. For some families, grandparents are playing a more pivotal role in the upbringing of their grandchildren and the opposition's bill recognises their status. Since I was elected to represent the people of the Kawana electorate in this place I have been contacted by several constituents with respect to the issues of recognising grandparent care in legislation. As the shadow minister would know, I have liaised with her on a number of occasions in relation to her private member's bill and consultation for key advocates in my local community. I want to thank the member for Burdekin, the shadow minister, for her assistance and communications on this matter and I know that my constituents certainly appreciate the opportunity for dialogue on such a key policy matter for them.

I also want to pay tribute today to Mr Greg Pullin, national president of the Grandparents and Grandchildren Society, who lives in my electorate; Ms Lynda Dickson from the Grandparents as Parents Program, also in my electorate; and Mrs Margaret Appleton, the managing director of Shine Community Care located at Birtinya in the Kawana electorate. These three people from three separate

organisations are leading advocates for carers' rights and have been tremendously supportive of the LNP's stance on this issue. For the benefit of the House, I table correspondence from Shine Community Care to me on 9 June this year with respect to its support for the opposition private member's bill.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, marked received 9 June 2010, from Margaret Appleton, Managing Director, Shine Community Care Ltd, to Jarrod Bleijie MP in relation to the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill [3343].

I also table a copy of correspondence that was sent from the same organisation to the Premier and the Minister for Community Services and carbon-copied to me, also on 9 June this year.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, marked received 9 June 2010, from Margaret Appleton, Managing Director, Shine Community Care Ltd, to Hon. Anna Bligh MP and Hon. Karen Struthers MP in relation to the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill [3344].

In tabling this correspondence I point out that the first letter from Mrs Margaret Appleton states—

Dear Jarrod,

I attach a paper supporting the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill. I have also written to the Premier and Minister for Community Services and Housing, supporting the bill you—

the LNP—

have proposed. I congratulate you and your party for proposing this legislation and I know you would have the support of many Queenslanders also.

That is from one of the leading advocate groups in the Kawana electorate congratulating an opposition for finally recognising this issue in Queensland, congratulating an opposition for having the foresight to get ahead of the government and do this. Again on behalf of those three community organisations to the member for Burdekin, the shadow minister, thank you. Unfortunately we will not have the opportunity to vote on that particular bill, but I thank the member for Burdekin for her initiative and for listening to the people of Queensland, particularly those in relationships as grandparent carers.

I also thank the Parliamentary Library for its comprehensive research brief on the opposition's bill. As indicated on page 3 of that brief and in the member for Burdekin's second reading speech, according to Mission Australia the occurrence of grandparents as primary carers is estimated at one per cent of families nationally and affecting approximately 30,000 children. Furthermore, the Australian Bureau of Statistics recorded that in 2006-07 there were 14,000 grandparent families in Australia in which grandparents were the guardians or main carers of co-resident children aged zero to 17. In 2003, 89 per cent of grandparent families had one or two children in their care, with 11 per cent having three or more children. Clearly this is an underlying social and economic issue that is at play here, and as legislators it is paramount that we have the necessary recognition in place.

As marriages split, children are born to parents who are not prepared for the responsibility and cost-of-living expenses spiral out of control, the burden is more and more on young families, particularly given the current economic climate. There are more and more families who have moved in with grandparents or circumstances where parents have to work away and grandparents are always handy as carers. As indicated on page 6 of the brief prepared by the Parliamentary Library on this issue, some of the commonly reported reasons for grandparents having primary care of their grandchildren is the death of a parent, particularly the mother, or the death of both parents; health problems of one or both parents, including physical disability, intellectual disability or mental illness; substance abuse by one or both parents—generally reported as one of the main and increasingly common reasons; incarceration of one or both parents; poverty; relationship problems such as family breakdown or domestic violence; or an inability or an unwillingness of parents to adequately care for their children—for example, where children are being sadly neglected.

There needs to be more recognition of the role that grandparents provide in the extended family unit, and the opposition's bill certainly recognises that fact. It also recognises the fact, having it as the primary responsibility in the opposition's bill introduced by the member for Burdekin, that not all children who are being cared for by grandparents have a disability. The opposition's bill sat comfortably and quite rightly in one area, but the government's bill comes under a different ministerial responsibility. I guess the government could use the excuse of 'two different ministers, two separate facts' and it may think that Queenslanders will get over it. But the point is that the opposition initiated this response and, at the end of the day, if we get some recognition—anything better for grandparents—it is going to be better than nothing.

But let Queenslanders not forget that it was the opposition—the member for Burdekin, the shadow minister—who had the courage and the conviction and listened to the community to actually get this legislation in place. Then some three months later the government introduces a bill, some of which is very similar to the opposition's bill, but it comes under the disability portfolio. I say to the minister that not all grandparents are caring for children with disabilities. They are simply caring for them after the mother or the father might have been tragically killed in an accident. The Shine Community Care team, which I tabled the letter from for the minister's attention, handed out community spirit awards to grandparents for children—

**Mr Hoolihan:** Hope you never practise law in that area.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** This is a serious matter, member for Keppel, and to make light of it is shameful, in fact.

**Mr HOOLIHAN:** I rise to a point of order. I find the comments by the member offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Kawana, the member for Keppel has asked for a withdrawal.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. As I was saying, in contrast, the Bligh Labor government has been very slow to respond to the increasing number of changing family arrangements or circumstances that exist in society. The government's bill adds grandparents to the category in the Carers (Recognition) Act, grouping them with different groups of carers who provide care for people with disabilities or who are infirm, aged or incapacitated. There is no specific, separate distinction for the role that grandparents play in many families. To just throw all your eggs in one basket is a failure on the government's part to understand the complexities and disparities that exist between the different groups of people who require care in Queensland.

This legislation is a poor attempt to copy the leadership of the LNP on this issue. When I say 'a poor attempt', I mean a very, very poorly conceived, poorly consulted, rushed job. As the shadow minister said in her second reading speech, seniors in Queensland make up 40 per cent of the total constituency base but, despite that fact, they continue to struggle for political recognition. Maybe that lack of recognition follows along a similar line to revelations made during the federal election campaign that Labor does not support seniors because Labor believes that the majority of seniors do not vote for them. I am not sure if that is the case, but, with that attitude, I would hardly think that it would endear the Labor Party to seniors. If members opposite question that remark, I believe that in the leaked cabinet documentation the honourable the Prime Minister did not support the pension rise at the time.

I would urge the government to either adopt the opposition's bill or amend its own bill to provide for separate recognition of that special role that many grandparents are playing in society. I know from my constituents and in the circumstances of friends and family that the role that grandparents are playing in supporting their grandchildren is increasing continually. As a parliament we need to do what we can to recognise that fact and provide the support that we can. For that reason, I commend the opposition's bill to the House.

**Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (4.24 pm): I would like to remind the previous speaker that we all have parents, grandparents and other extended family members. Of course, we all have wonderful friends who are seniors. To insinuate that we do not care for seniors is just absurd.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Just ridiculous. There are many levels of caring and many varying circumstances that families encounter. As a child, I had a lady living next door to me who had suffered from polio and who in those days was confined to bed. Her eldest daughter cared for her for many years and eventually married. Then the next sister took on the caring role. To my knowledge, she never married and it was simply what families did. They cared for their own without any outside help except from neighbours and friends. I was the little girl next door who brought flowers and sat for hours chatting at her bedside.

There are times when right from birth a baby has a disability or illness requiring ongoing intensive care all through life. I have heard from some extraordinary parents who have expressed it as a blessing to be asked to care for this special little person. Throughout life so many circumstances may overtake us—the severe sudden illness or accident occurring to a loved one causing brain injury, physical disability, severe mental illness. There is so much that can happen to any individual at any time during their journey through life. I must say that in 1975 my husband had a very severe brain tumour. He was in intensive care for a whole month, unconscious for a couple of weeks and was virtually lingering between life and death. Happily, he came through that, but could quite possibly have been in a state where I needed to be his lifelong carer.

I must say that I have watched my mother deteriorate over the past few years. My dad is now nearly 98 and she has been his carer now for probably three years or so. She is 91 and her health has gone down markedly since she has been caring for him. Happily, we have been able to find a residential care unit where he is now well looked after in high care and my mother and her sister are side by side in rooms in low care in the same facility. Her health has improved markedly since they have been in that facility and that has demonstrated to me what that full-time caring role can do to the carer's health and wellbeing. I think there are many people who take on that role of carer and when it is a 24-hour, seven-day a week role it can have a very marked effect on them.

But I must say that in this day and age we have so much to be grateful for, because there is a great deal of help available for people. I know that the Blue Nurses were wonderful to my father and we are very much indebted to what they were able to do. I have heard an interview with a young girl who cared for her severely disabled mother—caring for her personal needs, her physical wellbeing, feeding her nutritious food, stimulating her mentally and then attending to her own studies on a daily basis. Her maturity and her expression of selflessness was just extraordinary.

Then there are the many ageing parents who have the concern about what will happen when they are gone and are no longer there to care for their son or daughter. There is a wonderful organisation called Sunshine and they are searching for a solution for many of those parents. Two wonderful gentlemen—a friend of mine by the name of Alan Foster and Les Crofton, who some members may know—

**Ms Grace:** Yes.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Yes, they formed a friendship when they were both volunteering at ACCES Services.

**Ms Grace:** Railway union secretary.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Ex-railway union secretary. He is a great man. He is part of my Woodridge branch. These two gentlemen had within their circle of friends quite a number of ageing parents with sons and daughters who are now middle aged. They have a great deal of difficulty just thinking of what is going to happen to that son or daughter when they are gone. Les and Alan have formed a group called Sunshine. We had hoped that maybe they may have had some fortune getting some federal funding during the stimulus packages, but sadly that did not happen.

**Ms Stone** interjected.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Bill Shorten, yes, he may come to the rescue. That would be good. It is heartening to see there are some people out there who actually become volunteers to assist people just out of the goodness of their heart, not because they themselves are in a position to actually need the assistance for their own family. I really admire what they are doing.

This government has previously recognised and sought to champion our wonderful carers. It is often the case that family members do not even recognise themselves as carers. Sometimes they believe that is the role of someone who comes in professionally to care for a family member and they are simply doing what is perfectly natural—to care for someone they love.

In this bill before the House we are embracing another group within our community who care under different circumstances but nonetheless can be impacted in a very dramatic way—that of grandparents caring for their grandchildren. Regrettably, it is sometimes the case that the parents of children can split up, neither parent is able to care for the children due to a number of factors such as drug and alcohol addiction, mental illness, domestic violence or plain dysfunctional behaviour and at times a struggling single parent has lost the ability to cope. Grandparents can play a very vital role in the lives of their grandchildren. In fact, those of us in this House who are grandparents I am sure would attest to the fact that grandparenthood is the most wonderful of privileges. However, when a grandparent has the full responsibility of young children again after they have raised their own family I think that puts a huge amount of stress upon them, especially if they are living on a pension and coping with all the stresses that we as parents may have undergone as well as the stresses of where the money is going to come from to pay all those bills. They simply need as much support as can possibly be given.

It is heartening to know that the exceptional counsellors at Lifeline now operate a grandparents information hotline. How important it can be to have someone you can share your thoughts and fears with. This bill will give specific recognition to the role of grandparents who are full-time carers. The Carers Advisory Council will offer two positions to grandparents to represent their views and concerns. The bill will also carefully align with the Commonwealth Carer Recognition Bill, requiring public authorities to apply certain principles in their human resource policies. In the Queensland Carers Charter special recognition is given to all of our selfless unpaid carers who daily care for a loved one who may have a severe physical disability, illness, be aged and frail or have a mental disability. Today we ensure that our grandparent carers will be recognised as government decisions are made. They perform a vital task within our communities and shoulder their responsibilities with the special love and care that exists within our family units. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (4.33 pm): I rise to support this bill and to speak in favour of the government Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill 2010. Can I at the outset say that it is just wonderful sometimes to be a member of parliament and to be part of establishing a piece of legislation that actually puts into law the recognition of significant members of the community and in particular I refer to all our grandparents. Unfortunately my maternal grandmother is no longer alive but it brings back fond memories of the work that she did for us.

I congratulate the minister and her department on bringing this forward. I know that the Positively Ageless—Queensland Seniors Strategy 2010, which was launched by the Premier, includes a strategy to recognise and introduce Grandparents Day, which I think is fantastic. But I would like to just spend a little bit of time to celebrate the contribution that grandparents do make to our society and, in particular, all those grandparents who live in my electorate of Brisbane Central. I see them every day. When I visit the schools I see grandparents dropping their granddaughters or sons off, picking them up in the afternoon; helping their children out by caring for them. I think everyone in this House at some stage recognises the fundamental role that grandparents play in assisting many busy families these days to balance work and family responsibility. I often wonder whether sometimes these grandparents really are

the almost de facto full-time carers of these young children. You can see the love in their eyes. You can see the attention that they take towards their care and nurturing. It is the same care and attention that was given to me by my grandmother who, I might add in this House, I was actually named after.

For those who do not know, Grace is the anglicised version of my Italian proper name and my proper name is actually Ignacia. That is what is on my birth certificate. Ignacia was the name of my maternal grandmother. Sicilians had this quirky thing that when they had their children it was tradition that the first child was named after the father's mother or father and so my poor older sister got the name Maria. I was lucky that I was not called Maria. As an Italian it is a very unusual name, I know. But she got the name after my father's grandmother. I was named after my mother's mother and Ignacia was her Christian name.

My mother worked extremely hard to balance the family budget. We certainly were not born with silver spoons in our mouths. They were migrants from Sicily. My grandmother was born into a large family in the little town of Castiglione in Sicily. She was the eldest daughter of the family. Being the oldest daughter she had to actually take charge of nurturing the other children in the family. She saw her younger sisters and brother go to school. Unfortunately my grandmother did not go to school. She migrated out to Australia after she married my grandfather and remained, unfortunately, illiterate all her life. She could not read or write but she was such a strong, intelligent woman. There is no doubt in my mind that she was the pillar, the matriarch, of the family and she drew us all in.

As we were growing up, when my mother was busy trying to make ends meet, I think de facto wise she was really the primary caregiver of Maria, me and Silvana, my younger sister. At the end of the day she was really the one who raised us and was the primary caregiver but clearly was not recognised under legislation for doing so. We were forever grateful that she was there. I remember whenever I got into trouble the first person I ran to, whether I was wailing or whatever I was doing, was my grandmother. I will never forget those fond memories. She used to know I used to love a particular type of lolly or sweet from the local corner shop and she always used to have a little five cent piece hidden on the old Singer sewing machine that she had on the verandah of the place where we lived. That five cent piece was always there. I now have that Singer sewing machine in the hallway of my house just to remind myself of my grandmother, and I actually always keep a five cent piece on it just to remind myself of my grandmother. Back then you got a pretty big bag of lollies with five cents down at the local shop. This bill is bringing back some fantastic memories in relation to that.

Any indication from those opposite that we do not care about carers or that somehow they are not dear to our heart is so off the mark that it is not funny. I really appreciate this bill. It is amazing that the amendments that are proposed in the Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill today would make Queensland—and once again we are leading Australia—the first state to legislatively recognise grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren. So once again we have a fantastic piece of legislation introduced by a wonderful minister that would see for the first time in Australia grandparents receive legislative recognition. The government proposes to extend existing legislation to specifically recognise the interests of grandparents, and I think that is fantastic.

There are approximately 14,000 Australian families in which a grandparent or grandparents are the main carers of their grandchildren, like my family. I take my hat off to those carers in my electorate. They do an unbelievable job, whether it is caring for their own children or their grandchildren. There are a lot of peak organisations in my electorate—the Cerebral Palsy League and ARAFMI—who look after people with a mental disability, and many others. They are such fantastic organisations. When I go around my electorate and see the work that those carers undertake, it is absolutely the best day for me. We really cannot do enough for them. They are the backbone and the pillars of our society. Wherever we can give them recognition, thanks and gratitude, we should be in this House applauding them for the hard work that they do.

A couple of couples come to mind. One couple in particular live in the city with a very disabled daughter and they do a fantastic job. As they grow older they are concerned about exactly how they are going to continue to give their daughter the wonderful care they have given all of their lives. I fear for their concern as well, but I know that the minister is addressing some fantastic initiatives in that area. There is extra money flowing to assist these families. We have Youngcare. The minister and I were at a couple of fundraisers over the weekend for Youngcare, which is a fantastic service headed by Marina Vit. We enjoyed that night where we raised excellent funds that will be put to good use so that these families can rest assured that their loved ones will be looked after when they can no longer bear that burden.

The government bill extends the definition of carers, as I said, to recognise grandparents as full-time carers for their grandchildren where the grandparent is the primary caregiver and decision maker of the child. The bill extends the functions of the Carers Advisory Council, which already exists under the provisions of the Queensland carers act, to include working to advance the interests of grandparents providing that much needed care for their grandchildren.

The expansion in the membership of the Carers Advisory Council is much welcome. The membership will include two positions for grandparent carers providing full-time care for their grandchildren or a representative body of grandparent carers. The bill amends the existing Queensland

Carers Charter—again established under the Queensland carers act—to include recognition of the invaluable role, as I have mentioned previously, that grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren play in the lives of their grandchildren.

There will also be two new principles in the charter which will recognise grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren and, importantly—and this is a really important part of this legislation—will assure them of access to information that supports them in their role. Interestingly in the past they have not had access to this information. It is terrific that this bill now gives them the peace of mind that, if they require information on their grandchildren in providing full-time care for them, they will be able to access that information, and that will support them in that important role they are undertaking.

The bill closely aligns the Queensland carers act with the recently introduced Commonwealth Carer Recognition Bill in that it will require public authorities to apply the principles of the Queensland Carers Charter in their human resource policies. When we are talking about employing staff in this area, it is great that we have consistency nationally in Australia. It is great that we are aligning ourselves with the new Commonwealth bill. At the same time, as I said, Queensland is leading the way with this kind of legislation. I think we should commend the minister for doing that.

We have long recognised the invaluable contribution of carers of those who are in need. This bill will build on the legislative framework for the recognition of carers for people with a disability, frailty, chronic illness or pain, established under the Carers (Recognition) Act. That legislative framework has come about because of the valuable work and representation by carers and carer representatives. There are many groups in the community, as I have mentioned, but in particular groups such as Carers Queensland.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the valuable work of Carers Queensland. Carers Queensland is a peak body for carers in this state. It responds to the needs of carers by providing information, community development, counselling, support services and advocacy. It really provides the whole gamut of services when it comes to looking after, promoting and informing the interests of carers in this state.

Its services are many and extensive. They include information and resources for carers. I know that many in my electorate avail themselves of this information. It provides counselling. Many constituents have talked to me about how much they value counselling. Sometimes you just need someone to talk to, to have someone reassure you, because this is not an easy job, as those who are in the community caring for people with a disability or grandchildren or whatever would know. We all know that sometimes we need to receive some counselling and to have somebody to talk to.

It provides great referral services. People can go to Carers Queensland and be referred to services to address the needs that they have. It has a wonderful library of resources for carers. It supports young carers, which is very important. When you are a young carer you do need that support, and Carers Queensland provides that. It has accredited training to assist carers in their caring role, so carers can be trained. It also supports the no-interest loans scheme, which assist carers with financial support. We know that sometimes caring can also be a financial strain, and it does administer those much needed loans.

Carers Queensland has 12 offices across the state. So it is not just a Brisbane or South-East Queensland based organisation. Those offices stretch from Cairns in North Queensland—which the Deputy Speaker would be interested in—to the Gold Coast and out to Roma, for the interest of some of our country members. It offers the most decentralised carers support of any one carers organisation in Australia, and we have it here in Queensland. You can see from this that Carers Queensland is for all carers—those in urban areas, rural and regional areas and also for, and we must not forget, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers and carers from linguistically diverse backgrounds, which is my background. Carers Queensland has also very recently launched a most informative DVD aimed at Indigenous carers.

The Queensland government, I am very proud to say, funds Carers Queensland to the tune of \$3.3 million recurrently. I note that the minister is nodding. I think we all agree in this House that it is money spent in the right area. It does provide a wonderful service.

Counselling services are provided through the Australian government National Carer Counselling Program and include both telephone and face-to-face counselling to help carers deal with the range of issues that they face. I will mention some of those: stress—and I know that some of my carers are stressed; coping skills—it is hard to cope in very stressful situations, particularly when you are sleep deprived; dealing with grief and loss; and transition issues. So they really do provide a holistic approach for these people who require help.

Caring for another—whether it is a grandparent caring full time for their grandchild or caring for a person with a disability, frailty, chronic illness or pain—is a rewarding but challenging role. It is a role that I think society applauds and one that is much valued and cherished. I think any organisation that makes those people feel wanted and needed and is there to assist them when things are not going so well is one that government should be spending money on, and I applaud the money that we do give that organisation to assist those carers.

Once again, Carers Queensland have advised me—and I have spoken to them in the past—that they will open up their services to grandparent carers as a result of this bill. This is fantastic for those grandparents who may need some help. I must admit that sometimes we were naughty when my grandmother was looking after us and sometimes she could have pulled her hair out. I know that members in this House will not believe that, but from time to time it did happen.

**Mrs Cunningham:** I can actually believe it.

**Ms GRACE:** I take that interjection from the member for Gladstone. She can believe that I was naughty as a child, but I assure you I was actually very good. If grandparents do need help, it is good to know that Carers Queensland will be there. As a result of this bill, they will open up their services to grandparent carers which I think is fantastic news. I am sure honourable members will join me in thanking their board and CEO for this move. I hope they will monitor the uptake of these services by this newest group of recognised carers and advise the government and possibly this House of that number. I hope that grandparents who do go to Carers Queensland for assistance will find that professional service and be able to obtain whatever it is they require—whether it be referral, counselling or the other things I have mentioned in this speech.

I am sure all members will join me in acknowledging and thanking Carers Queensland for their invaluable role in supporting our wonderful carers across the state. I think they do a wonderful job. As I said, I am proud to be part of a government and proud to be part of a team that has a minister like Annastacia Palaszczuk who welcomes funds going to this organisation that assists people out there who do such a wonderful job.

I cannot speak highly enough of carers. I have been to the Cerebral Palsy League and I have seen those committed carers and family members. I recently went to the Picnic in the Park with the minister and there were thousands of people at that huge fundraising effort. It was a wonderful day at Roma Street Parklands. There were so many dedicated carers, be they parents, friends or full-time carers. Whatever capacity they were working in, they were there helping those people in need and taking it all in their stride. They were so proud of what they were able to do to assist the person in need.

In closing, I will refer once again to my maternal grandmother, and I know my mother would appreciate me saying this. She was a wonderful Italian woman. In my career, I have realised that you often have to be worried about small European women. They have a fire in their belly and they have an unbelievable way of making their point crystal clear. I see the member for Hinchinbrook waving his hand in the Italian way. If you got out of hand, they clipped you around the ears and they sure made you knew exactly who was boss.

My maternal grandmother was one of those strong women, a matriarch of our family. I miss her greatly and I think I could almost go to the point of saying that she was a full-time carer. My parents ran a boarding house in Spring Hill and my mother was taken away for many long hours; she worked extremely hard. If it were not for my grandmother, we would have been roaming the streets of Spring Hill when we should not have been roaming the streets of Spring Hill.

With those few words, and in recognising the role of grandparents and the wonderful work that carers do throughout Queensland, I thank the minister and her department for this piece of legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

**Hon. KL STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP)** (Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women) (4.53 pm): I rise to support the Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill 2010 and acknowledge, like other members in the House have done, that there are many special people in our communities who basically do not get five minutes to themselves. These are people who are on call 24/7, providing love and support to family members and loved ones who through a disability, an illness or a family breakdown are dependent on them for their care. These people are very giving carers.

A large number of people are also grandparent carers who have regular care, formal care or sometimes full-time care of their grandchildren. Just when they thought their child-rearing days were over, many of them find themselves not only grieving the issue with their own child—such as a family breakdown, a substance abuse or one of the other issues I mentioned earlier—but being responsible for the care of their grandchildren at a time when they thought they were free to retire or get on with their own lives without those responsibilities. Some of them find they have a house full of adolescents who all need toasted ham and cheese sandwiches, a couple of loaves of bread, lots of milk and lots of food—caring for their grandchildren is a big expense. Some are caring for young infants and babies and going through all that cycle of life stuff again with their own grandchildren. I do not think there is one person in this House who does not value and understand the very important role played there.

The member for Brisbane Central talked about her nonna and let me recount a quick story. I do this because when we are in these decision-making roles and making decisions about legislation we draw on lived experiences, we draw on formal advice, we listen to people around the state, we try to get a picture, we walk in their shoes and we understand what is going on for them. We use a whole range of sources of information to come up with the decisions we make, so let me tell a quick story about my nonna, Dot. Dot and Arthur played a big role in my early life, mainly because my mum experienced a

number of difficulties raising the Struthers brothers and me on her own. It was not easy, let me tell you. This was pre the Family Law Act, pre child support—all that good stuff that Labor governments brought into this nation and that Labor governments have supported and extended.

Let me tell you about Dot and Arthur of Acacia Ridge, because they had formal care of us on many occasions and for extended periods. We lived in their house for quite a while. There were times when my mother was getting support from the department of children's services—not because of neglect but just due to the fact that she had her own health issues and other issues going on—and we would be on a little boat over to Coochiemudlo for a while because poor old nonna, Dottie, had had enough too. She had had enough of the Struthers brothers and Karen and she needed a little break herself, so off we went to the priest and his wife for a little while to give nonna a bit of respite. I bring all of that lived experience to these decisions around legislation like this. I bring that to my daily work because there are many people around this great state of ours like our nonnas, like our grandfathers, who have played a significant part in our own lives and who continue to play a significant part in the lives of many people now. We do value them and we do support them.

One of the things that concerns me is that we have to do more than offer platitudes. We have to have these kinds of legislative frameworks for recognition, but I have found as I get around the state—and as I know from my own experience with Dot and Arthur—that these people need income support, they need practical help, they need respite, they need a whole lot of things. That is the core to some of these issues in this debate in the House this week. We actually need to be taking up these issues with our federal counterparts as well, and that is what we are doing in Queensland. The Community Services ministers—Annastacia Palaszczuk, Phil Reeves, Desley Boyle and I—all agree that these sorts of issues have to also be very prominent on the federal agenda, and we have done that. We have put the need for income support for grandparent carers firmly on the national agenda.

Let me ask a question of the member for Burdekin and let me ask a question of the member for Hinchinbrook: have you written to Tony Abbott and asked him to put income support for grandparent carers and increased pensions on the national agenda? What is your answer? I bet the answer is no. This is a critical issue. It is fine to come in here with your platitudes, it is fine to be self-righteous, but the reality is that these people need practical support. Who brought in the first-ever significant pension increase that was well above CPI? Who brought that in a couple of years ago? The federal Labor government. It was \$30 a week. We know that every dollar counts. We on this side of the House know that and our federal counterparts know that as well. Not only do we know it, but we deliver on it. This is the sort of help these people need. I support the framework for action we have through this legislative program, but probably more importantly I also support the practical measures of income support that these people need.

When we hold our community cabinet meetings around the state, what are people asking for? They are saying, 'I could not buy the young fellow his \$150 sports shoes,' 'I could not send him on the camp,' 'I could not get all the stuff the baby needed. I had to go to the Salvation Army.' That is the sort of experience many of these people have. I urge members on the other side of the House to take action instead of coming in here with platitudes. I urge them to get commitments from those on their side of the House and their federal counterparts on the much needed income support measures these people need.

**Mrs Menkens** interjected.

**Ms STRUTHERS:** I take that interjection. The member for Burdekin thinks income support for grandparent carers is ridiculous. In this bill we will extend the definition of carers to recognise grandparents as full-time carers, we will extend the functions and membership of the Carers Advisory Council to advance the interests of grandparents providing care for their children, we will also amend the existing Queensland Carers Charter to include recognition of the very important role grandparents take on in caring formally for their grandchildren and the charter will also provide access to information to support grandparents in their role. I want to thank Tracey Douglas, the chair of the Council of Grandparents and the members of that council and other people involved through organisations like KinCare, who do such a great job day in, day out. I also thank Julene Gibson, who has been present in the gallery throughout the debate, chair of the Carers Queensland board and members of that board and, again, the agencies involved in this area of work. I think we have all acknowledged the very important work that these councils and organisations carry out. Many of them are doing their own caring and taking on those responsibilities as well.

I am sure the member for Burdekin is genuine in her interest in supporting the needs of grandparents. However, I urge her to consider what action she needs to take place, not platitudes. What action does she need to take to get work done by her side of politics on these very important issues of income support? Many of these people are self-funded retirees. Maybe they need tax relief. Many of these people are pensioners who need income support or additional income support. Again, I put on the record that it is Labor governments that have really focused on these issues. The thing that people have said to me is that that pension increase made a big difference. That pension increase of \$30 a week—

**Mr Cripps:** What about the fuel tax? Why did you increase the fuel tax by 9c a litre?

**Ms STRUTHERS:** Thirty dollars may not seem like much to the member for Hinchinbrook, but I can tell him that every dollar does count to these people who take on these caring responsibilities.

As minister responsible for seniors, I take that responsibility very seriously. In fact, I enjoy it, I love it. I love meeting with the seniors groups. I love meeting with the Seniors Round Table. During the course of the consultation in the lead-up to the seniors strategy, I had a lot of fun because people are pretty positive about their futures. Sure, they have some issues they need dealt with and they want to see government action on. Let me tell honourable members that the Positively Ageless—Queensland Seniors Strategy that we have launched is going down a treat. People are rallying behind it. We are having implementation meetings around the state, the first of which was in Gatton recently.

We have a number of initiatives underway at the moment. We have increased the funding for the Time for Grandparents Program. They need respite and support, and that is what they are getting from this government. I certainly want to commend my colleague, the minister Phil Reeves. He took the initiative to write to the Premier to ask if we could have a Grandparents Day in Queensland. What are we doing? The Premier has nominated Sunday, 7 November as our inaugural Grandparents Day. No other state or territory in Australia has done that. I think it will catch on and it will be a national day at some point soon. Mothers have Mothers Day and we love it. Fathers have Fathers Day and they love it. Grandparents love Grandparents Day. So on 7 November take time to spend with your grandparents and spread the word. Like the member for Brisbane Central, on 7 November I, too, will be thinking about my grandma, Dot. I will be thinking about Dot and Arthur and all the wonderful support they have given to me and the Struthers brothers.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (5.03 pm):** I rise to support the Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill and, to the extent that it does not contradict the bill that the member for Burdekin moved, the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill 2010. Frankly, every single person in this chamber cares about elderly people. We all care about grandparents. It is disappointing to hear the debate across the chamber with one side casting allegations that the other side does not care and then the other side alleging in return that the first group do not care. The reality is that I doubt that we would be in this place if we did not have compassion and care for people, particularly for our elderly.

The saddest thing with the situation of grandparent caring is that their relationship with their grandchildren changes exponentially. I am a grandma of two beautiful children: Blake, who is four, and Isabelle, who is two. My relationship as a Grammy is—I was going to say all care, no responsibility, but not quite—all play perhaps.

**Mr Hoolihan:** You can give them back.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** Yes, you can give them back, too. It is a wonderful relationship. You have raised your own children. You are free to play with them. You still have responsibilities in your life; you still have jobs to do in your life, but you seem to have the time and the patience to have a different relationship with your grandchildren. These grandparents through circumstances usually not their own are placed in a position where they have to almost resign from that position of grandparents and become parents again to their grandchildren. I commend them wholeheartedly.

I have often said to my kids when we have been playing with Blake or Isabelle for a couple of hours and I am absolutely exhausted, 'I know why God had young people having babies,' because you have to have all this energy and stamina. You have to be able to think of eight different things and you have to be able to chase them, play with them, occupy them, clean them, look after them, keep them safe and then do everything else that has to be done in the house. It is a job for young people. So it is even more important that we recognise grandparents because of that added physical responsibility that they take on; the fact that, when perhaps they should be planning retirement, planning some time for themselves or some time to go away on holidays, they have actually made the decision to look after their grandchildren. I place on the record my utmost respect, my regard and my awe at their sense of responsibility, their sense of love and their sense of compassion.

I thank the minister, too, for the briefing that she gave on her bill yesterday and for the information that was passed on. The minister said that part of the problem with the legislation proposed by the member for Burdekin lies in the definitions in the bill. I am advised that consultation on the minister's bill occurred with the Queensland Carers Council, the Queensland Carers board, Carers Queensland, the Queensland Council of Grandparents and the Carers Advisory Council, which is the minister's advisory council. I would hope that as a result of the consultation with all of those groups this bill would be both practical and workable.

I commend also the Library for its briefing paper. It was distributed with the bill of the member for Burdekin. I would like to read from an article by Jean Shepley and Susan Dann of the National Seniors Productive Ageing Centre titled *Intergenerational caring: Current trends in Australian custodial grandparenting*. The article states—

The legal status of grandparents and the limits of their responsibilities is consistently raised as a significant concern ... This confusion is due in a large part to the fact that the legal status of the guardian grandparent will vary according to the processes by which category the grandchildren have come into their grandparents care.

...

These arrangements define not only the relationship with the child, but also grandparents' access to financial and other support.

It is important that the bill that we are debating gives grandparents who have assumed the role of primary decision maker and primary carer for their grandchildren access to information, that they have access to health information—the sort of information that is considered private that in today's society is increasingly difficult for family members to access—and that they have access to financial assistance.

I support the member for Algester's call for financial assistance for grandparents. If they have retired they are not expecting to then have to assume the responsibilities and costs of raising another family. I only had daughters, but I have fed a lot of boys. They can eat. You just about have to nail everything shut. You have to give them dumplings with their stew to fill their legs up. The grandparents' budget has not been tailored and they have not financially planned to feed some of these little monsters. I do not know where they put it. I think it is important to be able to give financial assistance to grandparents. I commend the ministers who have raised it federally because that payment would have to come through Centrelink or a similar payment system. The article goes on state—

The financial issues affecting grandparents raising grandchildren fall into three key areas, all of which are interrelated. First is the fact that most allowances available to assist in grandparents child rearing costs are means tested and therefore are not automatically available to grandparents raising grandchildren ... Second is the perceived inequity in access to parenting resources and assistance between grandparents and other categories of carers and third is the lifestyle impact particularly on those grandparents in retirement who have not allowed for additional child rearing costs when planning their financial future.

I have already discussed that issue. Grandparents who are reasonably well off will not feel the same pressure on their budget. A lot of grandparents have modest means. They are often the families that are asked to contribute to the rearing of their grandchildren. If there is a number of grandchildren, the cost of raising those children is significant. It is not only things like food and clothing that they have to fund but it is health and schooling costs and the whole plethora of things associated with raising children. The article finally states—

Specifically governments need to address the perceived and actual inequities faced by grandparents, in comparison with other carer groups in terms of access to financial assistance and other services.

I do hope that in the very near future that is addressed.

The bill covers grandparents who are looking after grandchildren. There are those grandchildren who have no physical disabilities and there are those who have significant disabilities and intellectual impairments. For those grandparents the demand is even greater. I am sure each of us in our electorates has examples of grandparents who are struggling with the responsibility but their commitment to their family is so great that they have not genuinely considered any other option. They struggle to function day to day. It is those who need our greatest support.

I am sure that when this bill is enacted there will be instances that come to our attention where grandparents in a caring role do not fit neatly into any of these categories. Based on the comments that have been made by all of the ministers who have spoken to this bill and will speak to this bill and the ministers who are in those caring roles—the Minister for Child Safety and others—I am sure they will be able to work with members in this parliament who raise with them instances that do not fit neatly into the package so that those people in great need can be supported.

I am conscious of the time. I again place on the record my utmost respect, regard and admiration for grandparents who are looking after their grandchildren. In the main, each of us has had a wonderful relationship with our grandparents. In great measure those grandparents have traded in that relationship to take up a parenting and authority relationship. I commend them and I wish each one success in their child rearing. I commend them for their compassion.

**Mr McLINDON** (Beaudesert—TQP) (5.14 pm): I rise to briefly contribute to the cognate debate on the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill and the Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill. I give credit to both the opposition and the government for introducing this legislation. There were many exchanges between both sides with regard to who was to take credit for this. The reality is that whilst it was initiated by the member for Burdekin it has, for the most part, been taken up by the government too. Therefore this is something that the parliament as a whole can be proud of. Politics is a competition of ideas. The more ideas that come to the table the better Queensland will become. So I commend both the government and the opposition on the legislation before the House.

Grandparents are the pearls of wisdom for all of us. I would like to acknowledge the many grandparents who give their precious time to their loved ones. In what appears to be an increasingly self-centred society, it is heartening to see the vital role that grandparents play. My parents have the joy of 24 grandchildren which keeps them even busier than when they were raising nine children of their own. Retirement is merely a word that does not reflect reality to those who are generous with their time.

The demands on families today are more strenuous than ever before with mortgages and rising costs of living mixed with the daily pressures in today's world. As a result, grandparents play a critical role in assisting their family. It is great to see that this role is finally being recognised. It is providing the legislative framework so that this recognition can be used as part of the decision-making process when it comes to the issues that directly affect grandparent carers.

I would also like to acknowledge the fantastic work undertaken by all the volunteers in the Beaudesert electorate who give so much of their time to assist in caring for those who are elderly, lonely or have disabilities. As a community we are forever indebted to the invaluable contribution of these people who make someone else's life a little easier. The legislation will now better provide the support and the respect that carers deserve. I support these measures before us tonight.

**Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (5.16 pm): I rise to participate in the cognate debate on these two very important bills. As I said in the debate on Wednesday in relation to making this a cognate debate, I believe it is quite appropriate that these two matters be debated together. Here we are debating an opposition bill in the government's time. We are certainly showing other parliaments around Australia—especially the federal parliament—that private members' bills are worthy of being debated. This is one real example where we can show that, irrespective of our political persuasions, we are able to work together and a compromise can be achieved for the good of Queenslanders.

I note that earlier in the week the Speaker tabled a comparison of how our parliament operates in relation to the way the federal parliament is anticipated to operate. I certainly hope that the federal parliament will follow our lead to ensure that future private members' bills, just like this one, are able to be introduced into parliament and then be debated honestly and frankly. If it is the case that the private member's bill is instrumental in provoking the government to do something that otherwise may not have occurred, what is wrong with that? That is what we are elected to do. This is good for government. It is good for Queenslanders and Australians to see how we as elected members are able to work together and make our parliament work as effectively as possible.

A number of members seem to think that this is the first time this matter has been debated in our state parliament. Can I just say that it certainly is not. I note the member for Burdekin responded to a private member's bill I introduced almost five years ago. That touched on some of the very matters that we are canvassing tonight. The Minister for Disability Services spoke about national responsibilities and how she and her ministerial colleagues are continuing to pursue this matter at a national level.

I note that back in 2004 then Premier Beattie went to the Council of Australian Governments meeting and put this clearly and squarely on the national agenda. This is one case where we all agree that it just does not require a partnership between grandparents and their families but a partnership between all levels of government. We all have a role to play—local, state and federal governments. I hope as result of this debate tonight that senators like Barnaby Joyce, who has a lot to say—and I do not mean to be critical—pursue this matter with the sense of passion that he seems to have when pursuing a range of other issues.

We all have a responsibility—the government, the opposition and the Independents. I hope as a result of this debate that our elected members in the federal parliament actually take the time to look at what we have said and pursue this. They have a responsibility just like we do to try to improve the lot for our grandparent carers. Our grandparent carers do not want to hand over the responsibility of their grandchildren to the department. They do not want to have to do that.

That is the dividing line at the moment to receive the financial support and is similar to my private member's bill five years ago. That bill tried to provide financial support to grandparent carers similar to what foster carers receive in Queensland. At the time it was made very clear that—and it is still the same today—for our Queensland grandparents to be able to receive the sort of financial support that Queensland foster carers receive they have to effectively hand over responsibility of their children to the department. We do not want to see that happen, and I know that grandparents certainly do not. But there is a responsibility for this new federal parliament to see how it is able to better support financially our wonderful grandparent carers. I support the comments made by the Minister for Disability Services in that she and her colleagues are continuing to pursue this issue with a sense of enthusiasm and passion at their regular meetings with their federal colleagues.

I congratulate the opposition for introducing its bill, but I am aware of the time so I will restrict my comments to the government's bill. I note that the bill includes two significant components—the charter and the capacity for recognised grandparent carers to be able to ask questions and to access information. The concern I have is that at the moment there are a whole range of bills, acts and codes of conduct which say that public servants are required to do certain things. The clearest example I can provide to the House is if a person is suffering from a mental disability and their carer—be it mum, dad or their grandparents—takes them to the local hospital. The clinician is required to diagnose and assess the person and their parents—be they mum or dad, the uncle, the aunt or grandparent carers—who have been looking after that child, who know the child's condition, know the child's disability, know the symptoms and know what is happening. However, time and time again clinicians in our hospitals are not giving the parents' or the carers' concerns the weight that I believe they are required to under the laws of our land. We are not seeing them giving the parents and the carers the recognition and appropriately valuing the concerns that these people are raising.

I know what the bill is proposing. In the briefing to the Independents the minister made it very clear how she and the government want to ensure that grandparent carers are able to ask questions and access information. I just really hope—and I hope and I hope and I hope—that our jolly bureaucrats

will follow through with what this parliament wants to see happen. I say that because I have seen this happen—I know other members have seen it happen and members of our community talk about it—where the jolly bureaucrats are bloody-minded—I do not mean to use that word disrespectfully—and simply will not listen.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Powell): Order! Member for Nicklin, that word is unparliamentary and I would ask that you withdraw.

**Mr WELLINGTON:** I withdraw. What I am looking for is an assurance from the minister that our bureaucrats are going to do what this parliament requires them to do. That brings me to the issue of the code of conduct debated during the last sitting week, and during this week's sitting there has been talk about the code of conduct that our bureaucrats are required to comply with. I want to put on the record that some of our middle management bureaucrats who senior department staff and ministers seem to think are shining knights making the changes that the government wants to see happen are not complying with the code of conduct that the government requires them to comply with. But what happens? No-one actually pursues it because the minister and the department do not want to know about it and the jolly poor public servants do not have the skills or the capacity to take the matter up with the bureaucrats. Again, I hope we can ensure that the assurances that the minister is proposing in this bill are followed through and we actually see this happen. I commend the bills to the House.

**Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (5.24 pm): I rise to speak to the cognate debate on the Seniors Recognition (Grandparents Providing Care) Bill and Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill. All that most of us want in life is to be acknowledged and affirmed for who we are and what we do, and seniors and grandparents—because they are not always one and the same—deserve that acknowledgement and affirmation more than most people in our community. Their wisdom and their combined life experiences have much to teach us. The Bligh Labor government has already done a lot to recognise the role that seniors have and do play in our lives. However, before I even speak on what the government has done for seniors and grandparents, I wish to acknowledge in this House the role that some of the community organisations in the Bulimba electorate play in supporting seniors and grandparents and helping their lives to be fulfilled. I want to refer to some of those groups now.

I talk about the Cannon Hill Sixty and Better group and the wonderful work of Frank and Bev Hughes and Les Gray before he passed away last year. I talk about the Bulimba Seniors Citizens Club run by Vilma Ward, the St Oliver Plunkett Social Club for seniors and the disabled run by Denise Power, the Morningside Pensioners and Superannuants Association run by Dawn Denman, the Cannon Hill Craft Club, Balmoral Probus and Bulimba Legacy. These are wonderful organisations and I know we would be a much lesser place without them.

But coming back to the government's contribution in this area, it was wonderful to be able to promote the government's Positively Ageless strategy throughout the Bulimba electorate. When it was first released for consultation, I know many older people in my local area were delighted to see the breadth it covered and the identification of so many issues that could possibly impact on their lives. Many local seniors had a lot to say about that draft. It was great to talk to them about it, and I thank the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women for the time she spent in the Bulimba electorate to give seniors the opportunity to talk to her directly about their views and concerns.

Seniors have been equally delighted to see the Positively Ageless strategy in its final form and to know that it was not all just talk but that the government has a real commitment to their wellbeing. It was great to see grandparents in particular being acknowledged in this strategy with the institution of a Grandparents Day for the very first time in this state. A lot of our local grandparents were delighted to have a special day allocated to their honour. They do not want any fuss and they do not want anything over the top and commercial to happen. However, they loved the thought that there is a special time just for them and I am looking forward to helping them celebrate the day with a special event that will bring families together. I will be assisted in putting this event on by some very active local grandmothers, and I thank Anne Wood in particular for her sage advice so far on the event and her practical tips on what grandparents would really want out of a day like this. I can always rely on her to tell me exactly what she thinks.

It was equally great to see that the Positively Ageless strategy supports grandparents raising grandchildren by noting the need for these grandparents to have access to respite services and by acknowledging their social isolation and their need for access to relevant information. The government has particularly long recognised the contribution of carers who provide ongoing care and assistance to those in need. There is no doubt that carers are that amazing breed of people who are better human beings than most of us will ever be. To do the things that they do, we know they are completely selfless and there is not one person who is not full of awe for what they do.

What a lot of people do not know about carers is the enormous financial contribution they make to our economy. This has been estimated at a staggering \$3.9 billion nationally, and it is interesting to note similar figures that have been estimated for other roles along the same lines. For instance, full-time older workers are estimated to have made an economic contribution of \$59.6 billion nationally, volunteers \$2 billion and the carers of children \$911 million. The government's recognition of carers has included formally recognising the interests of carers through the Carer Recognition Policy in 2003, the

Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 and the Carer Action Plan 2006-2010. In fact, I think that two of the most practical measures that this government has taken to assist carers are the carer business discount card and the companion card. Both these cards are key initiatives of the Queensland government Carer Action Plan 2006-2010. I want to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of carers who provide ongoing care to people with a disability, frailty or chronic illness and thank those who worked to achieve their long overdue recognition in the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008.

Grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren will benefit from the amendments to the Carers (Recognition) Act, which include acknowledging in the Queensland Carers Charter the significant contribution of grandparents raising grandchildren. However, I want to be very clear that this acknowledgement in no way diminishes the existing strong recognition in the charter of the dedication and self-sacrifice of voluntary carers for people with a disability, the frail and the chronically ill.

The Queensland Carers (Recognition) Act also requires public authorities to ensure that their staff have an awareness of the Queensland Carers Charter and to report on their compliance with the act in their annual reports. Further, the Queensland Carers (Recognition) Act establishes the Carers Advisory Council to work to advance the interests of carers, promote compliance by public authorities with the Queensland Carers Charter and to make recommendations and give advice to the minister about matters relating to carers.

The Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill is another way that the government is showing a real and practical recognition of carers and grandparents. The Carers (Recognition) Amendment Bill will build on the Positively Ageless strategy by legislatively acknowledging the dedication and self-sacrifice of grandparents who provide full-time care for their grandchildren, extending the consultation requirements of the Queensland Carers (Recognition) Act to organisations representing grandparents raising grandchildren and including grandparent carer representatives on the Carers Advisory Council. These initiatives not only give grandparents providing full-time care for their grandchildren the recognition that they deserve but also provide them with practical assistance in doing the important job that they do.

I would like to acknowledge several people whom I have particularly admired when it comes to supporting the cause of grandparents and seniors. These include, of course, the Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs for the passion that she has shown to this cause. She is a very caring person. But she does not just stop there; she makes things happen. I acknowledge the same passion shown by the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women for her wonderful work on the Positively Ageless strategy. However, I could not speak in this debate without also referring to the honourable member for Townsville, who is quite remarkable in her support for seniors, grandparents and carers. She is an exceptional member with a huge heart and she is feisty when she is fighting for a cause. We have spent many an hour discussing the cause of grandparents and I know that she has had numerous meetings and discussions with local grandparents who are looking after their grandchildren and who have raised a number of issues with her. I know that she raises these issues with the minister on a regular basis. I say to those grandparents and carers in the Townsville electorate that they are extremely lucky to have such a strong member.

Of course, I could not talk about grandparents and carers without also talking about my own mother, Meg, who was the most amazing grandmother. Unfortunately, she passed away eight years ago and not a week goes by that I do not feel incredibly sad that both she and my daughter, Millie, have not had the pleasure of each other's company in that time. It was a wonderful experience to have my mother around even in the first year of Millie's life. The dimension that my mother was able to add to Millie's life was immeasurable.

Of course, that was not always a good thing. In fact, I think the first thing my mother ever bought for my daughter—and as a doting grandmother she was always buying things—was a T-shirt that said, 'If mummy says no, just ask nanna.' But it was the wisdom, the authority, the life experiences, the sense of what is right in life that my mother passed on to Millie that was so precious. When she knew she was dying, despite suffering quite considerably from the effects of bowel cancer, she put aside time every day to keep a diary for Millie—putting down all her memories on what life was like for her as a child, what her family was like, what the values and traditions were in those days and what was important to her as a human being.

This diary is now Millie's most prized possession and she gets it out on a regular basis. I know that, despite the fact that Millie did not really know her nanna properly, she still sees her as her saviour. When life is tough, when something has happened at school that has upset her, when she is just really worried about something, she goes to her room, gets out my mother's photo and sits it on her lap and has a look at it and looking at that photo makes her feel good.

The grandmother role that my mother played in my nieces' lives was a very intense one and my sister could not have done without her during the days when they were little and my sister was working shiftwork and running around trying to make sure her daughters could still get to their activities. At the time my sister and her husband lived in Murwillumbah. My sister's husband had an extremely time-consuming job and was not able to be home very often. My sister worked night duty as a nurse for four or five shifts a week and they had four children—four under six years of age at one time. It was my

mother who used to drive down to Murwillumbah on a regular basis and stay for days and days at a time to make sure that my sister could get some sleep and to make sure that the children could keep to their routine.

There are so many stories like this—happening all over the world. I know for a fact that there are thousands of them happening every day in the Bulimba electorate alone and I never tire of hearing them. It is people like my mother that this legislation is about. That is why it is so important that the government is making this effort—that there is special consideration for our carers and grandparents. It is why legislation like this is so important. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Farmer, adjourned.

### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (5.35 pm): I move—That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 26 October 2010.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (5.35 pm): I move—That the House do now adjourn.

#### Ormiston House, Music Beneath the Stars

**Mr DOWLING** (Redlands—LNP) (5.35 pm): Tonight I rise to advise honourable members of an iconic event held in Redlands over the weekend, Music Beneath the Stars—although as members would recall it was a rainy night and quite often it became ‘music beneath umbrellas’. This is a world-class event with acts that have a world-class background. Headlining the event we had the British based baritone David Wakeham, who has a well-established career internationally and a reputation that precedes him. We also had soprano Rosemarie Arthars, who is a principal singer with Opera Queensland, tenor Virgilio Marina, baritone Shaun Brown, mezzosopranos Elizabeth Lewis and Alison McKenzie and rising Brisbane artists violinist Zoe Friesberg and pianist Alex Raneri.

It was a fantastic night and one not to miss. The artists were also accompanied throughout the evening by the Ormiston Heritage Pipes and Drums and the Redlands Sporting Club Pipe Band. It was a pretty classy affair with great food. It was a self-catered event and there was cuisine ranging from roast meals and mixed platters to barbecues and gourmet pizzas. It was also a BYO event and there was champagne, wine and spirits flowing—you name it, it was there. It was an outstanding evening with good company and fine friends. Last year we had the privilege of the Leader of the Opposition, John-Paul Langbroek, the member for Surfers Paradise, attending the event. It is certainly a top-drawer event. This year, I was joined by Mark Robinson, the member for Cleveland, along with a number of other good friends and acquaintances. There were candelabras and silk and lace tablecloths. It is very much a black-tie affair. The ladies were sensational in their after-five evening wear.

It is only right that I recognise the organisers of the event: volunteers led by Meg O’Driscoll, who is responsible for running the day-to-day operations of Ormiston House, John Mott, and Dushene Barry, who was responsible for coordinating all of the entertainment. George Williams was the emcee. It was a sensational night.

Ormiston House is owned by the Carmelite order of nuns and the money raised from this fundraising event goes into maintaining this iconic property that is Ormiston House. It is a fantastic event. I would encourage members opposite—

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr DOWLING:** I take that interjection. There are quite a few there. It is a cloistered order so I am not sure of the numbers. But they are a fantastic order of nuns. I hasten to add that their prayers kept the rain at bay for most of the evening. So congratulations to all the organisers and volunteers.

#### Greenslopes Electorate, Schools

**Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (5.39 pm): The Blich government is committed to providing Queensland students with the educational foundations they need to achieve their full potential. While this philosophy applies right throughout Queensland, it is particularly applicable to the electorate of Greenslopes. This is an area which provided me with my own educational foundations at Marshall Road State School in Holland Park. As a former student, and now the local state member of parliament, I was very proud to open the school’s 50th anniversary fete earlier this year.

Marshall Road State School is not the only school in the Greenslopes electorate that has celebrated a significant milestone or achievement this year. On 15 September this year I had the honour of being invited to the Holland Park State School's Excellence Expo. I congratulate Tony Gribbin, the principal of Holland Park State School, his team and all of the school's students for their outstanding achievements. I also acknowledge the efforts of several other people from the school involved in the expo, including the school's gifted education mentor, Gail Young, and community liaison officer, Karen Oliver, along with P&C president, Michael Gronow.

The night's expo showed just how talented the students are across a broad spectrum of pursuits including writing, reading Australian verse, public speaking, LOTE speaking, science, ICT and technology, art, vocal performance, instrumental performance, dance and Asian studies. I congratulate all students on their achievement. I was particularly pleased to be able to present the medallions to all of those Excellence Expo achievers in the area of public speaking.

Similarly, last month I attended the re-opening of the Mount Gravatt High School administration block. Members may recall I stood in parliament last year on 11 November 2009 to talk about the school's administration block, which had been extensively damaged by fire the previous evening. The building has been rebuilt and named the Sorensen Centre after the former and very much loved deputy principal Kev Sorensen, who sadly passed away in 2008. Kev was represented at the event by his wife, Noela Sorensen. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the school's principal, Scot Steinhardt, and his team and the school community including the P&C for putting together a great program, not only for the reopening of the Sorensen Centre but for all of the other events to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary.

Another school that has been showcasing the talents of its students is Holland Park High School, which hosted its Art at the Park festival recently. This event was a credit to principal Jocelyn Roberts and art teachers Patricia Corcoran, Johanna Taylor and Kerri-Lyn Ross, along with the school's music and drama students and teachers. I had the pleasure of hosting Jocelyn Roberts at Parliament House this week, along with members of the student leadership team, school captains Esther Allen and Ben Tuckwell and vice-captains Vladica Nikic and Scott Meakin. Those students are a credit to the school. The achievements I have highlighted here tonight are just a sample of the great work that is being done at schools across the Greenslopes electorate every day.

### **Day, Mr R, OAM**

**Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (5.42 pm): On 21 September I had the very great pleasure of attending an Australian Honours and Awards Investiture Ceremony where 19 Queenslanders were invested by Her Excellency the Governor in the presence of their very proud families and friends. Amongst that group of outstanding Queenslanders was Aspley Rotarian Mr Ron Day, who was awarded a medal in the General Division of the Order of Australia. Ron is a modest man who cites his father, Bert, as the person who instilled in him the value of community service. Like his father, Ron has given a lifetime of service to others—firstly in his career as a school teacher and principal and then, upon retirement, to his church and Rotary International.

Ron was born on the family farm in 1934 and was schooled in the Burnett region. After completing senior school he went on to teacher training college. Having qualified as a teacher, he was posted throughout Queensland, his final appointment being principal of Aspley State High School where he served from 1976-1990. Ron's achievements at the school were many, not only in educating children but also ensuring facilities kept up with the pace of increasing student numbers. He lobbied tirelessly to secure funding for desperately needed extra classrooms and a new administration block which, as a result of his dogged determination, was subsequently opened in 1981.

But it was not just buildings. He was successful in petitioning the department so that larger schools in Queensland—Aspley had about 2,000 students in 1981—would be serviced by more than one deputy and would receive increased administration support. Ron was always highly respected by staff and students. His hard work and passion for the school had no bounds. His son Ken said—

In all honesty the principal's role was incredibly demanding. Just about every afternoon Dad used to come home from school, have dinner and then go back to the office for a few hours—unless it was Thursday night which was, and still is, Rotary night.

In fact, it was during his teaching career that Ron connected with Rotary. In his first appointment as the principal of the new Yeppoon High School, the story goes that he approached the local Rotary Club because the school lacked many facilities, including a useable oval. Rotary was a way to raise community support in fixing this problem. It was when he retired from teaching that he became more involved in Aspley Rotary and also in the Kedron Presbyterian Church where he served on the church council and was its presbytery representative for many years as well as a driving force in the church's youth and community projects. Through Rotary he was instrumental in the establishment of the Probus clubs of Carseldine, Bridgeman Downs and Albany Creek. Today these clubs provide a vibrant social network for retirees in our local area.

I would like to end with the recommendation made by Mr Joe Carter from Aspley Rotary who nominated Ron for the OAM—

The awarding of an Order of Australia medal to Ron would be recognition of his lifetime service to his community, both at a local and international level. He is a hands-on worker who prefers to roll up his sleeves and go to the coalface of the issue, even if it is in the jungle of the Solomon Islands. His desire to improve the welfare and lifestyle of those less fortunate is a beacon for others to follow and an inspiration to those who know him.

Congratulations, Ron. On behalf of the residents in Aspley, thank you for your outstanding contribution to our community.

### Public Expenditure, Advertising

**Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (5.44 pm): In light of all of the debate on advertising this week it has come to my attention that when I tabled the new guidelines I did not table the advice from Dr Solomon. For the sake of completeness and the benefit of the House, I table that advice now.

*Tabled paper:* Copy of advice on publicly funded advertising by the opposition [\[3345\]](#).

### Sexual Violence Awareness Month

**Ms NELSON-CARR** (Mundingburra—ALP) (5.45 pm): Last Friday I was privileged to take part in the launch of Sexual Violence Awareness Month at the Women's Centre in my electorate. The theme of 'I say who, I say when, sexual violence has to end' is peppered throughout the calendar of events for the entire month of October. Other days are dedicated to events like Drink Spiking Awareness Day, which as members know is a deliberate act just like sexual violence. The launch of the hospital wall, 'Your Story, Your Choice', is another event which is an interagency exhibition depicting a no-wrong-door practice involving the police, the hospital, Victim Assistance, Sexual Health and the Women's Centre. I am pleased to say that the Premier will launch the occasion during her Townsville visit next week and the final activity of this important month will culminate with the Reclaim the Night march and rally. Congratulations go to the coordinators of Sexual Violence Awareness Month because their work saves the lives of women and children who suffer extraordinary gender inequalities and heartache.

Five to 10 per cent of Australian children experience emotional abuse; 12 to 13 per cent witness domestic violence; and four to eight per cent of boys and seven to 12 per cent of girls will experience severe—that is, penetrative—child sexual abuse. A whole month dedicated to sexual violence is tragic and unacceptable to say the least, but awareness and education is the key.

Against this backdrop, I draw members' attention to a growing and very worrying trend sometimes called the disappearing age. Being female, older and single is to be a housing risk. The entrenched social and economic disadvantage of women, particularly post separation, and the increasing numbers of older women now entering the crisis accommodation system suggests that responding to homelessness amongst ageing women is going to be a major challenge for Australia. There are more than 110,000 people aged over 65 in Australia who rent in the private market, 80 per cent of whom rely on the age pension as their main source of income. The *Senior News* adds that there is an estimation that 30,000 single women over 45 are at risk of homelessness on Australia's eastern coast. Existing services do not cater for this largely unseen group who have mostly held jobs and raised families before falling into financial difficulty due to relationship breakdown, unemployment or high rents in the private rental market.

Women who are older and living alone will be poorer than men their age, less able to maintain home ownership and less able to compete in the private rental market for affordable accommodation. They couch surf, they share accommodation, they sleep in cars or sleep rough during the day because it is too dangerous to sleep at night when the rough sleepers counts take place. They will be at risk of homelessness largely as a result of the entrenched social and economic disadvantage that continues to separate the experience of men and women. We must have a look at this as a matter of urgency at a federal level to protect this very vulnerable and growing population of older women—older women who, I might add, are just over 45. This is something, both in the judicial system and in the social system, that we have to address.

### Queensland Health, Meningococcal

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (5.48 pm): I place on the record my appreciation to the Minister for Health for the discussions that we have had recently in relation to the Gladstone Hospital and for his concern about appropriate levels of service. My community is certainly looking for improvements in that area.

I want to raise a health matter but one that is more about process than just the Gladstone Hospital. Sadly last weekend a family in my electorate said goodbye to a young man in very tragic circumstances. He had meningococcal and was transferred to another hospital for treatment. The three men who worked with him at a local contracting firm worked in an enclosed space. One of the workers went to the hospital the next day and received medication; the other two went up to the hospital and

waited for about four hours. They obviously had the preliminary attention, but when they were not attended to they left. One of them called me and as a consequence of our conversations with them and with the hospital they returned to the hospital for treatment—I thought.

As it turned out, they were given a script and they had to go to a chemist to get the medication that was required. The supervisor a couple of days later also felt unwell. He went to the hospital and got a script and it had to be prescribed. He was told that if Queensland Health had directed that they be prescribed the drug it would have been prescribed free of charge. However, the conversation is not about the cost; it is about the process.

The hospital did ring me on the day that the two gentlemen contacted me and said that Queensland Health had been to the workplace three times after the young man was diagnosed with meningococcal and discussed the processes, the precautions that had to be taken in relation to meningococcal. I have been contacted today to say that that is not the case. The workplace health and safety officer was phoned by Queensland Health on a couple of occasions but no-one visited the workplace. Understandably, the other three gentlemen who worked with this young man and their supervisor are very concerned that there may be a breakdown or a lack of process in relation to responding to meningococcal and particularly in such a tragic circumstance.

What I am asking is for the minister to review the process of action taken once a meningococcal case has been confirmed in relation to the processes for those working with the person who is being treated and the processes for those who may be in contact with that person. Information that was provided to me was contradictory. I was told that the only ones at high risk were those with intimate or family contact. But the paperwork supplied by the hospital talked about coughing and sneezing—that is, droplet infection. It is a serious issue and one where I would ask for the processes to be reviewed.

### **Redcliffe Electorate, 'Walk a day in my shoes' Program**

**Ms van LITSEBURG** (Redcliffe—ALP) (5.51 pm): On Friday from 12 noon to 8 pm I walked in Kim's shoes as he went through his shift tending bars at Bunny's Family Restaurant, the gaming rooms and the Legends Lounge at the Redcliffe Dolphins Leagues Club, where the band played until after midnight. I began the day learning to pull beers for the first time, to use the cash register and memorising the layout of the bars so I could lay my hands on the right drinks quickly. Co-workers accepted me as a new colleague and went out of their way to ensure that I had the support I needed.

On discovering I was their local member, they were impressed that I would work beside them, cleaning the beer taps, washing the bar floor and collecting glasses from the tables. It was a great opportunity to talk with many workers about issues at work and how these impact their lives. It was clear that the Redcliffe Leagues Club is a happy workplace where workers feel nurtured and looked after. This is a culture that is encouraged from the top. Kim spoke to me about career paths and possible training alternatives for bar staff.

Constituents laughed at being served their Friday night drinks by their local state member and many of them had good advice for me. They were impressed that the Premier would take the time out of her busy schedule to walk in the shoes of ordinary Queenslanders with extraordinary lives, be it a hospital worker or a busy working mother with a child with a disability. The Premier cares about what happens in each person's life, listens to their needs and designs policy and legislation with real people in mind.

As the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer and every government MP goes out and walks a day in the lives of two or three people in the community, we are confronted by the reality of the lives of many Queenslanders. We are listening to their issues and those issues are going to the heart of the Bligh Labor government. We are combining this knowledge with our experience and skills as individual members and as a government so our policies and legislation can be more responsive and, in turn, improve the lives of many Queenslanders.

We have come through a tough time with the global financial crisis and it may not be over yet, but the Bligh government is working hard for Queenslanders. We do not have a magic wand, but we are using our finances responsibly and, with the greater understanding we have garnered in walking in the shoes of Queenslanders, we have a better insight into the small things that can improve lives in an important way.

The Bligh government stands for good, practical government for the long term. We are not afraid to make the difficult decisions, but we are committed to delivering the best lifestyle in the country for all Queenslanders.

### **Services, Maori Community**

**Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—LNP) (5.54 pm): Health issues facing the Maori community on the Gold Coast came under the spotlight at a hui for hauora at Nerang recently—this is a gathering for health. There is a high percentage of Maori living in the Nerang area, and it is growing in the Gaven electorate. The meeting reported that there was a significantly higher prevalence of lifestyle related chronic disease such as diabetes, renal failure, cardiovascular disease, COPD—that is, chronic obstructive pulmonary

disease—and some cancers within the Maori community. It highlighted that Maori are struggling to come to terms with their health problems. People are not turning up to scheduled appointments and programs because they do not feel culturally safe. The medical model is not encompassing of family and spiritual wellbeing. There is a denial of the ramification of an unhealthy lifestyle—smoking, drugs, drinking alcohol and bad diet are commonplace. Many families do not know how to access health care or whether they can afford it.

One of the models for understanding Maori health, Te Whare Tapa Wha, includes the four cornerstones of physical, spiritual, family and mental health and, should one of these dimensions be missing or changed, a person may become unbalanced and unwell. For many Maori, modern health services lack recognition of the spiritual dimension and, in a traditional approach, the inclusion of the family and mind are as important as the physical manifestations of illness. Underpinning this is the relevance of the earth, and in this instance Maori living on the Gold Coast find themselves reflecting on the absence of this traditional, geographical and spiritual belonging.

Other issues identified at the hui were the move to Australia where there was a loss of a familiar environment, breakdown of social support network, as well as reduced economic support network. Parenting and schooling can also present issues, including teachers and others not being able to pronounce Maori names which can lead to retaliation. They tend to form groups and they can often be trouble. Often if cultural jewellery is not allowed to be worn at schools it can be perceived as an intention to bury different cultural habits. As well, there has been an increase in internal fighting and friction between different tribes, challenged because of race, size and colour. Many Maori experience stigma and differing levels of racism, but they can equally do the same in retaliation.

Since the hui, many good things have come out in the community. It has brought a focus to the Maori community and validated this community as separate, yet connected, to the wider Pacific community—that is, islanders primarily. The Nerang Neighbourhood Centre has become a well-known point of contact for the Pacific Indigenous Nations Network including Indigenous, Maori and Pacific islanders. Health and community representatives returned to their organisations with a greater understanding and positive response which they shared with workers. Queensland Health staff said the benefit of being able to speak with Maori patients about their own experiences reduced barriers and gave them a greater sense of confidence to refer patients to a range of social support.

There will be ongoing work with the community nutritionist at Gold Coast Health Service on the Go for 2&5 initiative with the Maori community. Furthermore, there will be inclusion in future activities with the Multicultural Communities Council Gold Coast and workshops for health professionals to improve their knowledge. It is critical for their overall health outcomes that Maori children and adults integrate into the Australian community and not try to recreate their New Zealand lives in an Australian environment.

### **Whitsunday Electorate, 'Walk a day in my shoes' Program**

**Ms JARRATT** (Whitsunday—ALP) (5.57 pm): Like many of my Labor colleagues, including the member for Redcliffe, I have recently participated in the 'Walk a day in my shoes' initiative. After attending a carers support network forum in Proserpine during Disability Action Week, I knew that one of the activities that I wanted to undertake was to spend a day with a carer.

I was delighted therefore when Marjan Longcar, who is a supported accommodation carer with Cootharinga North Queensland, offered to host me for a day. On the day I spent with Marjan he was assisted by Jo, a lovely lady who provides care on a casual basis across Cootharinga's three centres in Mackay. Marjan and Jo were on that day carers for two adult clients with profound disabilities such that they had no verbal communication or mobility. The work included providing the high-level care necessary for all of those day-to-day activities like bathing, feeding and going on outings that we all do for ourselves effortlessly and without thought.

I was delighted to witness the close bond that existed between Marjan, Jo and their clients. It must be so important for these clients to have regular carers who truly care about them and their needs, especially as they sometimes have no families of their own. I have to confess that I was surprised at the amount of paperwork that was attended to during the day. Everything is recorded and the level of accountability is very high. During the day I heard something about the workers' frustration with parts of the system, but the overriding message was the great satisfaction derived from the job.

The week after my day with Cootharinga I donned my uniform and became a Tourism Whitsundays work experience girl. I was so pleased that TW manager Peter O'Reilly invited me to join his talented team for the day. With tourism being such an integral industry in my electorate, this was a perfect opportunity to get the inside info on how operators are faring in what I know are pretty challenging times.

The day started with a staff meeting and a chance to meet everyone in the TW team. It was apparent from the various work plan reports that this is one busy team who are totally focused on promoting the Whitsundays to the nation and the world. They have a very close relationship with local

operators, many of whom are members of the organisation. I had the great privilege to accompany TW's partnership manager, Kellie Ashdown, as she did the rounds of members and prospective members. This was a great chance to hear feedback from individual operators across a range of local businesses. Times certainly are tough but everyone seemed to be fairly optimistic about the future.

There were no shortage of ideas about how the government could contribute to this bright future, and prime among these was support for the Airlie Beach revitalisation project that would see the main street realigned, a fresh new landscape developed and new hard and soft infrastructure put in place that will improve aesthetics and functionality of this tourism hub. I thoroughly enjoyed my time taking part in the 'Walk a day in my shoes' initiative. It was a valuable tool for me as a local member.

### **Lockyer Electorate, Health Services**

**Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.00 pm): I rise to raise two issues that this dysfunctional health minister has let slip. Unfortunately, the other day I needed to get Mark McArdle, our shadow health minister, to a meeting at the Lowood CWA hall where there were 250 people to support one of the local doctors, Dr Rajendra Moodley, who works at the Lowood Medical Centre for Dr Paul Crowley, who has been there for over 30 years. Dr Moodley has practised there for six years but because of bureaucratic processes he was asked to stop practising. The courts overthrew that and he is back practising. At the meeting, two motions were moved by Neil Zabel. The first stated—

This public meeting of Lowood, Coominya, Fernvale and surrounding districts calls on the State and Federal Government to ensure Health Professionals are given the appropriate support so they can continue to service Queensland.

The second stated—

We support Dr. Moodley and call on the State and Federal Government to assist him to continue to practice medicine in Lowood, Queensland and Australia.

Those motions were seconded by Fred Banff and carried unanimously. These Labor bureaucrats have created absolute chaos in the region.

The second issue I want to raise is the fact that the state government is talking about changing the health districts around my Lockyer electorate. Gatton residents have always travelled to Toowoomba for their health services, and it is only a 15-minute run up the road. The government is talking about moving it into the Ipswich health district. This would include areas right up to Withcott. People from Withcott, which is five minutes from Toowoomba, are going to have to travel to Ipswich, which is 50 kilometres from Withcott. This is stupidity in the highest form.

How is this going to benefit patients? It is not going to benefit patients. How is this going to be beneficial to Queensland Health staff? They will end up in arguments with patients so it will not be beneficial to Queensland Health staff. How is this going to be beneficial to the state government? All this will do is cost more money to provide similar sorts of services. There has been no consultation with the Lockyer community. The consultation process from the health minister's office is a debacle. This is the sort of thing that cannot go on. I call on the minister to make sure this does not happen. Apparently, Mick Reid is going to go to Toowoomba tomorrow to talk to people in the health services up there. This is absolute chaos. I realise that for some emergency issues you will still be able to go to the same place, but for all the outpatient services and out-of-hospital services you will have to drive 50 kilometres. It is like driving from Southport to the Royal Brisbane to go to the hospital every day. How stupid would that be!

This could only come from the health minister's office. Where else could this sort of stupidity come from? Nowhere else but a mismanaged Labor health minister's office. It is hypocrisy in the highest form. There is no common sense, no reliability, no benefit of services to the patient. It is stupidity in the highest form.

### **Mitchelton Neighbourhood Plan**

**Mr WATT** (Everton—ALP) (6.03 pm): Like many areas of South-East Queensland, the suburb of Mitchelton, where I live, is experiencing the pressures of population growth. Under the auspices of the state government's South East Queensland Regional Plan, the Brisbane City Council is currently preparing the Mitchelton Neighbourhood Plan. This has been a controversial process, with strong views being expressed about the future of our suburb, what building heights are appropriate and the capacity of existing infrastructure to service a growing population.

In the last couple of weeks, the council submitted a draft of the plan to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning so that state government interests can be reviewed prior to the plan being put out to public consultation. There is some uncertainty in the local community about the role of each level of government in this process. Earlier this year, I asked the minister to clarify the state government's role and he confirmed that it is not the state government's role to determine building heights or density projections in particular areas. However, the state government now has the opportunity to provide feedback to council on any impact the plan might have on state government interests, including main roads, schools and rail services.

Unfortunately, due to parliament sitting last night, I was unable to attend a public meeting held by the Mitchelton Action Group about the plan. However, last week I met with representatives of MAG and the Blackwood Street Chamber of Commerce. They raised a number of concerns regarding the potential impact of council's plan on state government interests. I have this week written to the minister to ask that these concerns be addressed in the state interest review process. I had no difficulty in doing so as all along through this process my main concern with the plan has been to make sure that infrastructure locally will cope with a growing population. Clearly, the provision of infrastructure in this area is a responsibility of both state and local governments, and I am pleased that the Brisbane city councillor in the area has also accepted partial responsibility for this issue.

The specific issues I have raised with the minister are as follows. The first issue is rail services on the Ferny Grove line. While services were increased following the duplication of the Mitchelton-Keperra rail line, my constituents are concerned that future population increases in Mitchelton may result in the current service provision being inadequate. The second issue is car-parking facilities at the Mitchelton train station. Currently, the number of spaces in the station car park does not meet demand, meaning many cars park in local streets. The government has committed to expand the car park at Ferny Grove station and this will cater to some people who currently park at Mitchelton. However, my constituents argue that more car parking is needed.

The third issue I have raised is rail boom gates on local streets, such as Blackwood Street and Osborne Road. My constituents are concerned that, should train services increase to cater to an increased population, rail boom gates on local streets will need to be closed more frequently and this would disrupt traffic attempting to use those streets. The fourth and final issue I raised is Samford Road capacity. Samford Road is the only state government controlled road in the Mitchelton area. My constituents are concerned that an increased population in Mitchelton will make Samford Road congested for large periods of the day.

There is no doubt that these issues need to be addressed as the local population grows. I do accept my responsibility as the state member to continue to lobby state ministers to provide the infrastructure that our suburb needs. I look forward to working in partnership with the Brisbane City Council to make sure it comes to the party as well.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6.05 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Bates, Bleijie, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Crandon, Cripps, Croft, Cunningham, Darling, Davis, Dempsey, Dick, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Finn, Flegg, Foley, Fraser, Gibson, Grace, Hinchliffe, Hobbs, Hoolihan, Hopper, Horan, Jarratt, Johnson, Johnstone, Jones, Keech, Kiernan, Kilburn, Knuth, Langbroek, Lawlor, Lucas, McArdle, McLindon, Male, Malone, Menkens, Messenger, Mickel, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nicholls, Nolan, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pratt, Reeves, Rickuss, Roberts, Robertson, Robinson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Seeney, Shine, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Stevens, Stone, Struthers, Stuckey, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson