



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2011



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

For the sitting week, Mr Speaker acknowledged the traditional owners of the land upon which this parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

ASSENT TO BILLS



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from Her Excellency the Governor letters in respect of assent to certain bills, the contents of which will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letters for the information of members.

The Honourable R.J. Mickel, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bill, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, was assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 8 September 2011

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 for particular purposes"

This Bill is hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

8 September 2011

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 8 September 2011, from Her Excellency the Governor advising of assent to a certain bill [\[5472\]](#).

The Honourable R.J. Mickel, MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 13 September 2011

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 for a particular purpose"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Electricity Act 1994 and the Electricity Regulation 2006"

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

13 September 2011

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 13 September 2011, from Her Excellency the Governor advising of assent to certain bills [\[5473\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. I have become aware that circulating in the electorate of Broadwater and on the Gold Coast generally, under the authorisation of Bob Brown of 6 Kavieng Crescent, Runaway Bay, is a copy of a newspaper article, which I table, relating to the tabling in this House when the parliament last met of documents by the Minister for Main Roads.

Tabled paper: Articles from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 9 September 2011, titled 'Canal Tax, Labor Accuses LNP of Secret Waterfront Cash-Grab Plan' and 'Dredging costs tax LNP' [\[5474\]](#).

Mr Speaker, I have already written to you asking you to refer that matter to the Ethics Committee. I table for the benefit of members a copy of the letter that I wrote to you.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 26 September 2011, from Mr Jeff Seeney MP to the Speaker regarding statements made by Hon. Craig Wallace MP [5475].

Mr Speaker, I also acknowledge that you have written to me responding to that and I table a copy of your letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 10 October 2011, from the Speaker to Mr Jeff Seeney MP acknowledging receipt of Mr Seeney's letter [5476].

As I made clear in that letter, this document never has been and never was LNP policy. It has never had anything to do with the LNP. I table for the benefit of the House a copy of the original document, which was a discussion paper for the then Minister for Transport, Paul Lucas, on 25 July 2007.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 25 July 2011, titled 'Discussion paper for Minister of Transport Hon. Paul Lucas' [5477].

Mr SPEAKER: Order! You are starting to get into a debate.

Mr SEENEY: And I table for the benefit of the House a copy of the document tabled by the minister which the minister doctored.

Tabled paper: Document, tabled on 8 September 2011, by Hon. Craig Wallace MP, titled 'Dot points for the dredging of the Gold Coast Broadwater & "Main Channel" to Moreton Bay Brisbane' [5478].

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable gentleman is starting to debate the issue. I would ask you to round off.

Mr SEENEY: Mr Speaker, it is outrageous that the Labor Party continue to use this issue, which was clearly a misleading of this parliament, for political purposes, and I will write to you again, adding that material and urging you to refer this to the Ethics Committee in the most expeditious manner.

Mr WALLACE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The only people claiming that this is an LNP document are the LNP themselves. I will vigorously defend that charge.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The matter will be determined and I will let the House know in due course. I ask the honourable the Leader of the Opposition to place that in writing to me and I will assess it accordingly. In the course of events I will also write to the honourable the minister and seek his views on the matter.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Appointment of Acting Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Commissioner



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, pursuant to section 307(3) of the Crime and Misconduct Act 2001 I advise that on 12 September 2011 I approved the appointment of the principal legal officer in the office of the parliamentary commissioner, Mr Mitchell Kunde, as the acting parliamentary commissioner, to act as the commissioner during the period 16 to 28 September 2011 while the commissioner was absent from the state. This acting appointment has the bipartisan support of the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee. I table the relevant notice of the acting appointment as required under the act.

Tabled paper: Notice of appointment of Acting Parliamentary Commissioner dated 12 September 2011 [5479].

REPORTS

Auditor-General



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General this morning a report titled *Report to parliament No. 9 for 2011: Acquisition and public access to the Museum, Art Gallery and Library collections*. I table the report for the information of members.


Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 9 for 2011: Acquisition and public access to the Museum, Art Gallery and Library collections: Performance Management Systems audit [5480].

I have also received from the Auditor-General for tabling *Auditor-General of Queensland: Auditing standards October 2011*. I table the standards as they are a cracking read.


Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Auditing Standards October 2011 [5481].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Order! 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 Tuesday, 25 October at 1 pm.

APPOINTMENTS

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.34 am): I lay upon the table of the House the *Queensland Government Gazette Extraordinary* of 16 September 2011, which outlines recent changes to ministerial appointments including the appointment of the Hon. Andrew Fraser to the position of Deputy Premier of Queensland.

Tabled paper: Extraordinary Queensland Government Gazette of 16 September 2011 [\[5482\]](#).

Mr SPEAKER: I congratulate the honourable gentleman from Mount Coot-tha on his elevation. It has been my practice to do so on the other side of the House. I also want to thank the honourable member for Lytton for his courtesy and consideration at all times in the position that he formerly held. I wish both gentlemen all the best in the future.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petitions, lodged by the honourable members indicated—

Daisy Hill, Noise and Air Pollution

Ms Stone, from 71 petitioners, requesting the House to produce with community consideration a plan to reduce noise and air pollution for residents of Daisy Hill near Winnetts Road and to implement this plan as part of the construction of the Pacific Motorway Upgrade Project [\[5483\]](#).

Cooroy-Curra, Speed Limit

Mr Gibson, from 401 petitioners, requesting the House to extend the 90 km per hour speed zone on the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Atkinson Road, Curra to provide a safe access to and egress from the highway [\[5484\]](#).

Loganlea-Jimboomba Substations, Powerlines

Mr Mickel, from 371 petitioners, requesting the House to direct Energex to re-evaluate options for the proposed high voltage powerline from Loganlea to Jimboomba to achieve lower community and environmental impacts by co-locating this high voltage powerline on roads [\[5485\]](#).

Carrara, Traffic Congestion

Mr Stevens, from 396 petitioners, requesting the House to improve the congestion of Nerang-Broadbeach Road and the roundabout at Gooding Drive, Carrara and to cease any proposal or related works of diverting traffic to local residential streets [\[5486\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petitions, sponsored by the honourable members indicated—

Caboolture South Area, Bus Service

Mr Ryan, from 11 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately review the decision to change the 653 and 654 Caboolture Bus Lines service routes with a view to reinstating these bus services in the Norfolk Esplanade, Caboolture South area [\[5487\]](#).

Beerburrum-Nambour, Rail Corridor

Mr Powell, from 180 petitioners, requesting the House to revise the timetable currently set for the 2026-2031 rail duplication works from Beerburrum to Nambour and to resume the project as a matter of high priority [\[5488\]](#).

Samford Road-Wardell Street, Intersection Upgrade

Dr Robinson, from 251 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently terminate progression of the concept plan for the Wardell Street/Samford Road Enoggera intersection upgrade concept plan and review policies and procedures relating to resumptions and works [\[5489\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

The Clerk to inform the House that the following papers, received during the recess, were tabled on the dates indicated—

9 September 2011—

[5286](#) Public Accounts and Public Works Committee: Report No. 10—Enhancing Accountability through Annual Reporting, June 2011: Government Response

- [5287](#) Public Accounts and Public Works Committee: Report No. 11—Management of Rural Fire Services in Queensland, June 2011: Government Response
- [5288](#) Darling Downs-Moreton Rabbit Board: Annual Report 2010-11
- [5289](#) Cape Hillsborough, Pioneer Peaks, Mount Ossa, Mount Martin and Reliance Creek National Parks and adjoining State Waters—Management Plan 2011
- [5290](#) Fitzroy Island National Park and Marine Management Area—Management Plan 2011
- 13 September 2011—
- [5291](#) Letter, dated 12 September 2011, from the Premier (Ms Bligh) to the Clerk of the Parliament enclosing a copy of correspondence from the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties regarding proposed international treaty actions tabled in both Houses of the Federal Parliament on 16 August 2011, and the Treaties and National Interest Analyses for the proposed treaty actions listed in the letter, and advising as to the online availability of the documents
- 14 September 2011—
- [5292](#) Letter, dated 9 September 2011, from the Minister for Health (Mr Wilson) to the Clerk of the Parliament (Mr Laurie) in response to the Scrutiny of Legislation Secretariat report on the Health and Hospitals Network Bill 2011
- [5293](#) Government response to the Crime and Misconduct Commission report titled 'Setting the Standard—A review of current processes for the management of police discipline and misconduct matters', dated December 2010
- 16 September 2011—
- [5294](#) Queensland Treasury Corporation—Annual Report 2010-11
- 19 September 2011—
- [5295](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Mr Lucas) to a paper petition (1752-11) presented by Mr Dempsey, from 84 petitioners, requesting the House to return vital funding to local councils so they can pass the savings on to ratepayers
- [5296](#) Response from the Deputy Premier and Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Mr Lucas) to a paper petition (1748-11) presented by Mr Powell, from 204 petitioners, requesting a pedestrian footpath adjacent to Flaxton Drive, between Glen Eden Court and Nimbus Drive, Flaxton
- [5297](#) Queensland Treasury—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5298](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Mr Wallace) to a paper petition (1751-11) presented by Mr Knuth, from 4,085 petitioners, requesting an upgrade of the section of the Atherton Tablelands road network from the Lake Eacham Roadhouse to Yungaburra through to Atherton
- [5299](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Mr Wallace) to a paper petition (1755-11) presented by Ms Croft and an ePetition (1717-11) sponsored by Ms Croft, from 192 and 62 petitioners respectively, regarding the school zone road markings and signage for the Coombabah State School
- [5300](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Mr Wallace) to a paper petition (1763-11) presented by Mr Knuth, from 261 petitioners, requesting that the Baal Gammon Copper Mine find an alternative route away from the main street of Herberton for trucks transporting copper
- 20 September 2011—
- [5301](#) Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee: Report No. 2—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5302](#) Response from the Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining (Mr Hinchliffe) to a paper petition (1749-11) presented by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 30 petitioners, requesting quarantining of the Darling Downs from all forms of mining in perpetuity to protect communities, water resources, quality agricultural and horticultural lands and the flora and fauna of this environment
- [5303](#) Electricity (Retail Billing Guaranteed Service Level Scheme) Code (Second Edition: made 18 August 2011, effective 2 September 2011) made under the Electricity Act 1994
- [5304](#) Electricity Industry Code (Tenth Edition: made 15 August 2011, effective 26 August 2011) made under the Electricity Act 1994
- [5305](#) Gas Industry Code (Fourth Edition: made 15 August 2011, effective 26 August 2011) made under the Gas Supply Act 2003
- 22 September 2011—
- [5306](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 7 for 2011—National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Reconstruction and Recovery—Performance Management Systems audit
- [5307](#) Response from the Acting Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Mr Hinchliffe) to a paper petition (1758-11) presented by Mr Malone, and an ePetition (1704-11) sponsored by Mr Malone, from 277 and 266 petitioners respectively, regarding the possibility of coal stockyards being placed at Louisa Creek
- [5308](#) Response from the Acting Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Ms Palaszczuk) to a paper petition (1753-11) presented by Mr Dempsey, from 70 petitioners, requesting the House to reinstate truth in sentencing and ensure that penalties reflect community expectations
- [5309](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority: Monthly Report, August 2011
- [5310](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs (Ms Palaszczuk) to a paper petition (1747-11) presented by Mr Emerson, from 68 petitioners, regarding bus routes 651, 653 and 654 removed from Norfolk Esplanade, Morayfield

23 September 2011—

- [5311](#) Response from the Minister for Finance, Natural Resources and The Arts (Ms Nolan) to an ePetition (1697-11) sponsored by Mr Kilburn, from 44 petitioners, requesting that Stanbrooke Estate be included in the suburb of Gumdale rather than Tingalpa
- [5312](#) Residential Tenancies Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5313](#) Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee: Report No. 2—Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011
- [5314](#) QSuper Board of Trustees—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5315](#) Queensland Future Growth Corporation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5316](#) Response from the Acting Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Ms Palaszczuk) to an ePetition (1628-11) sponsored by Mr Rickuss, from 1,335 petitioners, requesting amendments to the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 regarding input into the decision making processes and the right to natural justice
- [5317](#) Response from the Minister for Disability Services, Mental Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Mr Pitt) to a paper petition (1754-11) presented by Mr Dempsey, from 867 petitioners, requesting that Autism Spectrum Disorder children of all ages and their families receive the funding and programs needed to access support and services
- [5318](#) National Trust of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11

26 September 2011—

- [5319](#) Crime and Misconduct Commission—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5320](#) Queensland Ombudsman—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5321](#) Legal Practitioners Admissions Board—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5322](#) Board of Examiners—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5323](#) Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5324](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5325](#) Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health: Queensland Mines Inspectorate—Annual Performance Report 2010-11
- [5326](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Wilson) to a paper petition (1757-11) presented by Mrs Cunningham, from 631 petitioners, requesting that any review of the Health Council structure retains Health Community Councils or that strong community representation is included in any restructured Queensland Health system

27 September 2011—

- [5327](#) Parklands Gold Coast Trust—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5328](#) Letter, dated 26 September 2011, from the Premier (Ms Bligh) to the Clerk of the Parliament enclosing a copy of correspondence from the Commonwealth Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Treaties regarding proposed international treaty actions tabled in both Houses of the Federal Parliament on 23 August 2011, and the Treaties and National Interest Analyses for the proposed treaty actions listed in the letter, and advising as to the online availability of the documents
- [5329](#) Scrutiny of Legislation Committee: Report No. 46, Review of Part 8 of the Statutory Instruments Act—Forms authorised by legislation, June 2011: Government Response

28 September 2011—

- [5330](#) Safe Food Production Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5331](#) QRAA—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5332](#) Stadiums Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5333](#) Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5334](#) Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5335](#) Department of Justice and Attorney-General—Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2011
- [5336](#) Anzac Day Trust—Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2011
- [5337](#) Department of Environment and Resource Management—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5338](#) Valuers Registration Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5339](#) Surveyors Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5340](#) QLeave: Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5341](#) Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5342](#) Public Service Commission—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5343](#) Library Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5344](#) Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5345](#) Queensland Museum—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5346](#) Queensland Performing Arts Centre—Annual Report 2010-11

- [5347](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs (Ms Palaszczuk) to an ePetition (1700-11) sponsored by Mr Kilburn, from 266 petitioners, requesting the House to review current bus routes to provide improved connections to the central business district and Carindale Shopping Centre from the Gumdale/Wakerley area
- [5348](#) Letter, dated 22 September, from the Director-General, Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation to the Industry, Education, Training and Industrial Relations Committee providing further information in relation to a question at the estimates hearing on 15 July 2011 from Mr Nicholls regarding the Trade and Investment Queensland LA Office
- [5349](#) Motor Accident Insurance Commission—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5350](#) Queensland Competition Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5351](#) QIC—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5352](#) QIC—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5353](#) Queensland Rail—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5354](#) Queensland Rail—Financial Report 2010-11
- [5355](#) Queensland Rail Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5356](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation Ltd—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5357](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation Ltd—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5358](#) Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Ltd (Ports North)—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5359](#) Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Ltd (Ports North)—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5360](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5361](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5362](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5363](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5364](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Annual Report 2010-11, Volume 1 of 2
- [5365](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Annual Report 2010-11, Volume 2 of 2
- [5366](#) TransLink Transit Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- 29 September 2011—
- [5367](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 8 for 2011—Follow up of four audits completed in 2008 and 2009—Performance Management Systems audit
- [5368](#) Queensland Law Society—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5369](#) The Public Trustee—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5370](#) Legal Aid Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5371](#) Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5372](#) Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland—Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2011
- [5373](#) Department of Communities—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5374](#) Prostitution Licensing Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5375](#) Department of Premier and Cabinet—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5376](#) Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5377](#) Queensland Audit Office—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5378](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- 30 September 2011—
- [5379](#) Department of Community Safety—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5380](#) Department of Community Safety—Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2011
- [5381](#) Department of Local Government and Planning—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5382](#) Urban Land Development Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5383](#) Queensland Building Services Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5384](#) Building and Construction Industry Payments Agency—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5385](#) Department of Public Works—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5386](#) Board of Professional Engineers—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5387](#) Board of Architects of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5388](#) Queensland State Archives—Annual Report 2010-11

5389	Australian Agricultural College Corporation—Annual Report 2010-11
5390	Chicken Meat Industry Committee—Annual Report 2010-11
5391	Department of Education and Training—Annual Report 2010-11
5392	Non-State Schools Accreditation Board—Annual Report 2010-11
5393	Queensland Studies Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
5394	Office of the Governor—Annual Report 2010-11
5395	Office of the Information Commissioner—Annual Report 2010-11
5396	Q-Comp: Workers' Compensation Regulatory Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
5397	Q-Comp: Workers' Compensation Regulatory Authority—Statistics Report 2010-11
5398	WorkCover Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5399	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation—Annual Report 2010-11
5400	Scrutiny of Legislation Committee: Report No. 47, Our principles: Review of the meaning of 'Fundamental Legislative Principles', June 2011—Government Response
5401	Queensland Parliamentary Service—Annual Report 2010-11
5402	Queensland Integrity Commissioner—Annual Report 2010-11
5403	Tourism Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5404	Gladstone Economic and Industry Development Board—Annual Report 2010-11
5405	Southbank Institute of Technology—Annual Report 2010-11
5406	Skills Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5407	Training Ombudsman—Annual Report 2010-11
5408	Gold Coast Institute of TAFE—Annual Report 2010-11
5409	South Bank Corporation—Annual Report 2010-11
5410	Queensland Health—Annual Report 2010-11
5411	Bundaberg Health Services Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
5412	Training and Employment Recognition Council—Annual Report 2010-11
5413	Queensland Institute of Medical Research—Annual Report 2010-11
5414	Occupational Therapists Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5415	Medical Radiation Technologists Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5416	Ipswich Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
5417	Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5418	CS Energy—Annual Report 2010-11
5419	CS Energy—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
5420	Energex Limited—Annual Report 2010-11
5421	Energex Limited—Financial Report 2010-11
5422	Energex Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
5423	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Annual Stakeholder Report 2010-11
5424	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2011
5425	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
5426	Powerlink Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5427	Powerlink Queensland—Financial Report 2010-11
5428	Powerlink Queensland—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
5429	Stanwell Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2010-11
5430	Stanwell Corporation Limited—Amended Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
5431	Tarong Energy Corporation Limited—Annual Report 2010-11
5432	Tarong Energy Corporation Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
5433	Dental Technicians Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
5434	Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
5435	Health Quality and Complaints Commission—Annual Report 2010-11

- [5436](#) Office of Health Practitioner Registration Boards—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5437](#) PA Research Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5438](#) Speech Pathologists Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5439](#) Townsville Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5440](#) Toowoomba Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5441](#) Sunshine Coast Health Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5442](#) Royal Children's Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5443](#) Royal Children's Hospital Foundation—Financial Statements 2010-11
- [5444](#) Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5445](#) Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Foundation—Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2011
- [5446](#) Gladstone Area Water Board—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5447](#) Mount Isa Water Board—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5448](#) Allconnex Water—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5449](#) Seqwater: Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5450](#) LinkWater: Queensland Bulk Water Transport Authority—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5451](#) SEQ Water Grid Manager—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5452](#) SunWater—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5453](#) SunWater—Statement of Corporate Intent 2010-11
- [5454](#) Queensland Water Commission—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5455](#) Queensland Urban Utilities—Annual Report 2010-11
- [5456](#) The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation—Annual Report 2011
- [5457](#) The Prince Charles Hospital Foundation—Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2011

3 October 2011—

- [5458](#) Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee: Report No. 3—Examination of Bills: Property Agents Bill 2010, Motor Dealers and Chattel Auctioneers Bill 2010, Commercial Agents Bill 2010, Agents Financial Administration Bill 2010
- [5459](#) Response from the Minister for Energy and Water Utilities (Mr Robertson) to a paper petition (1764-11) presented by Mr McLindon, from 481 petitioners, requesting that Energex not proceed with an overhead high-voltage powerline from Loganlea to Jimboomba substations along the Logan River precinct and Camp Cable Road
- [5460](#) Queensland Government—Consolidated Fund Financial Report 2010-11
- [5461](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs (Ms Palaszczyk) to an ePetition (1629-11) sponsored by Ms Bates, from 52 petitioners, requesting a trial of a 'kiss and ride' public transport facility at Firth Park, Clover Hill Estate

4 October 2011—

- [5462](#) Legal Affairs, Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services Committee: Report No. 4—Examination of Business Names (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2011

5 October 2011—

- [5463](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority—Annual Report 2010-11: Erratum

6 October 2011—

- [5464](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Mr Wallace), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Fisheries (Gulf of Carpentaria Inshore Fin Fish) Management Plan 1999
- [5465](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies (Mr Mulherin), pursuant to section 56A of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Agricultural Standards Regulation 1997, Apiaries Regulation 1998, Diseases in Timber Regulation 1997, Exotic Diseases in Animals Regulation 1998, Stock Regulation 1988, Agricultural Chemicals Distribution Control Regulation 1998, Brands Regulation 1998 and Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Regulation 1999
- [5466](#) Response from the Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Mr Lucas) to an ePetition (1671-11) sponsored by Mr Emerson, from 268 petitioners, requesting that the Alan Fletcher Research Station in Sherwood be preserved as green space and protected for community use and parkland
- [5467](#) Response from the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Mr Wallace) to a paper petition (1762-11) presented by Ms Darling, from 209 petitioners, requesting the House to support Option B of the Department of Transport and Main Roads plan for the upgrade to the Deagon Deviation

7 October 2011—

- [5468](#) Response from the Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Mr Lucas) to two ePetitions (1694-11) and (1759-11) sponsored by Ms Grace, from 4,172 and 490 petitioners respectively, requesting legislation eliminating 'non-violent homosexual advance' from the ambit of evidence considered in establishing if the partial defence of provocation is justified in murder cases
- [5469](#) Queensland Institute of Medical Research Trust—Annual Report 2010-11 (final report)

[5470](#) Queensland Institute of Medical Research Trust—Annual Report 2010-11 (final report)—Notice from the Minister for Health (Mr Wilson)

[5471](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Wilson) to a paper petition (1765-11) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 21 petitioners, requesting the House to implement the Social Development Committee's recommendation to establish an Alcohol and Drug Advisory Committee

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007—

[5490](#) Urban Land Development Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 167

[5491](#) Urban Land Development Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 167, Explanatory Notes

Drugs Misuse Act 1986—

[5492](#) Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 168

[5493](#) Drugs Misuse Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 168, Explanatory Notes

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, Education (Overseas Students) Act 1996, Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005, Education (Queensland Studies Authority) Act 2002, Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2008—

[5494](#) Education Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 169

[5495](#) Education Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 169, Explanatory Notes

Industrial Relations Act 1999—

[5496](#) Industrial Relations Regulation 2011, No. 170

[5497](#) Industrial Relations Regulation 2011, No. 170, Explanatory Notes

Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000—

[5498](#) Vocational Education, Training and Employment Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 171

[5499](#) Vocational Education, Training and Employment Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 171, Explanatory Notes

Water and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2010—

[5500](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 172

[5501](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 172, Explanatory Notes

Aboriginal Land and Torres Strait Islander Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2011—

[5502](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 173

[5503](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 173, Explanatory Notes

Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991—

[5504](#) Torres Strait Islander Land Regulation 2011, No. 174

[5505](#) Torres Strait Islander Land Regulation 2011, No. 174, Explanatory Notes

Aboriginal Land Act 1991—

[5506](#) Aboriginal Land Regulation 2011, No. 175

[5507](#) Aboriginal Land Regulation 2011, No. 175, Explanatory Notes

Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2011—

[5508](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 176

[5509](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 176, Explanatory Notes

Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[5510](#) Forestry and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 177

[5511](#) Forestry and Another Regulation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 177, Explanatory Notes

Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[5512](#) Forestry and Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 178

[5513](#) Forestry and Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 178, Explanatory Notes

Local Government Act 2009—

[5514](#) Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 179

[5515](#) Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 179, Explanatory Notes

Pest Management Act 2001—

[5516](#) Pest Management Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 180

[5517](#) Pest Management Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 180, Explanatory Notes
Vegetation Management Act 1999—

[5518](#) Vegetation Management Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 181

[5519](#) Vegetation Management Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 181, Explanatory Notes
Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011—

[5520](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 182

[5521](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 182, Explanatory Notes
Plant Protection Act 1989—

[5522](#) Plant Protection (Approved Sugarcane Varieties) Amendment Declaration (No. 1) 2011, No. 183

[5523](#) Plant Protection (Approved Sugarcane Varieties) Amendment Declaration (No. 1) 2011, No. 183, Explanatory Notes
Fisheries Act 1994—

[5524](#) Fisheries (Gladstone Harbour and Surrounding Waters) Emergency Disease and Quarantine Declaration 2011, No. 184

[5525](#) Fisheries (Gladstone Harbour and Surrounding Waters) Emergency Disease and Quarantine Declaration 2011, No. 184, Explanatory Notes

Casino Control Act 1982—

[5526](#) Casino Control Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 185

[5527](#) Casino Control Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 185, Explanatory Notes

Local Government Act 2009—

[5528](#) Local Government (Operations) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 186

[5529](#) Local Government (Operations) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 186, Explanatory Notes

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994—

[5530](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 187

[5531](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 187, Explanatory Notes

Professional Standards Act 2004—

[5532](#) Professional Standards (Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Scheme) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 2011, No. 188

[5533](#) Professional Standards (Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Scheme) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 2011, No. 188, Explanatory Notes

[5534](#) Document titled 'Instrument Amending the Australian Property Institute Valuers Limited Scheme' (Refer Subordinate Legislation No. 188)

Professional Standards Act 2004—

[5535](#) Professional Standards (ACS Limited Liability (NSW) Scheme) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 2011, No. 189

[5536](#) Professional Standards (ACS Limited Liability (NSW) Scheme) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 2011, No. 189, Explanatory Notes

[5537](#) Document titled 'Instrument Amending the ACS Limited Liability (NSW) Scheme' (Refer Subordinate Legislation 189)

Aboriginal Land Act 1991, Auditor-General Act 2009, Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, Casino Control Act 1982, Financial Accountability Act 2009, Legal Profession Act 2007, Security Providers Act 1993, Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991—

[5538](#) Financial Accountability and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 190

[5539](#) Financial Accountability and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2011, No. 190, Explanatory Notes

Local Government Act 2009—

[5540](#) Local Government (Operations) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2011, No. 191

[5541](#) Local Government (Operations) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2011, No. 191, Explanatory Notes

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994—

[5542](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 2011, No. 192

[5543](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment Amendment Regulation (No. 5) 2011, No. 192, Explanatory Notes

Vegetation Management Act 1999—

[5544](#) Vegetation Management Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 193

[5545](#) Vegetation Management Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 193, Explanatory Notes

Environmental Protection Act 1994—

[5546](#) Environmental Protection (Water) Amendment Policy (No. 1) 2011, No. 194

[5547](#) Environmental Protection (Water) Amendment Policy (No. 1) 2011, No. 194, Explanatory Notes

Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[5548](#) Forestry and Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 195

[5549](#) Forestry and Nature Conservation Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2011, No. 195, Explanatory Notes
Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[5550](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 196

[5551](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2011, No. 196, Explanatory Notes
Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007—

[5552](#) Urban Land Development Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2011, No. 197

[5553](#) Urban Land Development Authority Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2011, No. 197, Explanatory Notes

Fisheries Act 1994—

[5554](#) Fisheries (Gladstone Harbour and Surrounding Waters) Emergency Disease and Quarantine Repeal Declaration 2011, No. 198

[5555](#) Fisheries (Gladstone Harbour and Surrounding Waters) Emergency Disease and Quarantine Repeal Declaration 2011, No. 198, Explanatory Notes

MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

The Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Mr Lucas)—

[5556](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission: Queensland Government response dated October, 2011 to report titled 'A Review of Queensland's Guardianship Laws'

Minister for Health (Mr Wilson)—

[5557](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Wilson) to a paper petition (1768-11) sponsored by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 21 petitioners, requesting funding for Queensland alcohol and drug services to provide specialist staff to develop and maintain treatment and referral linkages with key health and social services

Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services (Mr Roberts)—

[5558](#) Eleventh Annual Report of the Controlled Operations Committee delivered pursuant to the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000—1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011, together with transmittal letter, undated, from the Independent Member and Chairperson, Controlled Operations Committee to the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services

[5559](#) Queensland Police Service—Surveillance Device Warrants: Annual Report 2010-11

Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs (Ms Palaszczuk)—

[5560](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs (Ms Palaszczuk) to a paper petition (1767-11) presented by Mr Ryan, from 101 petitioners, requesting an immediate review of the decision to change the Caboolture Bus Lines service routes 653 and 654 with a view to reinstating these bus services in the Norfolk Esplanade Caboolture South area

MEMBERS' PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Algeester (Ms Struthers)—

[5561](#) Non-conforming petition regarding public transport delays, cancellations and over-crowding of bus services from the Greenbank RSL Park 'n' Ride to Brisbane City

Member for Noosa (Mr Elmes)—

[5562](#) Overseas travel report—Report on an overseas visit by the Member for Noosa (Mr Elmes) and the Member for Springwood (Ms Stone) to London from 21 to 28 July 2011—Report on attendance by Ms Stone (Delegate) and Mr Elmes (Observer) at the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference: Reinforcing Democracy, London, 21 to 28 July 2011

MINISTERIAL PAPER

Premier's Disaster Appeal, Report



Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.38 am): Today I table the Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal distribution committee report.

Tabled paper: Premier's Disaster Relief Appeal Distribution Committee Report October 2011 [\[5563\]](#).


The disaster relief appeal became one of the largest in Australia's history, coming second only to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund set up after the devastating bushfires of 2009. Due to the extraordinary generosity of donors locally, nationally and abroad, the appeal balance here in Queensland has reached \$277.2 million. The distribution of these funds has seen more than \$1.24 million being paid on average each and every day to in excess of 40,000 individuals and households.

I take the opportunity to thank the thousands of people who donated funds to this appeal for their generosity. It came when we most needed the help of our fellow Australians and we are deeply grateful for it. I also want to recognise the hard work of the hundreds of dedicated people who worked to deliver this relief for tens of thousands of people. It was a mighty effort, and many of them worked endless weekends to make sure the funds went out quickly.

I also want to pay tribute to the distribution committee, including the chair, the Hon. Dr David Hamill AM, and the honourable members for Rockhampton and Gregory, Messrs Robert Schwarten and Vaughan Johnson. Members of the committee had to grapple with complex questions of policy and equity and they did so with a great deal of diligence and compassion, working tirelessly and professionally and volunteering their time over the past eight months. The fund is still open to receive donations until the end of this year, and some donations are continuing to come in. Any further donations that are received will be distributed to victims of our disasters by the St Vincent de Paul Society.


MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hendra Virus

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.39 am): I regret to inform the House that late last night a new Hendra case was confirmed at a property in Beachmere. I understand that the property owners have been advised this morning and the chief vet will hold a press conference later this morning to provide more details. This is the 12th horse infected with the virus this year in Queensland. There is no doubt that 2011 has been a very difficult year for cases of this terrible virus. At the height of the outbreak, 100 horses were being monitored daily and the disease reached beyond Queensland borders into New South Wales. Following this unprecedented spike in cases, I was pleased to join with the New South Wales Premier, Barry O'Farrell, and announce an additional \$3 million from each state in funding for Hendra research over the next three years. This was subsequently matched by the Commonwealth government, bringing the total to \$12 million.

I am pleased to advise the House today how \$7 million of that boost in funding will be allocated. Firstly, five research projects will receive just over \$5 million. These projects are, first, Hendra virus infection and transmission being led by Queensland scientists; two, a Hendra virus in dogs; three, flying fox dispersal and Hendra virus risk; four, risks posed by Hendra virus antibody positive animals; and, five, the study of the effectiveness of Hendra virus vaccine for horses. It is very pleasing to see our internationally renowned Queensland scientists leading some of these projects. In addition, I am also pleased to announce today the opening of a \$2 million grants program for Hendra virus research. This opens the way for scientists, academics and universities within Australia and overseas to apply for funding from the \$2 million Hendra Virus Open Funding Program. The research project should align to one of three priorities: prediction of high-risk infection periods for Hendra virus transmission from flying foxes to horses; strategies to prevent transmission; and the detection and response to incidents. Details of how to apply for the research grants can be found on the Queensland government website and applications close on 31 October. This funding provides real opportunities for Queensland scientists who have already done such excellent research on this dangerous virus to take their work further.

Mental Health Week

 **Hon. AM BLIGH** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.42 am): This week is Mental Health Week and on Sunday I was pleased to join the Minister for Health and the shadow minister for health on the Walk of Pride through the Brisbane CBD and launch the Queensland government's \$8½ million mental health stigma reduction campaign called Change Our Minds. This campaign relates to one of the key objectives of Mental Health Week—to combat the stigma and the discrimination that can deter people who are experiencing mental health from seeking help early. Stigma is an ugly and unkind thing. It tells people that they are less than they are and, tragically, it stops people reaching out for the help they need when their illness means that they are not okay and they need more support. Stigma can also threaten the stability of a person's housing, education and employment. The ad campaign will be televised around the state and will also appear in print media, on billboards and in bus shelters.

While we are asking people to change how they think about mental illness, we are also changing how our government thinks about the provision of support and services to people suffering from poor mental health. Today I am pleased to announce that our government will establish a Queensland Mental Health Commission to elevate this important part of our health system and to drive better service delivery. Queensland Health is in the midst of a transformation that will change the face of public health care in our state. We have begun the process of establishing local hospital networks, which will ultimately mean that decisions are made closer to the communities that they serve. The Mental Health Commission is part of this transformation and it will focus on supporting more effective, transparent and

coordinated services in this area. The broad objectives of the Queensland Mental Health Commission will be to act as a strong advocate for mental health clients and their families; to improve the coordination, effectiveness and performance of mental health services; importantly, to ensure that resources are being deployed into mental health where they are most needed; to develop a strong evidence base to support government investment; and to promote greater transparency in the allocation of resources. Over coming months we will work with a panel of experts, and I am pleased to advise that Professor Beverley Raphael, a very well-respected person in this field, has agreed to chair the panel of experts.

The job of that panel will be to consult with the community, the workforce and the sector to establish the model for this commission. These commissions are becoming a new model of ensuring better health care for mental health patients, and we will be looking at the best around Australia and around the world with a view to legislating and to have the commission fully operational by July 2012. Tackling mental health is a challenge that I and my government are committed to. Over the last four years our government has injected \$632.4 million of new funding into mental health. This is the highest level of new funding into mental health of any state or territory in that period. The needs of people who live with a mental illness go much further than their medical needs. The inclusion and acceptance of people with a mental illness is one of the most profound human rights issues of the 21st century. It affects our most vulnerable citizens and often leaves people unable to advocate for themselves. We are passionate about building a stronger, better, healthier Queensland, and today we take another step towards that vision.

Kenny, Mr P, Motion to Take Note



Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (9.46 am): I am sure that all members will join with me today in extending our condolences to the family of former AgForce President Peter Kenny, who passed away on Saturday. Peter believed that the best way to get results was collaboration and not confrontation, hence his saying about not letting the bus run you down but getting on board. And Peter got on board many buses in his quest for a better deal for people on the land and for his beloved bush. In my first week as Premier he convinced me that I needed to have a dedicated rural advisor attached to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. We flew to drought-stricken Charleville and he badgered me about the need to have the bush in the engine room of government and having a greater say. He was right and I agreed.

The man behind AgForce's hugely successful Every Family Needs a Farmer strategy played a key role in many reforms over many years to benefit the regions. Whether it was the Blueprint for the Bush, improvements to the National Livestock Identification System, reform of the Wild Dog Strategy, the Fresh Approach reforms or the Delbessie agreement for the sustainable use of rural leasehold land for agribusiness, he was a champion for good ideas. As an RNA councillor, he helped secure the Ekka's new development and its greater financial stability. This is a strong and lasting legacy for this great event that unites the city and the bush. As a board member of Queensland Rail and later QR National, he was a tireless advocate for rural and regional Queensland, especially its cattle producers and their need for reliable transport. In his spare time, Peter was also chair of Primary Industries Week, chair of Biosecurity Queensland, a member of the national Biosecurity Advisory Council, a member of my Premier's Council on Climate Change and a member of the National Landcare Advisory Council.

Peter was born on 'Well Plains' at Clermont and educated in Harrisville and later at his beloved Nudgee College before completing an education degree. He owned and managed properties in different industries including cattle, dairying, orchards, lucerne and piggeries. Peter Kenny was a great living example of the old saying that you can take the boy out of the bush but you cannot take the bush out of the boy. His passionate love of rural Queensland, its landscape and its people travelled with Peter everywhere he went. He proudly wore the needs of rural Queensland as a heart on his sleeve. His wife, Hilary, told me that he knew on Saturday just how sick he was and in the early hours he turned to her and said, 'Love, this billy has boiled.' Our thoughts go to someone who was a great friend to many and our thoughts go to his wife Hilary, their children Liam, James, Sarah and Damian and his 11 grandchildren. Queensland is a better place because of Peter Kenny's contribution. He will be greatly missed. I move—

That this statement be noted.




Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.48 am): I join with the Premier in expressing our deepest sympathies to the family of Peter Kenny. I certainly endorse the words she said about the contribution that Peter Kenny made to agripolitics and to regional Queensland generally.

Like so many other people who serve in those roles, Peter gave his time freely. He gave a lot of himself to ensure that people who live in regional Queensland, who live and work in agricultural industries, do so in a better environment than otherwise would have been the case. His passing at such an early age has come as a shock to many in rural and regional Queensland. Many in rural and regional

Queensland fully understand the great contribution that he made, which was summarised by the Premier this morning. We can only extend our sympathies to his family as we note his passing and the great contribution that he made to regional Queensland and to the agricultural industries in Queensland.

Motion agreed to.

Tax Forum


 **Hon. AP FRASER** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade) (9.50 am): Last week's Tax Forum was an exercise in substance, not politics. Constructive policy making was the task at hand. Queensland took the lead and in my opening address to the session on state taxes, I put forward a proposal for a full harmonisation program to commence for state taxation, beginning with payroll tax. Policy harmonisation has been pursued in recent years with bipartisan support, but the proposal here is for one uniform piece of legislation that would apply across all eight jurisdictions, reducing the compliance effort for business. I made it clear to the forum that we should fully harmonise legislation, regimes and administration but preserve the ability for each state to set the rate and threshold at which payroll tax should apply.

Queensland remains committed to maintaining the lowest payroll tax rate in the nation of 4.75 per cent and the highest threshold of the mainland states of \$1 million. I welcome the support received for the proposal from industry and academics and, in particular, from the other states and territories. I and the New South Wales Liberal Treasurer, Mike Baird, will now work on a proposal to advance the harmonisation project, reporting back to COAG by the end of next year. One issue we will assess is the potential for central collection by one agency, like the ATO, as we look to design the most efficient system for a nation of our size.

It is reforms like these that can deliver real benefits for our economic future. They are the reforms that will build on the resilience we are seeing in the broader economy at the moment. The latest ABS building approvals showed that the number of dwelling approvals in Queensland increased more strongly than that of the nation last month. In fact, it was the fourth consecutive monthly increase. Retail activity has also recently been reported and, again, it showed an increase. As Westpac's *Coast-to-Coast: An update on Australia's state economies* report recently said, we are once again on track to become the 'boom state'.

We are getting on with delivering the infrastructure that is needed for the future, skilling Queenslanders for work, making the choices for the future and creating jobs—just like we said we would.

Criminal Sentencing

 **Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (9.52 am): Queensland has some of the toughest laws in the country when it comes to stamping out crime, which is evidenced by a strong police presence and strong jail sentences. In the past 10 years we have seen the overall crime rate drop 26 per cent, and there are more than 10,000 police officers today compared to 6,800 in 1998. Statistics show that the rate of imprisonment in Queensland is 161 per 100,000 adults compared to Victoria, where the rate of imprisonment is 105 per 100,000 adults. But that does not mean that we will not continue to constantly improve our response to crime in Queensland, particularly our sentencing laws.

On 30 September the Sentencing Advisory Council delivered to my office its final report into standard non-parole periods. I met the council last week and I brought the report to cabinet yesterday, and I table the report today.

Tabled paper: Minimum standard non-parole periods, Final Report September 2011, Sentencing Advisory Council [\[5564\]](#).

All in all, there are 22 recommendations in that 144-page report, which the government will now consider in full. The council notes in its report that a majority of its members have concerns over the application of a minimum standard non-parole system to the Queensland justice system. However, this mechanism of responding to community concerns in relation to sentencing is an important part of government policy. I am pleased to say that the council has also devised a system that applies the best of systems used in other jurisdictions as well as avoiding the problems that have been experienced elsewhere.

The council recommends a standard percentage scheme where criminals convicted of serious offences will have to serve at least two-thirds of their sentence as a bare minimum. As it is at the moment, convicted murderers already must serve at least 15 years in jail and criminals sentenced to at least 10 years in jail and classified as serious violent offenders must serve at least 80 per cent of their sentence or 15 years, whichever is lesser. Under the standard percentage scheme recommended by the council, criminals sentenced to between five and 10 years in jail will need to serve 65 per cent of their sentence as a bare minimum before they are eligible for parole. The council suggests that the scheme should apply to about 50 offences, including serious sexual and violent offences such as manslaughter, rape and child sexual offences.

This government has a track record of being tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime. Under Queensland's Criminal Code, more than 40 offences are punishable by life imprisonment, including murder which carries mandatory life. Queensland has the toughest sex offender laws in the country, including the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act, the Child Protection (Offender Prohibition Order) Act, electronic monitoring and the like. This government was the first in Australia to introduce constitutionally valid legislation to detain and supervise dangerous sex offenders under the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003. These laws mean dangerous sex offenders can be detained in custody beyond their sentence if the Supreme Court considers them to be an unacceptable risk to the community. Under the former conservative government, sex offenders walked free at the end of their sentence with no supervision and no monitoring.

This government has also increased penalties across a range of offences including drug offences, weapons offences, child pornography, dangerous driving, attempted murder and child cruelty. Other sentencing reforms include amending the offence of serious assault to extend the protection of the provision to child safety officers, ambulance, fire and other emergency services officers and health service employees; expanding the indefinite sentences regime so that courts can impose indefinite sentences for many more crimes, including torture, incest, maintaining a sexual relationship with a child and indecent treatment of a child; and changing the law so that an offender who commits a sexual offence against a child must serve an actual term of imprisonment unless there are exceptional circumstances.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the council and its chair, Professor Geraldine Mackenzie. The report will be available today for public comment at the Department of Justice and Attorney-General website. The government will then consider those public comments and the report and, as I have indicated, will respond accordingly. I table the report for the benefit of the House.

Gladstone Region, Fish Health



Hon. CA WALLACE (Thuringowa—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure) (9.55 am): There are few things I enjoy more than heading out onto the water to throw in a line. I come from a long line of fishermen, so I was naturally concerned when I was advised last month that an unknown condition was affecting fish in the Gladstone area. But of greater concern to me were reports that local fishermen were sick and feared that their symptoms may be linked to the fish that they were catching.

I asked for a full and urgent briefing from the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation. At a meeting on Thursday, 15 September, I was advised of the department's decision to temporarily close an area centred on Gladstone to fishing. The emergency disease declaration was made under section 96 of the Fisheries Act, which allows for the closure of a fishery in an emergency situation—in this case, being a potential risk to humans or animals from fish products infected by unknown diseases.

The decision to close an area centred on Gladstone for an initial 21 days from 16 September was not made lightly but was necessary for public health reasons while scientific tests were being carried out. On 23 September, we received two test results from Biosecurity Queensland which identified two conditions causing lesions and cloudy eyes in fish in the Gladstone area. The first was red spot disease, a condition which is endemic in Queensland and has also been found in several other states and the Northern Territory. This disease is caused by a fungus and often occurs when fish are under stress. It is also more prevalent during winter months when the immunity of fish is lower or following heavy rainfall events. Given that we are coming out of winter and have recently experienced the worst flooding event in living memory, this disease is not unexpected.

The other condition which has been causing eye problems in fish is a fluke, or a parasite. Again, it is fairly common in Queensland waters. Additional laboratory testing of fish samples were received last week and I can report that, apart from barramundi, no other finfish has had red spot disease or the parasite. Mud crabs and prawns submitted for testing all had evidence of erosion consistent with shell disease, which again is common in Queensland.

The Gladstone Area Water Board estimates that some 30,000 barramundi washed over the spillway at Awoonga Dam between December 2010 and March this year due to overtopping. These fish suffered physical stress which, combined with the stress of relocation, would have made them susceptible to these two conditions. Importantly, past experience has shown that these conditions will naturally pass out of the environment. I am advised by Fisheries Queensland that these factors suggest that the flooding events may have caused the conditions in Gladstone fish.

REGISTER OF RELATED PERSONS' INTERESTS



Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.58 am): Mr Speaker, you will be aware of recent public debate regarding the registration of the interests of members and the registration of the interests of related persons to members. As the House is aware, the Register of Related Persons' Interests maintained by the Clerk of the Parliament as the Registrar of Members' Interests is not a public document and is only available to certain office holders and organisations such as the Crime and Misconduct Commission in accordance with section 13 of schedule 2 of standing orders.

I give notice to the House that, at its meeting tomorrow, the Standing Orders Committee will give consideration to a proposal that the Register of Related Persons' Interests be tabled in the House, placed on the parliament's website and generally be made publicly available in the same way as the Register of Members' Interests is currently made available. Members who wish to express an opinion about this matter may wish to convey their views to members of the Standing Orders Committee, which comprises the Committee of the Legislative Assembly and the Speaker, before our meeting tomorrow.

REPORT

Office of Information Commissioner



Hon. DM WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (10.00 am): I lay upon the table of the House a report to the Legislative Assembly by the Office of the Information Commissioner titled *Report No. 2 of 2011-12, Compliance review—Queensland Health, review of Queensland Health, Corporate Office, and Metro North and Metro South Health Service Districts' compliance with the Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld) and the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*.

The report details the findings of a review of Queensland Health's progress in implementing the right to information and information privacy reforms. The Office of the Information Commissioner reviewed the corporate office and the metro north and metro south health service districts.

Overall, the Office of the information Commissioner found that Queensland Health is progressing well in meeting its legislative obligations. The report contains 20 recommendations to assist Queensland Health to move towards full implementation of the reforms. Queensland Health has accepted, I am advised, all the recommendations.

Tabled paper: Office of the Information Commissioner: Report No. 2 of 2011-12 to the Queensland Legislative Assembly—Compliance Review—Queensland Health: Review of Queensland Health, Corporate Office, and Metro North and Metro South Health Service Districts' compliance with the Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld) and the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld) [5565].

NOTICES OF MOTION

Bligh Labor Government



Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.02 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this parliament notes that the Bligh Labor government has become totally focused on mud-slinging and personally attacking Campbell Newman rather than addressing the many important issues facing the people of Queensland, and calls upon Premier Bligh and her ministers to either focus on the business of governing Queensland or call a state election immediately.

Legislative Assembly, Marks of Respect



Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—Ind) (10.03 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House notes that:

1. To date 29 soldiers have lost their lives in Afghanistan and enjoined our nation's roll of honour.
2. On only one of those occasions since 2001 has this House observed silence for an individual soldier killed serving in Afghanistan: Trooper David Pearce.
3. Queensland RSL president, Terry Meehan, writes—
We believe that our fallen men and women are deserving of such a mark of respect and were surprised to learn that the House did not observe a minute's silence.

And calls on the government, supported by the opposition, on the first sitting day immediately following the death of any members of the Australian military on active overseas service to move, as a mark of respect, a motion for a minute's silence for our fallen heroes.

Mr SPEAKER: I will formally put it to the Leader of the House: which motion do you wish to accept?

Ms SPENCE: The government will accept the member for Burnett's motion today.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Mr SPEAKER: This morning we are joined in the public gallery by a group of eight senior students from various schools in South-East Queensland who are finalists in the South-East Queensland Water Grid Young Water Leaders Award. The students are from The Glennie School in Toowoomba, Boonah State High School, West Moreton Anglican College and Clayfield College. Later this morning I understand the Minister for Energy and Water Utilities will announce one of the students as this year's young water leader. We wish them all the best.

In the House today we will be joined by the students and principal from Marymount College in the electorate of Burleigh, students and teachers from the Clontarf Beach State School in the electorate of Redcliffe, and the Calliope State School in the electorate of Gladstone. Question time will end at 11.05.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Carbon Tax, Waste Disposal Costs



Mr SEENEY (10.05 am): My first question without notice is to the Minister for Environment and Resource Management. I table a copy of the orders of the day from the federal parliament which shows that the legislation introducing the carbon tax, which the Queensland state Labor government is supporting, will be debated today. I ask the minister: what will be the increase in waste disposal costs to Queensland small businesses following the introduction of Labor's carbon tax, and what will prevent those cost increases being added to the spiralling cost of living of every Queensland family?

Tabled paper: Daily Program of the House of Representatives, Tuesday, 11 October 2011 [\[5566\]](#).

Mr SPEAKER: Let me clarify which minister you are directing your question to.

Mr SEENEY: The Minister for Environment, Mr Speaker.

Ms DARLING: Mr Speaker, I will firstly seek your clarification that I can talk about a bill before the House?

Mr SPEAKER: As I understood the question, the question referred to federal legislation. There is not a rule of anticipation with respect to a federal bill.

Mr SEENEY: The question very deliberately does not refer to the legislation before the House. The legislation before the House imposes other costs on waste management. This is a cost that is being imposed by federal legislation by the carbon tax which the state government supports. It is a very legitimate question—to ask the minister how much that cost is and how it will not be added to the cost of living of every Queensland family.

Mr SPEAKER: The question is quite legitimate. It referred to federal legislation; it did not refer to this House and it refers to costs. It is up to the honourable minister how to answer that question.

Ms DARLING: Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I welcome the opportunity to be able to address half of the honourable member's question. I will pay my respects to the House by saving comment on the sorts of money being raised by levy. A levy is proposed as part of the waste reduction bill.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Those on my left, the question has been asked. The honourable the minister is, as I am hearing it, answering it. I would allow the honourable minister the courtesy of the House.

Ms DARLING: As I said, I will answer the half of the question that refers to the carbon tax. As members of the House know, the Commonwealth parliament is considering a carbon tax. The Queensland government has put quite an extensive submission to the Commonwealth that explains our support for the need for a price mechanism on carbon. You do need to put a price on carbon. It is a serious impost on the environment. It will also be a serious impost on social concerns and on the economy of Queenslanders. I am very pleased that the Australian government has considered a lot of the information referred to in the Queensland government submission on carbon tax and has taken into account some initiatives such as the carbon farming initiative that I know will bring a lot of benefit to Queensland farmers. That is an area that my department will continue to explore with landholders.

I am also really pleased that the Queensland government is way ahead of the pack when it comes to getting ready for the impost of a possible carbon price. We have some landmark—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Again, those on my left, there has been no attack on any member among those on my left. The minister is answering the question. The minister has the call.

Ms DARLING: I am very proud of our household reforms such as the ClimateSmart Home Service, which is very close to reaching its 300,000th customer. Those household-by-household changes not only save the environment but also save householders a lot of money. You can save up to \$400 a year off your electricity bill by making some small changes around the house. I encourage everybody to call the ClimateSmart Home Service and book in a service right now. You get a standby power eliminator and a lot of advice on how to save on your electricity bill.

QR National

Mr SEENEY: My question without notice is to the Premier. Why did the government borrow an additional \$2.2 billion and incur an additional \$92 million interest bill to pay itself for QR National shares that the taxpayer retained ownership of after the government's panic-driven asset sales that were supposed to reduce government debt?

Ms BLIGH: I think there is a great deal of confusion around this issue, but it is very simple. The Queensland government, on behalf of the Queensland people, continues to own a body of shares in QR National. Those shares were owned by the people of Queensland. They are still owned by the people of Queensland. They will not be sold until such time as the requisite period has elapsed and, regardless of what happens at the next election, I understand both sides of politics have indicated that they will put those shares into the market. At that time, the people of Queensland will have an opportunity, through their elected government, to determine where that money goes.

Mr Seeney: You've already hocked them.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting.

Ms BLIGH: I repeat, for the benefit of the House: those shares have always been owned and continue to be owned and there is no change in the ownership of those shares.

Queensland Economy

Mrs KEECH: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier inform the House how investment in Queensland is driving our strong economy?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the honourable member for her question and for her understanding that it is through a strong and thriving economy that families in the electorate that she and others represent can grow and have prosperity. Increasingly Queensland is being recognised as the place to be right now. Whether it is Westpac's *Coast to Coast* report or the Commonwealth Bank's *Economics: Update* for September, they all agree. Westpac labelled Queensland the economic golden state, with annual growth to June this year of 5.7 per cent versus 3.4 per cent nationally. The Commonwealth Bank says that Queensland's economy is booming.

I know that there are still parts of regional Queensland and other parts of our state that have yet to feel the ripple, but it has started. Since the last parliament sat, we have seen a number of very tangible examples of new private investment here in Queensland. In the past month alone, we have seen a new \$120 million contract between the Queensland Gas Company and Iplex Pipelines for the supply of polyethylene pipe for the gas fields. That means that a new pipe manufacturing facility will be built in Toowoomba within the next 12 months. That is great for regional Queensland. We have seen a decision by Visy to build a new drink-can manufacturing facility at Stapylton on the northern Gold Coast. That will be the first such manufacturing plant to be built in Australia in 20 years and it is happening right here. We have seen \$275 million committed by Leighton Properties to the next stage of the Boggo Road urban village redevelopment, which will deliver 1,800 jobs. We have seen Primo Smallgoods commit \$131 million to bring 600 jobs to Wacol. We have seen financial close reached on the \$2.5 billion Wiggins Island coal terminal. That project is expected to create some 900 jobs in the Gladstone region. Public consultation has now commenced on the EIS for Waratah Coal's \$8 billion China First project. That project will open up the Galilee Basin and deliver close to 6,000 construction jobs and 1,500 operational jobs.

The total value of projects already underway in Queensland now hits \$48 billion. Much of that has been driven by the economic activity of this government. Projects such as those of Visy and Primo Smallgoods have been brought here as part of our investment attraction schemes. Projects in the mining sector are opening up because this government is good to do business with. We are still the lowest taxing state with the highest thresholds on business taxes. Queensland is on the cusp of an economic transformation being driven by a Labor government

QR National

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Premier. Given projected debt is rising from \$83.5 billion to almost \$85 billion, even after the government has put a \$2.2 billion mortgage on its remaining stake in QR National, why has the Premier compounded her deception on asset sales in 2009 with a broken promise to use the QR asset sale to reduce state debt?

Ms BLIGH: I answered the question when it was put to me by the Leader of the Opposition. Unfortunately, those opposite have a profound misunderstanding of how public accounts and transactions of this nature are treated and accorded. The treatment of this transaction in the public accounts of Queensland is exactly the same as that in relation to Suncorp Metway by the Borbidge government: nothing new and as required. The Queensland government still owns these shares; nothing has changed.

Mr Fraser: And more to the point, they are worth hundreds of millions of dollars more.

Ms BLIGH: I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. More to the point, for Queenslanders they are now worth close to \$1 billion more than they were when we owned them last year. Holding them is actually growing them in value. Why are they growing in value? Because private investment into QR National is driving value into that transport and logistics company that Queenslanders continue to hold a significant stake in.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Ms BLIGH: Frankly, it is alarming that the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer are so ignorant of the way that these transactions are reported and are so profoundly wrong about them. I would never have thought that I would be sending them off to seek advice from Rob Borbidge and Joan Sheldon. I refer them to Treasurer Joan Sheldon in this regard.

Mining Industry

Ms JOHNSTONE: My question is to the Premier. Can the Premier please inform the House how the Queensland government is encouraging Queenslanders to take advantage of the resources boom?

Ms BLIGH: I thank the member for Townsville. It was great to be up in her part of the world last week, to spend some time with her and to visit a number of organisations in her electorate. Like a number of other members representing regional parts of Queensland in this House, the member for Townsville understands the opportunity that is before Queensland right now. We are on the cusp of the most significant mining development in our history.

I think it is wrong to call this a boom because a boom indicates to people that we are talking about a short-term economic flash in the pan. What is happening with our gas industry, our significant expansions in coal, particularly in the Galilee Basin, and with other minerals in the north-west and the Mount Isa region is, in my view, a complete structural shift in the Queensland economy that will sustain us for decades into the future.

So the challenge for us as a state, the challenge for a government on the cusp of this sort of prosperity is how to make sure it is shared by all, how to make sure that there are not people left behind, how to make sure that there are not big haves and have-nots. How do we make sure that people who are living in towns and cities that continue to have higher levels of unemployment than others can be part of this where possible?

The parliament will have seen that we have launched a series of ads telling people about the mining industry and encouraging them to find out more, encouraging them to upskill and to find the training that will give them a chance to be part of the action. I am pleased to advise that on the first day of our 'We need you here' ads there were over 10,000 visits to the site—some 10,000 visits in 24 hours. That has never happened for any campaign that I am aware of. As of yesterday afternoon there had been almost 26,000 site visits. That ad campaign will underpin our jobs expos which are rolling out over the next couple of months in major regional centres.

We know there are many people out there who want to either get a job because they do not have one or want to upgrade the job they have. They have never been in a better place at a better time than in Queensland to take advantage of what is on our doorstep. I encourage members to ensure that their constituents know what those opportunities are. Going on to that website will help people understand the skills that they will need and how they can get those skills upgraded and recognised and qualifications where they might need them. That kind of interest—26,000 hits on the website in less than a week—shows me that there are many Queenslanders who understand what is happening and want to be part of it.

Queensland Health, Payroll System

Mr McARDLE: My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister tell the House what the final cost will be to fix the Health payroll system after reports it has risen once again—that is, to \$223 million?

Mr WILSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. The basis of the member's question is wrong. That is not unusual. It is wrong on this occasion like it has been wrong on previous occasions. The report in the newspaper today is incorrect. There is no new money, no additional money that has been allocated to restore the payroll system to a proper condition. This is an old story. There was a media release and several newspaper articles produced in July about the resolution of a payroll reclassification dispute associated with a number of other initiatives that were adopted by the government then to address a range of concerns and issues of unions.

That matter has been progressed in the normal way. That matter has been resolved. It is focused on a number of workers who are involved in the payroll hubs and a longstanding—about 12 months—reclassification problem and dispute that they had. It had been filed in the commission and there had been negotiations between Queensland Health and the union. Finally, that matter has been resolved.

As I say, it is an old story. There is no additional funding as indicated in today's paper. Additional funding was allocated at that time. It is also clear that this issue is being caught up in EBA negotiations. Is that a surprise? There are EBA negotiations happening right across government—at the federal government, state government and local government levels. The garbage contractors in the BCC, Qantas federally and customs federally are negotiating EBAs. We also have a number of EBAs in Health and in a number of other government agencies that are being negotiated.

Is there argy-bargy about those negotiations? Sure there is, but the parties are coming in good faith to the bargaining table and they are wanting to make sure that they negotiate their way through the issues. That is conventional. It will happen this time like it has happened many times in the past. Will we have disagreements about the issues that ought to be taken into account in resolving those EBA negotiations? Yes, we will. There is nothing new about that. That has happened in the past. Will we resolve these EBA negotiations? Yes, we will. We will endeavour to do the very best we can for all of the excellent and hardworking Queensland Health staff that we have right across our hospitals and health services in this state—the 80,000 hardworking staff in our system.

(Time expired)

Housing Industry

Mr WETTENHALL: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for State Development and Trade. Is the Deputy Premier aware of any reports that illustrate the current state of play in Queensland's housing industry? Is the Deputy Premier aware of any other reports on activity in the sector?

Mr FRASER: I thank the member for Barron River for his question. I am aware that OESR within Queensland Treasury has released the latest residential land development activity profiles which tell a story about housing markets around Queensland picking up pace, including in the first quarter of this year that lot approvals in Far North Queensland increased by 13 per cent. More stunning, however, is the result in Ipswich where lot registrations have increased by 64 per cent as that city bounces back from floods. At the heart of the investment activity, the investment surge is beginning to flow through the many housing markets of Queensland. At the heart of that activity in Gladstone we have seen a 114 per cent increase in building approvals for detached dwellings.

We are all of course aware of other activity in the property sector. After five weeks of mock indignation and faux bravado finally Queenslanders have been let into the secret life of Campbell Newman. Of course, what we have seen is that there has been a lot of activity going on. It is important to say here that it was he, Campbell Newman, who said that he had been open and transparent. It was he who all along said that his declaration as Lord Mayor had been exhaustive and was sufficient. It was he, of all people, who wrote to the Integrity Commissioner and said that there had been no material change in his assets since his declaration as Lord Mayor. I table that letter for the benefit of all members of the House and indeed for the people of Queensland.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 19 September 2011, to the Integrity Commissioner from Mr Campbell Newman [\[5567\]](#).

What of course we now know is that it was not true. It was shamefully untrue. By his own admission we now see the depth of his deception and the breadth of his dishonesty. After the protests, up until last week, what Campbell Newman was trying to have us believe is that over the weekend he shifted the shopping list on the kitchen bench and happened upon eight title deeds to properties never previously known to him. That he reached for the coffee jar in the kitchen pantry to make himself a cuppa and found five shelf companies never before known or disclosed to the people of Queensland. Sorting through the mail and the junk mail he happened upon a series of bank statements, loan facilities and other bank facilities never previously known to the people of Queensland.

Of course, it is not illegal to make investments, but it is against the rules not to disclose them. This goes to the heart of the character and integrity of Campbell Newman. Ultimately it was he who said on the public record earlier this year—and I quote him in the *Australian* newspaper—

My pecuniary register is there for all to see. For seven years rather than buy shares, rather than buy property I have saved my money and put it in a term deposit because I never wanted to have a conflict of interest.

Well, he was not telling the truth then. Queenslanders are entitled to ask whether he is telling the truth now. What this goes to is someone who is woefully dishonest, who is prepared to be dishonest to the Integrity Commission and who is not fit to stand for public office let alone be the alternative Premier of this state,

Gladstone Region, Fish Health

Dr ROBINSON: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure. Why did the minister say his department had tested 160 fish in Gladstone Harbour when it had only tested four or five? Why did the minister mislead the Queensland public on this very serious public health issue?

Mr WALLACE: I think the shadow spokesman should check his facts because indeed I was correct in saying that evening on the news that we had tested 160 fish. One of the fish that was featured on the Channel 9 news was a fish caught one month before. That news program claimed it was caught on the night in question. Again, they are incorrect points.

We know the shadow spokesman has been incorrect before. He claimed publicly that there have been fish kills as a result of these two conditions in Gladstone. That is totally incorrect. This bloke claims he has some sort of degree. We do not know what it is. He claims—

Ms Bligh interjected.

Mr WALLACE: He claims he is a marine biologist, but we know that is not true, and that is reflected in the statements that he has made publicly. Indeed, he was on radio saying that he would not eat the seafood in Gladstone. This is from the shadow spokesperson on fisheries. Shame on him, I say! I will go out and eat that seafood in Gladstone because I know it is safe. It is good men and women who are catching that seafood in Gladstone, and they know their responsibilities to sell that fish properly on the market, and they do so with that knowledge. Indeed, these fishermen catch thousands of fish each year. They know which fish can and cannot be sold on the market. So I think the gentleman opposite should go and check the facts. We have caught over 240 fish in the Gladstone area since 29 September. Of those fish, 20 per cent have shown signs of the lesion or the fluke that has affected the eye.

Mr Johnson: You're not very convincing.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Gregory will resume his seat.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not care. You are not to interject standing up.

Mr WALLACE: No yellowbelly there, Vaughan. As I told parliament this morning, the fact is that these two conditions—the fluke and the red spot—have been found only in barramundi in that area. We know 30,000 barramundi went over the dam wall at Awoonga after this year's rainfall events, which has added to the stress in those species. So I say to the honourable gentleman opposite: go and do your research. Stop attacking the fishing industry in Gladstone. We know the Tories attack people across Queensland every chance they get. Stop talking down the fishing industry in Gladstone. For the interest of the House, I table this Facebook page from the honourable member. It says, 'Humility is my best gift.' Perhaps the member for Cleveland should be less humble and learn the facts.

Tabled paper: Copy of Facebook page of Mr Mark Robinson MP [\[5568\]](#).

Regional Planning, Urban Land Development Authority

Ms GRACE: My question without notice is to the Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State. Can the minister please inform the House of the statutory regional planning process and the role of the ULDA as well as any alternative views?

Mr LUCAS: I thank the honourable member for the question. The role of the state in relation to planning is a very significant one in setting the broad framework and in working cooperatively with local authorities. Regional plans are a critical aspect of that in providing certainty in relation to areas that one can protect—for example, primary production land, environmentally sensitive land and, indeed, urban land. Proper planning is about everyone having an appropriate and fair go in a sensible and rational environment.

Each region of the state is of course different, and the state has a role in relation to encouraging regional economies. The great thing I love about Queensland is its regional nature. Of course we have had a bit of debate about the regional planning process and indeed comment on it in the past. Who could forget that when he was mayor of Brisbane Campbell Newman indicated that the SEQ Regional Plan was arguably the best in the nation—in fact, it was award winning, as was Cairns, and indeed was copied in other parts of Australia and endorsed by the federal government. That is because South-East Queensland is not a free-for-all.

But of course one thing we see with the LNP when it comes to policies is their changing attitude or their changing face depending on where they are, depending on what time it is and depending on who it is. What we have seen with Campbell Newman in relation to his pecuniary interest register—the Deputy Premier discussed that earlier—is that that is a classic example of his attitude to being frank and candid. In fact, they talk about Can-do Campbell; it is ‘non-candid’ Campbell because the LNP clearly have the attitude that they will say one thing to one group of people and they will say something else to others.

When it comes to people who are concerned about coal seam gas in their communities, they get up there in the countryside and they say to people that they are going to stop coal seam gas projects and the like. Then they get down to the boardrooms and they say, ‘Don’t say anything else.’ We know that, Mr Speaker. When it comes to primary production interests, they get out there and they say, ‘We’re going to make sure that we protect you from coalmining and we’re going to ban open-cut mining,’ and things like that. Then they go out to the mining companies and they say something else. Then Campbell Newman goes up to Mackay and says that he wants to alter the urban footprint, but of course we know that when he was mayor he said how good the FNQ regional plan was, and his Leader of the Opposition in the Queensland parliament gets out there and says, ‘The way to protect land uses in rural communities from development’—with validity, I might add—‘is by strong statutory regional plans.’ So what they say and what they do are different things.

Then we have urban development. At the Local Government Association conference the other day Campbell Newman said that he wanted to give councils the power to opt out of Urban Land Development Authority areas. Yet on the other hand he then says that there is a role for them. I simply make this point for the benefit of the House: it is not just pecuniary interest that is a moveable feast with him changing his attitude; it is in relation to every item of policy.

(Time expired)

Gladstone Region, Fish Health

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure. Why did the minister reopen Gladstone Harbour for fishing before his independent scientific panel had even met to consider why hundreds of fish are diseased and 20 fishermen are sick? Will the minister now admit his decision was premature, not based on science and has put the Queensland public and the Queensland seafood industry at risk?

Mr WALLACE: Like the previous member who asked a question, this honourable gentleman is also incorrect. It was not my decision to close the fishery and it was not my decision to open the fishery. It was made at a departmental level.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Those on my left. The question has been asked. The honourable the minister is answering the question.

Mr WALLACE: As I said this morning, the emergency disease declaration was made under section 96 of the Fisheries Act, which allows a closure of the fishery for an emergency situation. That decision was made by the director-general of the department of employment as the regulator. However, at all times my director-general—and I am confident of this—has followed the advice of the scientists within the department of fisheries. What the scientists in the department of fisheries advised the director-general at the time of the closure was that they were concerned because of the condition that was affecting fish in the Gladstone area. As I have told the House twice already this morning, we now know what those two conditions are—red spot, which is a fungal outbreak which causes the large red spots on the fish and can lead to lesions and ulcerations, and fluke, which is a flat worm which when it makes its way into a fish can cause the cloudy disease within the eye of the fish. Once we identified those two conditions and scientists were comfortable that they would have no effect on human health, the department reopened the fishery. It did the right thing in doing that until those two conditions were identified.

Separate to that, I have set up an independent scientific panel, headed by Dr Ian Poiner, who is CEO of the Australian Institute of Marine Science in Townsville—a well-regarded fish scientist globally, a very good fish scientist globally. We have experts on that panel looking at fish health, fish histology and also water quality. They have done a peer review of the results which my department has acted on. The

results have been provided to my department and we have acted on them. So, again, like the previous opposition member who asked a question, the member for Glass House should learn the facts before he jumps into this place and makes incorrect statements to this House.

My department made the decision to close the fishery. My department made the decision to open the fishery on the best scientific advice—on the best scientific advice. Now that we know that these two conditions—red spot and fluke—have affected some barramundi in the Gladstone area, we are comfortable with reopening that fishery.

Mr Johnson: Would you eat them?

Mr WALLACE: Absolutely I would eat them, because they are good fish.

(Time expired)

Georgina and Diamantina Rivers, Wild Rivers Declaration

Mrs KIERNAN: My question is to the Minister for Environment. There is currently an extensive consultation process occurring in my electorate with regard to the proposed declaration of the Georgina and Diamantina river systems in the electorate of Mount Isa. Can the minister update the House on this and other broader issues in relation to the wild rivers program?

Ms DARLING: I very much thank the honourable member for Mount Isa for her question. This is an honourable member who understands the importance of extensive consultation within her community on issues that are really going to affect the entire future sustainability of that area. So I thank her for her interest in the wild rivers program. As she has rightly explained, currently there is some consultation being undertaken for the Georgina and Diamantina wild river basins. There will be quite a few more weeks consultation on that. Of course, Cooper Creek has been under consultation for quite some time, and hopefully a declaration in that area will be made fairly soon.

Wild rivers is such an important policy, and I am proud to be part of a Labor government that instituted this policy. We get only one chance to protect these beautiful, pristine rivers in Queensland. That is why we are acting right now to make sure that wild rivers are protected for future generations.

The Georgina-Diamantina area covers 263,000 square kilometres of Queensland and the Cooper basin area covers 244,000 square kilometres. We have started the consultation, but we understand that it is very important to get the balance right. You must strike the right balance between the agricultural economy and environmental protections. It is also important that traditional owners are front and centre. That is why the wild rivers legislation embeds native title rights and also secures jobs for Aboriginal people.

So who would want to turn such special and important environmental reforms like this on their head? I am disappointed to say that Campbell Newman has said that he would completely trash the wild rivers legislation if he were to get into government. Campbell Newman has said that these laws are inappropriate. But what is the alternative he has offered? Silence. He has outlined no alternative and no plans—no plans for the future of the traditional owners out in the Lake Eyre Basin, no plans for the future of the graziers out in the Lake Eyre Basin, no plans for the future of our beautiful, pristine river systems out in the Lake Eyre Basin. The truth is that he actually has no idea. I would encourage him to go and talk to some of the traditional owners in the Lake Eyre Basin. More than 100 traditional owners got together recently and they actually called on the state government to hurry up and declare the wild river basins in the Cooper, Georgina and Diamantina. Campbell Newman cannot have it both ways. He thinks planting a few trees makes him an environmentalist. I beg to differ.

Community Services, Fair Work Regulation

Ms SIMPSON: My question is to the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women. I table a letter from federal minister Chris Evans announcing the withdrawal of a fair work regulation due to concerns about the accuracy of the list of employers supplied by the Queensland government.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 September 2011, from Senator Chris Evans to Senator Eric Abetz regarding Queensland pay equity regulations [\[5569\]](#).

Tabled paper: Statement, dated 22 September 2011, from Senator Chris Evans regarding Queensland pay equity regulations [\[5570\]](#).

Now that the federal minister has put the responsibility squarely on the state minister, will the minister apologise for putting a number of these vital community services at risk from her own incompetence?

Ms STRUTHERS: I welcome the opportunity to clarify the record in relation to this question. The question really needs to be: will the shadow minister put an end to her scaremongering? That is effectively what she has been doing. She has been getting around the state, scaremongering with organisations.

Let me put the facts to the House, as I have done publicly on many occasions in recent weeks. It is the Bligh Labor government that put up \$414 million to support pay equity in the community services sector in Queensland. Recurrently, year in and year out, what does that mean? That means \$125 million that this government has stumped up to support pay equity in the community services sector. What has Barry O'Farrell done in New South Wales? What has the Victorian Premier done? When the conservatives took power in those states, what did they do? They ran a million miles from pay equity. They backed off like the Road Runner—zipped off into the sunset with a cloud of dust behind them—because they do not want to stump up. That is what Tories do: they say one thing to the community services staff and workers and say another thing publicly. They have not committed one extra dollar to pay equity—not one dollar. They are getting around the state scaremongering, and that is irresponsible.

This is the government that has stumped up. This is the government that has supported community services wages across the state. Not only have we supported wages; in the last six years our investment in community services has grown 160 per cent. What have they done? The only commitments I have heard are no extra dollars for community services wages and no more funding for social housing. They are the two I have heard. I am not sure what they are going to do to support the community services sector, but they are certainly not stumping up with any extra money.

Ambulance Service, Resources

Mr MOORHEAD: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services. Can the minister advise the House where the additional 50 ambulance officers funded in this year's state budget will be allocated?

Mr ROBERTS: I thank the member for his question and also for the support that he provides to emergency services personnel in his electorate. In fact, the funding that the government has provided will allow for an additional 52 positions to be allocated across the state. That takes the total number of additional officers since 2007 that the government has funded to 680. Not only has that led to improved performance in terms of response times and the quality of care that is offered to the Queensland community; it has also led to Queensland having the higher ambulance officer to population ratio in the country. There were 56.9 ambulance officers and paramedics per 100,000 people in 2010—the latest comparison with the other states—compared with the national average of 43.6. So significant investment in additional ambulance officers is delivering for the people of Queensland.

Mr Crandon: What are you going to do about police numbers in Coomera?

Mr ROBERTS: We can talk about police numbers as well, because under the National Party government there was one police officer for every 507 people. This government, through significant investment, has reduced that to one officer for every 436 people. So whether it be police or ambulance officers, the Labor government is delivering.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The member for Coomera will cease interjecting.

Mr ROBERTS: Let us look at where the additional ambulance officer positions will be going. Into the northern region, five positions will be shared between Townsville and Kirwan stations, allowing the service to deliver four day shifts, four afternoon shifts and four night shifts plus coverage from the intensive-care paramedic. In the central region there will be 10 additional positions, including five into South Mackay which will provide an additional day shift seven days a week. In the south-west region there will be two positions going into Roma and Dalby, one each. In the north coast region there will be 10 positions, including six to Nanango to upgrade that station from a category 3 to a category 4. In the south-east region there will be 10 positions, including nine into Beenleigh to provide an additional two-officer crew seven days a week. In the far-northern region there will be six positions: Yarrabah, two; Thursday Island, two; Gordonvale, one; and Mossman, one. And into the Brisbane region there will be a total of eight positions: one into the new station at North Lakes and seven into the communications centre, which includes a professional development officer. In addition to that, there are extra positions which will be on a part-time basis into both Brisbane and central regions.

Queenslanders can be very proud of their Ambulance Service—not just the significant enhancement and investment by this Labor government—delivering some of the best response times in the country. At the fiftieth percentile it is 8.2 minutes. New South Wales was our most reasonable comparator with 10.3. There have been 680 extra officers since 2007. We are delivering 19 new or redeveloped ambulance stations in this year's budget and have funded 455 additional vehicles since 2009.

(Time expired)

Political Parties, Donations

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Attorney-General. On 12 May the Attorney-General said—
Queenslanders can have greater confidence in our democratic system of government as a result of legislation passed on Wednesday addressing donations to political parties and election candidates.

How can Queenslanders have any faith in these laws when, six months after its introduction, the ECQ and Crown law cannot provide me with a simple answer as to what is and is not considered campaign expenditure?

Mr LUCAS: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am not sure when the honourable member was born, but I would say this to him: one of the great things in history prior to the Fitzgerald inquiry in Queensland in 1989 and the famous 'Whispering' Wendy who worked in the office of the then National Party Premier was a complete lack of separation between the electoral process and indeed—

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for Southern Downs will cease interjecting. The Attorney-General has the call.

Mr LUCAS: There was a complete lack of separation between the electoral process and the then government of the day. For example, one of the things of most interest to the government—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member has asked the question. The Attorney-General is providing the answer. Show the courtesy of the House.

Mr LUCAS: One of the things of most interest to the Fitzgerald inquiry and to LCARC as well was the—

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, order! As I understand it, a question has been asked in a series of parts. The honourable gentleman is answering the question. The Attorney has the call.

Mr LUCAS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It is as clear as a bell that those opposite do not understand this matter by their interjections.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Honourable member for Kawana, that is the second time I have asked you to stop. There will not be another one.

Mr LUCAS: One of the issues that was as clear as a bell was their absolute and total and complete political interference with the electoral process in Queensland. In fact, the famous redistribution that was kept in a filing cabinet in 'Whispering' Wendy's office in the Premier's department went missing, so they could not really see it. But there is one thing that we do know for sure from those days—that is, as we saw in previous redistributions, when the community of Wujul Wujul all of a sudden turned up in the electorate of Cook. That was the first time there was an electorate with two non-contiguous parts. Of course, could we see anything in the process about that? We could see nothing. What this shows is that they have learned nothing of those lessons.

Mr SPEAKER: And I would ask the Attorney to come to the question of donations now.

Mr LUCAS: Why do I say that? Why? Because the honourable member asked a question about the conduct of the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission is independent of the government. The Electoral Commissioner administers the laws passed by the parliament and it is for the Electoral Commission then to interpret them. It is no different to the police administering the criminal laws of the land without the government telling them how to do it, and again that is something that those opposite did not understand at that time.

Bruce Highway Upgrade Strategy

Ms BOYLE: My question is to the Minister for Main Roads. The Bligh government's Bruce Highway Upgrade Strategy is an excellent example of how we are planning for the future. Could the minister please update us on progress with the strategy?

Mr WALLACE: I thank the honourable member for Cairns for her question. She was with me and the member for Mulgrave last week as we turned the first sod on that \$150 million Bruce Highway upgrade south of Cairns, funded by Labor governments. We have a vision for the Bruce Highway. Labor has a vision. Let me remind the House what happened the last time the tories were in power in Canberra. It funded \$100 million for the whole of the Bruce whereas it is close to \$500 million now under Labor. Cairns is seeing the largest road construction project ever, and it is the first stage of the Bruce Highway upgrade master plan coming to fruition. Our vision includes additional lanes, overpasses and a

state-of-the-art traffic management system. A project like this is all about the Bligh government's vision for jobs, jobs, jobs in order to create a prosperous and secure economic future for all Queenslanders. This project will create more than 400 jobs during the two-year construction phase in Cairns. That is great news for that Far North Queensland economy, and Labor is playing a role in supporting it. It also means that the 55,000 locals who will use that road each morning and afternoon to get to and from work will do it much more quickly. When people go to university, they will get there on time and they will get to school before the bell rings.

As the member for Cairns said, this project is just one of 10 major projects we have identified in our Bruce Highway Upgrade Strategy that we need to keep so that we can keep Far North Queensland moving for the next 20 years. But people will not see this project on the LNP's plan for the Bruce Highway. And why is that? Because it has no plan. There is no plan, and we have figured out why. The member for Cairns and I have figured out why. What we are seeing from the LNP is what I call the anti genie in the bottle syndrome: you can rub Campbell Newman on the head and instead of a genie appearing, he pops back into the bottle! 'Can-do' is gone, replaced with a 'could've, should've, would've'. When asked yesterday if he wished he had moved earlier to release his financial affairs, he told reporters, 'Well, perhaps yes.' Rub him on the head and back in the bottle he goes! He told the media that he regretted waiting so long. If Campbell Newman was in government, we would hear the same excuses: 'I could've fixed that road, but I didn't. I would've built a new cruise ship terminal, but I couldn't. I should've constructed that new bridge, but I didn't.' He has a track record in Brisbane of not delivering infrastructure. We have a plan for the Bruce Highway and we are delivering in Cairns and right across this state.

(Time expired)

Kingaroy, Water Quality

Mrs PRATT: My question is to the Minister for Community Services and Housing. The new units at 12-14 Belle Street in Kingaroy do not comply with the state government's own Queensland Development Code which mandates the installation of water tanks in all new class 1 residences and therefore has not yet been passed by council. I ask: why has the government ignored its own development code and on what grounds, if any, has it sought exemption from the code? In recognising the ongoing issue of water quality in Kingaroy, when will the units be fitted with tanks?

Ms STRUTHERS: I thank the member for the question and I thank the member for her interest in public housing, because not all members of the LNP support public housing and we have great difficulties in some areas where they continue to oppose the construction of public housing in their own local areas. I am not aware of the details in relation to the Kingaroy property that the member has spoken of. I would be very keen for her to contact me after the session this morning and I can follow that up immediately.

While I am on my feet, I am not going to let two minutes go without talking about housing right across the state. In the last couple of weeks alone I have been to Gladstone. I have met with the member for Gladstone about housing in her area. I have been to Mount Isa. I have been to many parts of the state to see what is happening in terms of the rollout of both our Future Growth Fund—our state money in relation to housing—and the Nation Building Jobs Plan money. They are two significant investments of funding into public housing right across the state.

It was good to meet with the member for Gladstone, because I know that she is very concerned about the housing pressures in Gladstone. As many members know, there are a lot of people benefiting from the prosperity of the resources sector and the developments in Gladstone. There are a lot of people benefiting from that and a lot of people moving into that region for jobs. However, that also brings pressures on housing prices for those people who are working in retail, the services sector and other areas who are not directly employed by the resources companies. We had a good talk about the pressures in Gladstone and there is a lot of action being undertaken. I commend the work done by our Treasurer and Deputy Premier and others such as Stirling Hinchliffe in terms of our major resource centres housing policy. In meeting with Liz Cunningham and Mayor Gail Sellers and her team, I saw how the companies are putting up significant funds as part of that policy to contribute to ease the housing pressures. In fact, the 236 apprentices in Gladstone are all going to get a \$80 a week housing subsidy because of some of those efforts. So it is as practical as that. It is not just about building new housing in those ULDA developments; it is practical initiatives like giving people housing subsidies. I know that the member for Gladstone is very keen. She wanted more public housing.

Mrs Cunningham: Absolutely.

Ms STRUTHERS: We are doing what we can. I inspected 20 units of accommodation built by our department in that area. We are seeing some great developments all around the state, but I am certainly happy to follow up with the member for Nanango in relation to the Kingaroy project.

Health Services

Ms NELSON-CARR: My question is to the Minister for Health. Could the minister please update the House on the Bligh government's plan to secure Queensland's health future?

Mr WILSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. Queensland Health and this government is delivering more beds, more services sooner and closer to home to Queenslanders right across the state with a \$7 billion building program over five to six years expanding every major hospital throughout the state—with just in this financial year approximately \$1.6 million or \$1.7 million. We will have employed by February about 4,700 extra doctors, nurses, physios, speech pathologists and other allied health professionals. There are about 40,000 construction jobs in that sector created directly and indirectly as a result of the infrastructure program. This is creating jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders as well as rolling out more beds, more services sooner and closer to home and employing more and more direct clinical staff—people who are treating patients in our hospitals.

By contrast, what is the LNP position? It has recently produced a grand plan for infrastructure in Queensland. Careful scrutiny of that document reveals that its grand plan offers no new bed, no new medical ward, no new surgical ward, no new emergency department, no new community health service, no new mental health facility, no new oral health service and no new primary health service. There is no new health infrastructure spending in their infrastructure program. Frankly, the 'can do' LNP in this space 'can't do'. 'Can Do's' problem is that he 'can't do' and he certainly 'can't do' in the health area. The public of Queensland has to ask what projects in the Bligh government's infrastructure program would Campbell Newman be cutting? The \$30 million Thursday Island Chronic Diseases Centre, the \$22 million left to spend in the Townsville expansion, the \$50 million for the final stage of Rockhampton, the \$230 million at Mackay, the \$98 million yet to be spent at Ipswich? Not to mention the mother of all health cuts: \$400 million cut from the Health budget. Not just cut from the Health budget, which we increased 10.6 per cent—\$1 billion—but cut from the Sunshine Coast. None of these programs appear in their 'can do' infrastructure program.

Mount Oxide Mine

Mr DEMPSEY: My question without notice is to the Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining. After spending more than \$1 million of taxpayers' dollars, why has the government failed to identify the source and stop stream pollution from the abandoned Mount Oxide mine north of Mount Isa, even though this pollution remains as a concern for landholders, a clear danger for stock and wildlife and a major black spot on the government's environmental management record?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the honourable member for the question. I want to reiterate how important this government's commitment is to dealing with the abandoned mine legacy that we have throughout the state. This state has a long and extensive history of mining, but unfortunately the largest proportion of that mining history was under a regime which did not have, as was introduced by Labor in the early 1990s, solid environmental requirements. In the days before those requirements were in place, the mining industry was not regulated in a way that placed a requirement on the tenure holders to clean up their operations before they were finalised.

We are, as a state, living with a legacy that is a terrible, terrible blight and is providing significant challenges. We as a government have committed to having in place a way of dealing with those abandoned mines which involves a significant treatment of water that flows from those mines and the impact of that. We are doing that in a range of places across Queensland. Mount Oxide is one of those places where we have ongoing monitoring and we liaise with the local landholders about the impacts those historic abandoned mines have. We have done significant work to rectify the damage that is going on. This is vitally important in places like Mount Morgan and Horn Island in the Torres Strait. These are large abandoned mines that have resulted in significant environmental damage that we have to manage and maintain. We will continue to do that in consultation with industry, the local community and local landholders.

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has ended.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Bligh Labor Government



Mr SEENEY (Callide—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.05 am): Today we see why the most commonly asked question in Queensland is, 'When is the election?' Queenslanders want to have an election and today in the parliament we have seen why. This is a government that is drowning in a sea of its own failures. It is drowning in the failures of its own creation. Those opposite have nothing to offer to the people of Queensland and nothing to offer to this parliament. Over the last few weeks—over the last couple of months—we have seen an increasing focus from the government on mud-slinging and personal attacks on Campbell Newman. The Treasurer epitomises that. So totally focused is the

Treasurer on Campbell Newman that he is like the proverbial rabbit in the spotlight. He is totally dazzled by Campbell Newman. It is Campbell Newman everything: Campbell Newman this, Campbell Newman that. Forget the AAA credit rating, forget about the state's finances, forget about the Treasury; it is all Campbell Newman. The Treasurer grabs hold of any opportunity to throw mud like a drowning man grabs a life raft. He grabs a life raft to try to save himself from drowning in that sea of failure that is his own creation.

It is time that the government made the choice that the people of Queensland so desperately want them to make: either focus on the business of governing or call an election and let the people of Queensland pass judgement on this government's record rather than indulge in the type of personal denigration and mud-slinging that we have seen over the last few weeks. What we have seen this morning is a new element that has been introduced into this desperation. We have seen this morning the good news that somehow Queensland is on the cusp of a huge mining boom, a huge economic boom, that will save the government before it has to go to an election, before the people of Queensland get a chance to pass their verdict. I have been here long enough to remember the days when this government would not even provide basic support to the mining industry, when it used to talk about the mining industry as a sunset industry, when a new industry—biotechnology I think it was called—was going to come and replace the part that the mining industry plays in Queensland's economy. Of course it never happened. Like so many of the false, hollow promises that the Labor government have offered to Queenslanders over the 10 years that they have sat over there, it never happened. Now those opposite seek to grab the mining industry as the saviour. They seek to make the mining industry another life raft for a government that so richly deserves the fate that Queenslanders are waiting to hand out.

The government is intent on importing from its New South Wales Labor colleagues the operatives who were so resoundingly successful in saving another failed government. The Labor government has established this high-level dirt unit that has obviously driven the agenda for the last couple of weeks. It is headed by a fellow called Eamonn Fitzpatrick. Maybe the Treasurer could tell us about it. Eamonn Fitzpatrick has been appointed as the principal media adviser at the office of the Queensland Premier. He is now on the government payroll. He is now on public funding.

Mr Johnson: How much is he getting?

Mr SEENEY: The member for Gregory asks a good question. How much is he getting? Is his salary going to be declared in the election costing caps? Will his salary be caught by the legislation that the Deputy Premier cannot even explain? Eamonn Fitzpatrick is an operative from Hawker Britton. He is an operative from the company that the Labor Party hire every election to run its public relations. He is an operative who has been imported from New South Wales to save this failed government. Rather than stump up and pay him themselves, rather than find the money to pay him themselves, they have put him on the public payroll. They have said to the people of Queensland, 'You put your hands in your pockets and you pay for this little grub to come up here and dig up dirt to throw at Campbell Newman.' They could not dig up the dirt themselves, so they got this refugee from a failed Labor regime in New South Wales, installed him in the Premier's office and said to the people of Queensland, 'Put your hands in your pockets and pay him for us'. That shows the desperation of this Labor government. It is but one more reason the people of Queensland will consign this failed Labor government to political history and the political fate that it so richly deserves.

Bligh Labor Government



Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.10 am): I want to talk about debt, deceit and broken promises, which are the hallmarks of this Labor government and Australia's worst Treasurer. This week we have discovered that it was not enough for Labor to go to the last election telling Queenslanders a whole stack of things that were palpably untrue and were never going to be delivered; even after that they have not learnt the lesson and the deceit continues. Let us reflect on what happened before the last election. Before the last election it was dragged out of the Treasurer that there would be no new taxes in Queensland. What do we have in Queensland? New taxes! Before the last election in Queensland it was dragged out that there were no plans for asset sales. What do we have? Asset sales! After they said they would be selling the assets, what did they say? They said, 'We're going to get the AAA credit rating back.' What do we have? No AAA credit rating! They said, 'We will use the proceeds to pay down the debt.' What do we have? More debt! When it comes to the debt, deceit and broken promises of the Queensland Labor Party and Australia's worst Treasurer, we have it in bucketfuls. They cannot do it.

Through the QTC annual report we have found out that following the asset sales the stake in QR National owned by the Queensland government has been hocked. It has been pawned. On the day that it was sold \$2.2 billion was borrowed, but where has the money gone? It has been spent. A sum of \$2.2 billion has been added to the debt of the state of Queensland. A sum of \$2.2 billion has been spent, the debt has not been reduced, the interest bill is going up and Queenslanders are paying more

because this government never learns. Before the last election it sent us broke in a boom, it lost our AAA credit rating, it broke its promises on asset sales, it broke its promises on no new taxes and it broke its promises on using the asset sales to pay down debt.

This is the story of a government that has no honour and no shame. This week we have seen that compounded as the New South Wales Labor disease is imported into Queensland. Last year the Premier said that she did not want the New South Wales disease to come to Queensland, but what do we have? We have the agent of infection, Mr Eamonn Fitzpatrick, the Hawker Britton operative, coming up here and being embedded in the Premier's media unit on the taxpayers' tab; at the cost of the Queensland taxpayer. He drops off the website for Hawker Britton, he is on leave and then he is not there at all. Where does he show up? He shows up here in Queensland on the payroll!

This Premier needs to ask some questions in relation to Mr Fitzpatrick. What will he do when he leaves this office? Will he go back to Hawker Britton? Is there an arrangement in place to second him up here? What advice does she get through him from Bruce Hawker, who visits level 15? He was there a couple of weeks ago, giving them advice because they have run out of ideas of their own. These are all the hallmarks of the Labor disease. It spreads through the Labor Party like ebola. It is not enough to have it in New South Wales or Victoria or in South Australia; it is now on its way to Queensland.

This shows the arrogance of Labor, which has been in power for such a long period and has run out of ideas. It is arrogance to use public funds to employ political operatives. It is arrogance to use public funds to dig dirt. It is arrogance to have a lack of policy ideas and a lack of planning for the future and to engage in meaningless rhetoric, dirt digging and dirt throwing. That is what the Labor Party has been involved in. Like any disease, there is only one way to get rid of this Labor disease and the arrogance that permeates throughout the entire government. The best way to get rid of this Labor disease is to get rid of Labor. There is only one way to get rid of this Labor disease: elect a can-do government, not Labor, not this time.

Newman, Mr C



Ms JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (11.16 am): In recent weeks issues of honesty and accountability have deservedly received prominent media scrutiny and coverage. They have been the subject of public interest because the LNP leader, Campbell Newman, has shown a real reluctance to meet the standards accepted by others who have sought to lead our state. Mr Newman has been dragged kicking and screaming to reveal even basic information about pecuniary interests. Others who have sought to lead Queensland since the Fitzgerald report have willingly divulged those details. In my own case, I have always adhered to the disclosure rules applying to my spouse and me. Whenever there has been the slightest question in my mind on any specific matter, I have never hesitated to actively seek appropriate advice.

By contrast, just like an old-style National Party leader, Campbell Newman has shown himself to be allergic to accountability. Each time he has told the electors of Ashgrove that he has disclosed everything and that he has told us the full story, we find out there is more that he has been hiding. For instance, let us consider the question of who has been paying him to campaign not in Ashgrove but to crisscross across Queensland. On March 24 in the *Australian* Campbell Newman said—

I'm not a wealthy man ... and in a matter of days I will not have an income.

On 4 April at a news conference he said—

Well I'm not being funded by the LNP if that's what you're asking.

Yet last month it was revealed Mr Newman was actually being paid \$12,000 a month by the LNP which, according to President Bruce McIver, is 'a small modest fee'. I have not met anyone who thinks that income of \$12,000 a month is a small and modest amount, particularly for those who are trying to pay off a mortgage. Mr Newman himself claimed that he was being paid less than a backbench state member of parliament, but under pressure from the media he had to reveal, once again, that this was just not true.

Let us consider his attempts to justify to the people of Ashgrove his own failure to meet minimum standards of openness and accountability in declaring his financial interests. On 14 September on 4BC, Campbell Newman said—

I have declared my interests, I did it in April this year, nothing's changed.

That was just not true. On the same day on ABC Radio Mr Newman said—

We have declared all our pecuniary interests. That was done in April before I left the Lord Mayoralty and nothing has changed.

We now know that that was just not true. In a letter to the Premier dated 22 September, Campbell Newman wrote—

Not only have I published my interests, I have undertaken to update those interests should any material change occur, as is required of MPs.

That is his own writing. We now know that that was just not true. On 24 September in the *Australian*, Mr Newman claimed, '... I have been more transparent than the Premier or any of her Ministers.' Again, we know that that is just not true.

Now this week Mr Newman has revealed new information about his pecuniary interests despite, as I have just outlined to the House, protesting for weeks in writing, on TV and in letters and articles to the electors of Ashgrove that there was nothing more to disclose. We saw a huge and significant backflip this week when it comes to his accountability.

Every time Campbell Newman tells the electors of Ashgrove that he has told us the full story it was just that, a story. Voters in Ashgrove and elsewhere must now ask themselves whether he is honest enough to represent their interests when he cannot tell the truth about his own. And what about those who are helping Campbell Newman mislead voters in Ashgrove? On 20 September the opposition leader said, 'Campbell Newman has gone over and above what is required of us as state parliamentarians.' Mr Newman himself has now shown that that was never true. The opposition leader went on to claim—

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I find the claim that what I said was untrue offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn. It was clearly the fact that he had declared more than me. It is quite indisputable. I find that offensive and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Ms JONES: I am actually quoting from an article. I quoted that the opposition leader said, 'Campbell Newman has gone over and above what is required of state parliamentarians.'

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kilburn): Order! It is my understanding that the member for Ashgrove is quoting from an article. If you are unhappy with that or you think it is untrue you have the ability to go through the normal processes for that. There is no point of order.

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. What I find offensive is the comment that the member for Ashgrove made that what I said and what was quite correctly quoted in the article was untrue. The member for Ashgrove is claiming that what I said was untrue. I find that offensive and ask for it to be withdrawn.

Ms JONES: I am happy to withdraw. What I should point members of the House to is another comment that the Leader of the Opposition made. He said, 'I do not believe that Campbell Newman has anything more to declare.' Well that is just not true because he actually had to spend his own time in the *Courier-Mail* admitting not only to the Leader of the Opposition but also to the electors of Ashgrove that for six weeks he has misled you, he has misled the electors of Ashgrove and he has misled all of the voters in Queensland who I think deserve to have honesty—honesty from a man who is trying to run for the top job in Queensland, honesty from a man who is wanting to represent an electorate where he does not live, which he has no intention of representing and where we barely see him now. Honesty and accountability is a basic requirement of all members of parliament.

(Time expired)

Ministerial Advisory Committee for HIV-AIDS, Hepatitis C and Sexual Health



Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.22 am): Last month I had the opportunity as the Parliamentary Secretary for Health to attend a meeting of the Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee for HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Sexual Health at Herston to discuss their progress. One of the privileges of my role is seeing firsthand the extraordinary talent and commitment of Queenslanders who work very hard every day to improve the health of Queenslanders in their communities, especially those gathered in that committee room that day who have a range of expertise.

The complexity of the issues faced by the committee is enormous and a many-layered approach is required to find solutions to the ever-increasing rates of STIs and blood borne viruses, BBVs. Their work to address public health and improve the lives of those affected by STIs and BBVs is very challenging. We have every right to be concerned about the rising number of notifications of sexually transmissible infections and high rates of blood borne viruses in Queensland.

The message I am hearing is not good. As a lay person I get quite scared when I read statistics and stories on the subject of sexually transmissible infections. Chlamydia notifications in Queensland increased by 59 per cent between 2006 and 2010. Between 2009 and 2010 the number of notifications of infectious syphilis increased by 19 per cent, while notifications of gonorrhoea increased by 35 per cent. Rates of sexually transmissible infections in some Indigenous communities are up to 11 times higher than those in other parts of the state. HIV notification rates in Queensland have increased by six per cent per year over the past 10 years—a pattern similar to that seen in other states. Meanwhile, I hear estimates that one third of people with chronic hepatitis B remain undiagnosed and high rates of hepatitis C continue among some of our most vulnerable populations.

However, now is not the time to bury our heads in the sand and hope these problems pass. The quality of life of too many people is at stake. Too many people are experiencing poor health outcomes because of STIs and BBVs. Perhaps most tragic of all, the high prevalence of STIs increases the risk that babies are born with congenital syphilis, HIV or gonococcal infection.

When working in such a demanding and sensitive health area, we cannot work in isolation. As NGOs, as health experts and practitioners, and as a government we have to coordinate and unify our efforts to tackle these diseases. That is why the committee is so important. They have worked together to provide vital monitoring, reviewing, evaluating and reporting on the Queensland HIV, Hepatitis C and Sexually Transmissible Infections Strategy 2005-2011 which has recently been evaluated. I think the most important aspect of the strategy will be to provide a coordinated and unified approach in addressing the significant health issues associated with HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs in the Queensland population.

There is a strong sense of partnership in the development of the strategy and in the implementation of the actions. This kind of approach is vital in our efforts to reduce STI and BBV rates across Queensland. There is ample evidence here in Queensland and throughout the world that major advances have been made in research, treatment, patient management and numerous other areas. The Queensland government has teamed up with the Commonwealth to provide \$19.5 million in funding in 2011-12 to resource a wide range of HIV-AIDS, hepatitis C and sexual health programs. This is on top of the ongoing funding provided by Queensland Health for public sexual health services, infectious disease units and specialist liver clinics in the major hospitals across the state. I commend the work of the committee and I hope that they continue to produce results that will benefit all Queenslanders for years to come.

At the end of August this year I had the opportunity to officially tour the Cairns North Community Health Centre to see firsthand the valuable services they provide to Cairns and surrounds. The building, which includes a dental health service, is thoroughly modern with the latest in technology. Clients are warmly welcomed and treated with dignity. Privacy is absolutely guaranteed.

Services offered include testing and treatment of STIs, HIV and hepatitis, needle and syringe packs and counselling and information. An Indigenous health worker team provides outreach programs to remote areas. I congratulate the team of medical and allied professionals and staff who do a fantastic job in a very challenging environment.

(Time expired)

Construction Industry, Dispute Resolution



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.27 am): In my capacity as shadow minister for the building industry I have met with many out-of-pocket homeowners over the last few months. They are all telling me the same disturbing thing—that consumer protection standards have fallen significantly under the Bligh government and the BSA has become a toothless tiger. The fact that the BSA's dispute processing times have blown out to a record 120 days is staggering enough, but it gets worse with homeowners now increasingly finding themselves caught up in costly and drawn out legal battles with multimillion dollar building companies, all as a direct result of the government's incompetence and inaction.

It is difficult enough for consumers to navigate the often perilous building and renovation process at the best of times, but now thanks to the government it gets worse as there are a small but growing number of unscrupulous operators taking advantage of homeowners by exploiting a loophole in the existing legal disputes system. This is a legal loophole created by the Bligh Labor government and one it refuses to close, much to the detriment of homeowners and the BSA.

The loophole in question was created when QCAT was created. Ironically, QCAT was supposed to lead to earlier resolution outcomes and easier resolution outcomes for homeowners. QCAT was supposed to be a consumer friendly super tribunal—all things to all people—but it has failed to live up to expectations because of the government's poor administration, resourcing and incompetence.

The QCAT loophole allows for contractors to effectively bypass a BSA complaints investigation by instead going straight to QCAT. This immediately halts any BSA action and thus turns BSA into a toothless tiger. In July during the estimates committee hearing I quizzed the minister concerning this legal loophole and he admitted that homeowners were suffering as a result. But I was then astounded to learn that he has no plans to close this loophole. In fact, he said it would take a further 18 months to secure funding for much needed reforms to close the loophole. This is not good enough. Buying a house or undertaking a major renovation represents the single largest investment in most people's lives. The state government should be protecting families from predatory and unethical practices, but here in Queensland we have mums and dads out there under huge financial stress fighting expensive court battles, and many of them are stuck with structurally defective homes that are unsaleable.

I have spoken to dozens of people face to face whose lives have been derailed and destroyed when their dream home turns into a costly nightmare. Recently I met with a delegation of disgruntled homeowners led by LNP Mount Coot-tha candidate Saxon Rice, who is a passionate advocate for consumer rights. Among Saxon's group was an elderly widow whose home had had a major subsidence problem, largely as a result of trees being planted too close to the house. She trustingly contracted a licensed builder to perform the rectification work to the foundations, but the builder subcontracted part of this work to another contractor who was working outside his scope of work and he botched the job and, as a result, her home is now structurally defective.

As soon as the builder found out that he was going to be pursued by the BSA, he cynically lodged concurrent proceedings in QCAT against the widow to tie her up and bleed her dry. This stopped any BSA involvement in its tracks because the matter was before the courts, forcing the poor little old lady into the costly court system. The builder has since gone into liquidation, further leaving her out of pocket and in the lurch. This type of scenario is happening all too often as word gets around the industry that this is the way to beat the BSA.


For the government to sit on its hands and do nothing to close the gaping loophole while homeowners are being burnt in the legal system is wrong and akin to Emperor Nero fiddling while Rome burns. Not only has the government's inaction over the loophole adversely affected homeowners; the BSA has also been let down in a big way. The BSA is supposed to regulate the residential building industry to protect consumers, but the QCAT loophole has turned it into a toothless tiger, hamstrung and impotent—unable to act.

My assessment is that the BSA is doing a good job under difficult circumstances. However, it is continually being forced to fight with one hand tied behind its back. If the BSA is ever going to fulfil its primary function of policing the residential building industry, it needs the proper tools to do the job. The long-awaited KPMG organisational review into the BSA was released in June with a raft of recommendations, but the report has been gathering dust in the minister's ivory tower office—out of reach and out of touch with ordinary Queensland homeowners. He is known as the minister who sits on his hands while Rome burns. He is Finn the fiddler.

I have read the KPMG report with interest and I have also read the LNP's BSA discussion paper, compiled by the former shadow minister Jann Stuckey, the member for Currumbin, who also is a passionate advocate for consumer rights. Both documents stress the need for greater consumer protection for homeowners. Rest assured that, if elected, an LNP government will act quickly to close the loophole to protect consumers and once again empower the BSA to perform its independent role without fear or favour.

(Time expired)

Newman, Mr C

 **Mr LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (11.32 am): About four weeks ago in this House I suggested that Mr Newman document his pecuniary interests—what I thought was a simple and reasonable request. I thought it may be a 24-hour story before Mr Newman put an end to it by acknowledging that it was a reasonable request. Every other aspiring Premier has done this since the Fitzgerald inquiry. After all, he is no ordinary candidate. He is the Leader of the LNP. He has a vote in his party room. He therefore has a big say on issues of policy and legislation before this House.

The rules have not been formulated to cover the situation where a candidate sought the premiership from outside the parliament, as Mr Newman is doing. Essentially, I was simply asking for Mr Newman to abide by the spirit of Fitzgerald—a spirit of transparency and accountability—by suggesting that he should do what each of the other two alternative Premiers at the next election have already done—that is, Premier Bligh and the other alternative LNP Premier Jeff Seeney. But instead of submitting to the same level of transparency and accountability as Anna Bligh and Jeff Seeney, he self-assessed his situation and said that he would not comply with the pecuniary interest that every other aspiring Premier has complied with since the late eighties. Since then, he has just recently changed his mind.

So for the last month we have had the most intemperate and inaccurate assertions by Mr Newman about an ALP 'dirt unit' digging up dirt on him and his family, notwithstanding that most of the investigation has been undertaken by media outlets such as the *Courier-Mail*. We then had the recent hysterical assertion by Mr Newman that the government was full of 'drunks, punks and desperadoes'. Can I remind Mr Newman that it was not government members who had to be chased down the main street of Cairns in the middle of the night to pay a restaurant bill; it was LNP members. Can I remind Mr Newman that it was not government members who could not get themselves to this chamber to vote in a division because they were too drunk; it was LNP members. When it comes to 'drunks, punks and desperadoes', Mr Newman need look no further than the party of which he is a leader.

Further, on Mr Newman's well-known glass jaw and his demonstrated inability to handle pressure, I quote—

Monday to Friday, he's often out of Brisbane and at regional centres listening to the punters.

That's sensible as he needs to show he isn't Brisbane-focused.

...

It's also because he can avoid the press gallery and the tough questions. He's often back in Brisbane for the weekend because press gallery journos are off then.

...

Ask any journo in Brisbane; if you didn't toe the line while he was mayor you got blacklisted. If you toed the line you got the exclusive.

Newman had half the council reporters scared. Almost all of them spent time in the "naughty corner" for negative yarns.

They are not my words; they were written by the *Gold Coast Bulletin* columnist Daniel Meers in the paper's edition of 30 September. Daniel has some unkind things to say about the state government in the same column, but, unlike Mr Newman, I do not regard Mr Meers to be part of a fictitious dirt unit or his criticisms of the government to be part of some grand conspiracy.

What about Mr Newman's hissy fit last week when he cracked under pressure and sunk to muckraking and name calling, describing the Premier as a 'sleaze bucket' and defaming others in the government? I quote—

When a man attacks a woman in politics you have to be very careful. Does this guy have the temperament to lead Queensland?

Again, they not my words; they are from Robert Craddock in the *Courier-Mail* of 8 October. I quote again—

There is now a perception among some people that [Campbell Newman has] got a glass jaw and doesn't have the character to be Premier.

Yet again, they are not my words but those of the *Courier-Mail's* Dennis Atkins in the same edition.

Now let us consider what prompted these assessments—Mr Newman's whingeing and whining and his resistance to meeting basic standards of accountability. I quote—

In political terms, Newman was a dill not to volunteer everything that he has subsequently been forced to reveal.

The problem is not Newman's financial affairs (good luck to him).

The problem is his intemperate response.

Yet again, they are not my words but those of *Sunday Mail* columnist Terry Sweetman. Is Mr Sweetman part of the 'dirt unit'? Is he part of the conspiracy which includes Dennis Atkins and Robert Craddock that is unfairly exposing his shortcomings? I quote again—

There is no excuse for obfuscation, waffling, word games and cover-ups when it comes to accountability.

The public expects and should get honesty, transparency and full disclosure when it comes to the pecuniary interests of politicians, especially those who aspire to leadership.

Mr Newman failed this basic test in recent weeks.

They are not my words; they are from the *Courier-Mail* editorial on 8 October. Surely the *Courier-Mail* is not part of the 'dirt unit'. I quote also from Steven Wardill, who says—

Newman's defence often consists of him declaring himself ethical, so therefore any questions to the contrary are wrong and malicious.

It's not all that far removed from Sir Joh's famed, 'Don't you worry about that' response whenever he faced tough questions.

I am sure Mr Wardill is not part of that conspiracy. All of Campbell Newman's problems have been self-inflicted. His problems stem from his character, his temperament and his failure to grasp the need to be honest and open with voters. A glass jaw, a talent for evasion and a willingness to cover up—they are not the qualities that we want in a state leader.

(Time expired)

Gladstone Region, Fish Health



Dr ROBINSON (Cleveland—LNP) (11.37 am): The Gladstone fish fiasco is another example of gross Labor government failure that is now starting to smell like a cover-up. Over the last few months large numbers of diseased fish of various species have been caught in Gladstone Harbour. Recently, a cluster of 20 fishermen have fallen ill while doing their work as fishermen. These fishermen who work in Gladstone Harbour have presented ill to hospitals and doctors' surgeries with common complaints of skin rashes, boils, lesions and nausea. The number of sick fishermen is higher than what would be considered normal. Fishermen's livelihoods have suffered greatly and, due to no fault of their own, men like Trevor Falzon have had their livelihoods impacted during already tough economic times.

The government and particularly the fisheries minister have displayed gross incompetence, negligence and even deceitfulness in the following ways: by doing nothing about a serious developing health issue over several months since the problem was first reported to Fisheries Queensland officers in May—and perhaps even earlier—but then claiming to know nothing about it until 15 September; by prematurely reopening Gladstone Harbour for fishing before it was safe to do so; by deliberately refusing to acknowledge and report the real number of diseased fish being caught; by falsifying test results by claiming that 160 fish had been tested but then later admitting that it was only four or five fish—it cannot be both, minister; by abusing science by pre-empting the findings of its own independent scientific inquiry before the panel met even once; by underestimating the human toll in terms of people falling ill and commercial fishermen's livelihoods; by placing at risk Gladstone's and even Queensland's seafood industry; and by ruling out dredging and water quality as a potential cause of sickness in diseased fish before toxicology results have ruled out the potential impacts of heavy metals—testing that is not due until November.

In terms of the underreporting of the scale of the issue, when Fisheries Queensland officers have worked as observers in the harbour they have failed to report any diseased fish species other than barramundi. When fishermen have asked why observers did not register sick salmon and other species, they were advised that Fisheries Queensland were counting only barramundi, so there appears to be a serious undercounting of diseased fish by deliberate instruction.

What does the minister know about this accusation by fishermen? Does he dispute it, or does he know nothing about this also? The minister this morning said of the Gladstone fishing problem that this disease is not unexpected. He also stated that 20 per cent of the fish tested were diseased; that is hardly a normal or expected level of sickness. The minister's strategy of counting only barramundi means that the government has underestimated the magnitude of the problem. Like Private Vanderbilt of *F Troop* fame, the minister is stumbling along and is unable to see diseased fish in front of his face.

What about the large numbers of diseased fish that are still being caught? Since the ban was lifted last Friday, commercial fishermen have continued to catch significant numbers of diseased fish—far in excess of the 20 per cent the minister is prepared to admit. Commercial fisherman Trevor Falzon fished on the day the harbour was reopened. He caught a significant number of fish and estimated that four in five—or 80 per cent—were diseased. Another fisherman reported to me this morning that in the last few days he had caught two tonne of fish from the Gladstone Harbour but, to his dismay, 100 per cent of his catch was rejected as unfit for sale due to the suspicion of disease around Gladstone Harbour. These catches support the conclusion that there is still a major issue in the harbour that is not going to go away by itself no matter how hard the minister and government wish.

What about the impact on commercial fishing? What lurks below the murky waters of Gladstone Harbour is worse than a renegade great white shark. We still do not know what it is, but it is causing greater devastation to the commercial fishing than a trawler-destroying jaws ever could. Fishermen are going broke and they need support. If the government is shown to have been negligent, then the fishermen will be due compensation. The seafood industry in Queensland could also be decimated if the government does not handle this carefully.

Then there is the question of when the minister knew. He said 15 September, yet Fisheries Queensland officers knew in May this year. What is clear is that the Gladstone fish fiasco has blown up in the face of the government, which has put spin before science and politics before people.

(Time expired)

Dengue Fever, Research



Mr WETTENHALL (Barron River—ALP) (11.43 am): I am pleased to report to the House on the progress of some very important scientific research being carried out in Far North Queensland and to explain how the Bligh government is supporting the project and building the research capability of the region. Dengue fever is the most widespread mosquito-borne viral disease in the world, with an estimated 2.5 billion people living in dengue transmission areas and more than 50 million infections every year. Although numbers fluctuate, every year there are dengue outbreaks in Northern Queensland. In 2011, there were 55 confirmed cases in Innisfail, nine in Townsville and five in Cairns.

Dengue can be fatal and deaths can and do occur. Traditional control methods have mostly involved the use of insecticides and the removal of breeding sites. Neither method is totally effective nor sustainable and there is as yet no functioning vaccine. But now an international team of researchers from the University of Queensland, James Cook University and the Queensland Institute of Medical Research has successfully trialled a new biological control method. The method involved introducing wolbachia, a natural bacterium known to reduce the ability of mosquitoes carrying dengue to transmit the virus into wild populations, thereby reducing the risk of transmission between people. Following years of laboratory work, the results of the first open field trials have recently been published in the prestigious scientific journal *Nature*, and I table a copy of three articles that appear in the journal.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 25 August 2011, published in *Nature* titled 'Successful establishment of Wolbachia in Aedes populations to suppress dengue transmission' [5571].

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 25 August 2011, published in *Nature* titled 'The wMel Wolbachia strain blocks dengue and invades caged Aedes aegypti populations' [5572].

Tabled paper: Article, dated 25 August 2011, published in *Nature* titled 'Mosquitoes attacked from within' [5573].

The results are very exciting. In January 2011, mosquitos carrying wolbachia were released at Yorkeys Knob and Gordonvale near Cairns. Wolbachia mosquitos were released over three months, after which it was found that 100 per cent of the mosquitoes at Yorkeys Knob and 90 per cent at Gordonvale were carrying wolbachia. What this means is that we are getting very close to an effective worldwide control of dengue and we are a big step closer to the ultimate goal of eliminating dengue altogether.

When I was first approached by the Eliminate Dengue team for my opinion on how the proposed field trial would be received by the people of Yorkeys Knob, I was confident that they would recognise the importance of the project and embrace the opportunity to be part of such world-leading research. I was right, and I want to place on record my thanks to the people of Yorkeys Knob in the Barron River electorate for their overwhelming support for this project.

I am proud that our government has supported this project with a \$1.95 million Smart State funding contribution. I commend Professor Scott O'Neill, Professor Scott Ritchie and the entire Eliminate Dengue team for reaching this highly significant point in their campaign to rid the world of the scourge of dengue fever. The project is a fine example of what can be achieved with the collaboration of researchers and institutions.

The benefits of collaboration are epitomised by the Queensland Tropical Health Alliance, with which Professor Ritchie is associated as a researcher. The QTHA brings together in one network world-class researchers focused on reducing the burden of tropical diseases in Queensland and other tropical regions of the world. The QTHA, in its brand-new headquarters and medical research laboratory at James Cook University at the Cairns campus at Smithfield, was launched on 14 July this year by the Treasurer and Minister for State Development, Andrew Fraser. In 2009 our government committed \$19.45 million as an interest-free loan to establish the QTHA; \$12 million of that funding goes to JCU towards the construction and equipping of the new facility at the Smithfield campus as well as equipping one floor of a new medical research laboratory at the Townsville campus.

I have no doubt that the QTHA will become one of this state's great scientific assets and there is no more appropriate place for the QTHA to be headquartered than at this outstanding new facility at the Smithfield campus of JCU. The QTHA and the Eliminate Dengue project is an example of how our government is nurturing the development of a tropical expertise industry in Queensland and how Cairns is uniquely placed to be a world leader in tropical health research. This is embodied in our government's Q-Tropics strategy and is an important component of the Cairns economic future plan which aims to diversify the Cairns, and in particular, far northern economy.

Through the great work of our leading scientists, the cooperation of local communities and the support of the Bligh government, the Eliminate Dengue project has been an outstanding success. Bringing together our top scientists with the latest equipment in first-class facilities has already placed Cairns and Tropical North Queensland on the map as a world-class tropical research centre, and this reputation can only continue to be enhanced in the future.

Education, Curriculum



Dr FLEGG (Moggill—LNP) (11.48 am): When it comes to education, what Queensland parents want above anything else is results. They were certainly horrified at the attempt to include a Labor Party speech in the school curriculum—a speech which is likely to form part of the Labor Party re-election campaign early next year—and to see that speech put up alongside the great speeches in our history. The education syllabus for our children should be free of this sort of politics and political intervention. It is very important that parents have the confidence that we are making these decisions based on the best education advice available and free of any political influence.

There is no better proof of how this government is out of ideas in education, as in every other area, than the fact that all they have got left to offer Queenslanders this far out from an election campaign is mud-slinging. If they had anything to offer in education or indeed in the rest of the state, we would be hearing that—not simply mud-slinging.


As shadow minister for education I get to meet many education stakeholders, teachers and headmasters. Over time I become more and more impressed with their commitment and with the job that they do. I also understand the frustration that many of them have. These teachers and headmasters, along with the students and parents of Queensland, want to be the best in Australia. The LNP will support them in that effort in every way. With this in mind I read the annual report of the education department. There are many things contained in that report that should be better than they are and there are many things that should be ringing alarm bells.

In disadvantaged communities that need early childhood education the most, 62 per cent of children do not go to a kindergarten program. The government's target was that only 45 per cent should miss out. Sixty-two per cent are missing out—nearly two-thirds. No wonder they run the risk of slipping further behind. The figures are there in the report in black and white. The situation with regard to kindergarten for Indigenous children is even worse. Sixty-five per cent of Queensland's Indigenous children miss out on a kindergarten program. Page 82 of the annual report sets out Indigenous performance in NAPLAN. It shows that, on some measures, as few as 62 per cent of students are able to meet the minimum standard. This should be giving us considerable concern for the future.

I refer to NAPLAN. Twenty areas were tested in grades 3, 5, 7 and 9. The best result we were able to achieve in any one of those 20 areas was fourth in Australia. We can all count how many states and territories there are in Australia. We have a KPI for the two upper bands revealed in the annual report, yet the report does not give the figures for the upper bands. We should not be ashamed to support the best of students in this state. If you look at maths and science you see that on TIMSS in year 4 Queensland came eighth out of eight states and territories in scientific literacy. No wonder we are struggling to staff the mining industry! We are bouncing along the bottom of the states, with the small states. I mention also the results for students with disabilities. Almost a quarter of parents are dissatisfied with their school when their students attend a state school. Page 99 sets out the post school destination of students.

(Time expired)

Newman, Mr C

 **Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (11.53 am): I note the column in today's *Courier-Mail* by Paul Williams in which he likens Gordon Nuttall to Campbell Newman and makes some comparisons. 'What is the difference between Gordon Nuttall and Campbell Newman?' is an apt question following the recent revelations about his deceptive conduct. Both hate scrutiny. Both reject advice. Both, when confronted with the truth, blame others and strike out at their accusers. Nuttall told this House that everyone was doing what he was, that the rules did not apply to him and that he was not guilty of anything. Newman says that he does not have to declare that he is a beneficiary of a company set up with his mother because he does not earn money from it. Nuttall said that he did not have to declare money he got from a wealthy miner because it was less than \$10,000 a month—reinterpreting the rules to suit himself, just as Newman is.

The LNP has torn up the rule book by creating a leader of the opposition outside of the parliamentary rules. Therefore, this leader does not have to declare where the \$12,000 per month is coming from. We do not know if Newman is getting the same deal that Nuttall got from a rich miner after the money has been laundered by the LNP, as people like McIver are hiding that information from public view. Every member of the LNP in this chamber shares this guilt, as he who holds the ladder for the thief to climb the wall is as guilty as the thief. Every member here should be demanding that Newman obey the declaration rules as though he was a member and tell the public where this money is coming from.

Nuttall is in jail because the former Premier referred him to the CMC, stood him down as a minister and ultimately forced him out of this place. We made no concession to him. We took away his superannuation. Contrast that with what those opposite are saying. The puppet Leader of the Opposition has attacked the Premier for airing Newman's dirty secrets, accusing her of muckraking—in much the same way Nuttall attacked the CMC in this chamber. This is not dirt; this is the inconvenient truth.

Newman has covered up his assets from public view. A would-be Premier who thinks he can write his own rules runs Joh's ghost up my spine. I lived through the Joh era. I recall the planning deals that saw ministers like Russ Hinze become millionaires through cabinet decisions that they themselves made. And I have no doubt that Newman was keeping units that one day will be his from public view so that he could not be caught out doing deals to make even more money out of them through rezoning and the like, and no-one would know about it.

Then, of course, we need to be aware that as Premier Newman would be in a position to change the pecuniary interest register rules as he sees fit to overcome the hurdles that have already tripped him up. You can bet money on that one, given his recent performance. Mr Newman has been dragged, kicking and screaming, to the altar of public accountability. He has been humiliated into making a half-hearted apology, just like Nuttall was—insincere and full of reservations. It is clear that the only thing he is sorry about is that he has been caught out. He has been used to the pampering that he got down at City Hall, where he was king of the kids. He got away with his brother-in-law breaking into council chambers on election night—the same brother-in-law he rorted into a senior council post, the same brother-in-law he conspired with during the Brisbane floods to make money out of people's misery and then shamefully traded on his mother-in-law's ill health to excuse his wife's interest in the company.

Newman also showed weakness in not disendorsing that disgraceful example of flawed humanity, the egotistical misogynist King. Either he agrees with King that drunkenness should be rewarded with rape or he does not. We do not know. There is no excuse for rape. Rape is violent, antiwomen behaviour which is done by spineless perverts. It is an offence against humanity. No-one who wants to be in a position in politics should do anything but condemn rape, not excuse it as King has done. Newman has not sacked this bloke; nor has he distanced himself from the views of this awful bit of work, and he has compounded the offence by attempting to explain it. I have not heard one member opposite dissociate himself from the remarks made by King or by Newman, and it is a disgrace that we actually have female members here who seem to be condoning of this practice.

Newman and Nuttall are a pigeon pair. They love money, they hate accountability, they crave importance and they attack the truth. They claim to care for people and yet use every chance they can to make a dollar out of them. We are just beginning to find out about Newman's deceit as lord mayor. We now see the elaborate network of companies he has used to cover his tracks. Perhaps he is better at it than Nuttall is after all. The question is: what other sorts of underhanded deals would this bloke come into if he was the Premier of this state?

Herbert, Mrs J; Gladstone Harbour



Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—Ind) (11.58 am): Many serious issues have been raised this morning that would be solved by an independent royal commission into political corruption.

A disagreement has developed between a Mrs Jean Herbert and Lorraine Pyefinch, the mayor of Bundaberg Regional Council. Jean is a Bargara resident who caught the flesh-eating bug vibrio vulnificus after wading at the popular bathing area called the Basin. At Easter this year the bug entered a small graze in Jean's heel, and 48 hours later she almost died because of the fast-spreading infection. With permission from Mrs Herbert, I table photos of her leg before, during and after she received life-saving surgery. Those photos are also on a memory stick.

Tabled paper: Copy of pictures of limbs affected by vibrio vulnificus [5575].

Tabled paper: USB containing copy of correspondence, article and images tabled by Mr Rob Messenger MP relating to vibrio vulnificus [5579].

I also table a letter Mrs Herbert has written to me describing her experience and subsequent fight with the Bundaberg Regional Council in order to stop this bug from injuring or killing some other unsuspecting adult or child.

Tabled paper: Letter, undated, from Mrs Jean Herbert to Mr Rob Messenger MP relating to vibrio vulnificus [5574].

Jean has spoken—indeed pleaded—with Mayor Pyefinch and many Bundaberg city councillors, including Councillor Greg Barnes, in an effort to establish water quality tests and to erect proper warning signs at the Basin. Her request to close the Basin until tests have given the Basin the all clear have been refused. On behalf of Jean I have written letters and emails to all Bundaberg regional councillors. None except Deputy Mayor Ricciardi have indicated that they are willing to help. Indeed, Councillor Batt, a serving part-time police officer, proudly told me that, unlike me, he was willing to let his family swim at the Basin. He is a lucky man. Because of his privileged position on the council, he is able to make an informed decision, unlike the thousands of unsuspecting tourists and locals who have not been warned or given any information of how Jean Herbert contracted the flesh-eating bug.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 13 September 2011, from Mr Rob Messenger MP to Mr Peter Byrne, Chief Executive Officer, Bundaberg Regional Council regarding vibrio vulnificus [5577].

The council has used the excuse that vibrio vulnificus is naturally occurring for its inaction but fails to acknowledge that the place where Mrs Herbert contracted the disease—the Basin, and I tabled pictures—is a man-made swimming enclosure built by Kanaks 120 years ago, the like of which rarely occurs on the Queensland or Australian coast.

Tabled paper: Copy of pictures of Kelly Beach [5578].

The Basin's unique design combined with the lack of natural tidal cleaning means that it is the ideal environment for the breeding of vibrio vulnificus, which occurs in oysters. I table a scientific study on the occurrence of the flesh-eating bug in oysters in Chesapeake Bay in America.


Tabled paper: Copy of article, dated February 1996, published in *Applied and Environmental Microbiology* titled 'Distribution of Vibrio Vulnificus in the Chesapeake Bay' [5576].

The photos show that the Basin, one, is not completely open to the ocean and consequently is not properly flushed or cleaned of sediment by tidal action; two, most likely has a large build-up of silt and flood polluted sediment deposited over 100 years of use; three, is a place where a water temperature of 25 degrees in the summer months is ideal for the proliferation and the breeding of vibrio vulnificus in oysters found growing on its volcanic rock walls; and, four, that these are oysters which are easily accessed at low tide by the public, who regularly consume them.

The Basin is the site where at least one known and nearly fatal case of vibrio vulnificus was contracted by Mrs Herbert, and she does not want it to be the site which produces any more harm or—God forbid—death. The mayor of the Bundaberg region, Lorraine Pyefinch, and local councillors Greg Barnes and Councillor Batt, amongst many, should be ashamed of their do-nothing response to this serious public health matter over the last three months, and so should the Premier and the health minister of this government, who have also been alerted to this threat. Today I renew my call for Premier Bligh and the state government and Mayor Pyefinch and all Bundaberg regional councillors to act immediately to protect the public health of Bargara residents and visitors to our region.

In response to the Gladstone Harbour dredging water quality and environmental crisis, which has severely impacted on the northern Burnett community of Turkey Beach, professional fishers and other small businesses, visitors and residents and a delegation of approximately five professional fishermen who have firsthand experience of the skin rashes and boils and who have personally seen the turtles, stingrays, sharks and dugongs dead will be coming to this place on Thursday to speak personally with Fisheries Minister Wallace. I understand that the minister is busy, but I would ask that he and other ministers and indeed the Premier set aside some time to talk with people who are directly involved with one of Queensland's biggest environmental and water quality disasters. The government and the LNG industry will benefit from this. They must compensate professional fishers and small businesses injured by this dredging.

Runaway Bay Sports and Leadership Excellence Centre

 **Ms CROFT** (Broadwater—ALP) (12.03 pm): This month marks the one-year anniversary of the state government's purchase of the Runaway Bay sports centre at Runaway Bay. Today I want to share with the House the transformation of this centre that has been underway and the exciting opportunities that further development of the centre offers to Broadwater residents, the Gold Coast and Queensland. The centre was purchased in October 2010 for \$15 million. This outcome was the result of an ongoing campaign by me to ensure that this world-class facility remained a facility for local residents to access to improve and maintain their health and fitness as well as a training venue for international and national sporting stars. Premier Anna Bligh's support for the purchase was instrumental in making this happen and I thank the Premier for her vision to see local and regional school students beneficiaries of this acquisition. The newly named Runaway Bay Sports and Leadership Excellence Centre now operates an outdoor education centre staffed by Education Queensland and has delivered a multitude of leadership programs, including Indigenous leadership camps that were held in conjunction with events such as the NRL youth summit. To date, 40 state schools from five regions have participated in specialised camps. Previously, these schools would not have had the resources to access the centre and all that it offers.

The centre is one of the only models of its kind in the world to simultaneously balance the needs of elite athletes, student groups and the growing membership base of healthy minded locals. Centre manager David Morgan, like me, is very proud of the fact that the centre hosts sporting teams such as the Matildas, Triathlon Australia, the Brisbane Broncos, the Spanish Swimming Federation, the Gold Coast Suns and the elite Kenyan and Tanzanian distance runners, to name a few, and that these teams and more have shared the same centre facilities and services as our state school students, our future leaders. What a great way for students to be inspired to achieve their goals to see elite athletes training at the same venue as them, demonstrating effort and commitment.

The centre is also developing innovative outreach programs where the centre's team of exercise specialists work with local schools to facilitate before- and after-school exercise classes that are open to students, parents, teachers and friends of the school. I know that the centre also supports the community by providing swimming for the disabled at reduced rates, a venue for the MS 24-hour swim and by sponsoring local athletes. With a large and fully equipped gymnasium, exercise classes and learn-to-swim classes to junior squads, the centre really has everything to offer. As a training camp, the centre is ideal. It offers nine purpose-built accommodation lodges, making it the ideal location for school and sport training camps. For all of those reasons and more, the centre would also be the ideal training venue for any international and national sporting team should the Gold Coast be successful in its bid to host the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

The centre offers elite athletes everything they need to enable them to prepare for a major international event such as the Commonwealth Games in a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere. I want to thank David Morgan and all of the staff for their recent efforts in extending a warm and happy welcome to visiting Commonwealth Games Federation delegates as they toured the centre. Without doubt, Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre is a great facility on the northern Gold Coast. The state government's purchase of this facility is paying dividends in so many areas and has done so in such a short amount of time. I will continue to work closely with the management to ensure that the centre continues to deliver good outcomes and opportunities for athletes, local residents, schoolchildren and the wider community.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kilburn): Order! The time for matters of public interest has expired.

MOTION

Order of Business



Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (12.07 pm): I move—

That government business order of the day No. 1 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

DISASTER READINESS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee



Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (12.07 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003, the South East Queensland Water (Restructuring) Act 2007, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008, for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Disaster Readiness Amendment Bill 2011 [[5580](#)].

Tabled paper: Disaster Readiness Amendment Bill 2011, explanatory notes [[5581](#)].

I am very pleased to introduce the Disaster Readiness Amendment Bill 2011. The natural disasters experienced in Queensland over the 2010-11 wet season were unprecedented. Queensland's summer of sorrow will long be remembered for the dramatic impact it had on the lives of many families and the widespread devastation inflicted across the state. However, it will also be remembered for the remarkable resilience and strength demonstrated by so many Queenslanders. As we approach the coming disaster season, we must maintain our efforts to ensure that Queensland is prepared to respond to disaster events in the future. There are many lessons to be learned from the 2010-11 disasters and my government is working hard together with local governments, the Commonwealth government and our other disaster management partners to ensure that we are as ready as we can possibly be in responding to future disaster events. We established the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry to forensically examine Queensland's flooding disasters of 2010-11. The commission's terms of reference included a mandate to review disaster management preparations by all levels of government and the community and all aspects of the response to the 2010-11 floods.

We established the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry to forensically examine Queensland's flooding disasters of 2010-11. The commission's terms of reference included a mandate to review disaster management preparations by all levels of government and the community and all aspects of the response to the 2010-11 floods. Public hearings were conducted across Queensland from 11 April to 27 May 2011. The commission is currently part way through the second round of hearings that commenced on 19 September 2011.

On 1 August 2011 the commission released the *Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry interim report* which focused on flood preparedness to enable early recommendations to be implemented before the next wet season. The interim report made 175 recommendations, some of these requiring legislative amendments to ensure the recommendations are fully implemented. The bill has been prepared to implement the state's legislative response to the interim report and puts in place other improvements to the disaster management framework prior to the summer season.

The bill is an omnibus bill that includes amendment to water, disaster management, transport and planning legislation. Amendments to the Water Act 2000 will set out the new regulatory framework under which the responsible minister, following consultation with relevant agencies, may temporarily alter the full supply level of dams. This is in line with the commission's recommendation that there should be a clear process through which the responsible minister takes full responsibility for decisions about alterations to the full supply level of dams in South-East Queensland. Such decisions will be based on advice from the chief executive, the director-general of the Department of Environment and Resource Management, who will have the power to require that relevant water entities and dam operators provide information regarding safety impacts and effects of an alteration of the full supply level.

The bill further addresses the interim report recommendation that dam operators should provide local residents with the opportunity to be included in a notification list to receive warnings about outflows from dams. Proposed amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 will allow the

chief executive to impose obligations on owners of referable dams to provide warnings to the local community in the event of a potential flood affecting the dam. This is an improvement to the current process. It will allow residents to plan effectively and will prevent unnecessary calls for information to dam operators during a flood event.

The bill further improves the operations of disaster management groups by recognising the importance of stakeholders being represented on, and consulted by, various disaster management groups. In line with the commission's recommendations, the bill proposes that the membership of the State Disaster Management Group be expanded to include representatives of the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Red Cross. Following further consultation with key stakeholders, it is proposed that the Bureau of Meteorology and Surf Life Saving Queensland also become members of the State Disaster Management Group. These proposed amendments recognise the importance of these stakeholders in strengthening the disaster management planning at a state level. The bill also inserts a new provision in the Disaster Management Act 2003 requiring that essential services providers be consulted if the chairperson of the disaster management group considers the provider of the essential service can help the group perform its functions.

The government's commitment to further improve disaster preparedness beyond the commission's recommendations is evidenced by the bill's proposal that disaster management plans at all levels must be published to increase the accessibility. This is beyond the commission's recommendation that applies to local government only. All three disaster management groups—local, district and state—will be required to publish their disaster management plans on their relevant websites. Additionally, the bill provides greater administrative flexibility for extensions to disaster declarations by allowing an initial disaster extension to be approved by the responsible minister and Premier. This will allow for these significant decisions to be made with minimal process and closer to the expiry of an initial disaster declaration.

Amendments to transport legislation are also proposed in response to lessons learned in relation to the dangers of driving in floodwaters. These amendments are designed to reduce the incidence of drivers entering flooded roads. The amendments streamline the content requirements for restricted road use notices which will allow for a more prompt installation of road closure signs that display essential information. The bill also includes amendments to allow for circumstances in which it is appropriate to allow a driver to pass a restricted road use notice, for example, for a roadworker carrying out road inspection or repair duties and for the delivery of water or food supplies to a flood affected area. Further amendments are included to ensure transport inspectors are available to assist police in enforcing road restriction and road closure provisions for all types of vehicles in flooding situations and other critical wet weather events.

The bill further emphasises the government's commitment to streamlining the legislative framework during times of disasters by ensuring that urgent repairs are carried out to community infrastructure, such as roads and bridges, damaged because of an emergency or natural disaster. The proposed amendment to the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 clarifies and expands the scope of the emergency exemption provisions to cover situations that involve urgent repairs to community infrastructure that is not a building. This would include roads and bridges, as well as other community infrastructure such as pipelines and powerlines.

It is inevitable that Queensland will face extreme natural disasters again. This bill is yet another step forward in Queensland's recovery from last season's unprecedented disasters. We have learnt important lessons from the 2010-11 season and we are acting quickly to fully implement these recommendations. We are doing everything that can possibly be done to ensure that Queensland is as best prepared as it can be to respond to any type of disaster event. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading



Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (12.15 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.

SUSTAINABLE PLANNING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and Referral to the Transport, Local Government and Infrastructure Committee

 **Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (12.15 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008, the Building Act 1975, the Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995, the Local Government Act 2009, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, the Sustainable Planning Act 2009 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport, Local Government and Infrastructure Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2011 [\[5582\]](#).

Tabled paper: Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2011, explanatory notes [\[5583\]](#).

The Sustainable Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill demonstrates the Bligh government's commitment to legislation that provides a clear and effective framework for sustainable planning and infrastructure development in Queensland. The amendments in this bill ensure the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, which provides the legislative framework for best practice land use, planning and development assessment in Queensland, remains effective, contemporary and relevant to all stakeholders. Amendments in this bill will help to ensure businesses and the community are not burdened by unnecessary red tape or compliance costs relating to routine plumbing work, provide certainty to those entering into infrastructure agreements with the Urban Land Development Authority and assist local governments to identify irresponsible dog owners or those responsible for dangerous dogs following complaints about serious attacks.

To accommodate significant population and economic growth, especially in South-East Queensland, the government is actively encouraging increased dwelling density, sustainable infill development and transit orientated development. However, this intensification is likely to lead to increased levels of conflict between land uses. The bill will amend the Sustainable Planning Act 2000 to give effect to a state-wide urban encroachment policy under which existing lawful businesses can apply for protection against encroaching urban intensification, similar to the protection currently afforded the iconic Milton Brewery under the Planning (Urban Encroachment—Milton Brewery) Act 2009. The existing protection for Milton Brewery will be transferred to the Sustainable Planning Act and therefore the Milton Brewery act will be repealed.

A number of provisions in the bill seek to improve the operation of the Independent Development Assessment Scheme, IDAS, to ensure consistency, clarify intent and simplify process. For example, the bill clarifies when the minister must consult in relation to a proposed ministerial call in and when the minister must consult or not consult in making a ministerial direction. The bill also includes minor amendments to clarify the policy intent of infrastructure charging reforms made in the Sustainable Planning Act earlier this year. In line with current practice, provisions of the bill also permit local governments and distributor-retailers to index infrastructure charges for the period between when an adopted infrastructure charge notice is issued and when the charge is paid. The provisions ensure that an infrastructure charge that has been indexed cannot exceed the maximum charge mandated by draft state planning regulatory provision adopted charges.

The Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 will be amended to assist local governments in investigating serious dog act complaints. When undertaking investigation of such complaints council officers are often provided with limited details by witnesses or victims. There are occasions when the only way to identify the person who had charge of the alleged offending dog is a vehicle registration number. The Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act will be amended to enhance community safety by enabling authorised local government officers to access Queensland motor vehicle registry information to identify the owner or responsible person of a dog when investigating an alleged dog attack offence under sections 194 and 195 of the act causing death, grievous bodily harm or bodily harm to a person or animal. The Brisbane City Council and the Local Government Association of Queensland have supported the amendments.

In keeping with the government's commitment to delivering on a smart state reform agenda, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002 will be amended to significantly cut red tape and reduce compliance costs to industry. This will be achieved by expanding the category of works that do not require a plumbing compliance assessment or local government inspection. This will include works such as renovations and additions to existing homes, including new bathrooms and kitchens and associated pipe work. This will allow council inspectors to focus on important matters such as plumbing inspections when houses are first built.

However, to help ensure regulatory oversight and public safety, the works will be notified to the Plumbing Industry Council and will be subject to audit programs in which local governments will continue to play a major role. Industry and consumers will directly benefit from significant reforms that will mean a much simpler process that attracts a much lower fee. Preliminary estimates show that significant cost reductions for applicants are expected. For example, in 2010-11 one local government collected \$1.1 million in fees charged to applicants—that is a direct cost that is meant to be passed on to homeowners—for very little benefit. For example, building and electrical works certification for homes is self-certified. Under the proposed amendments, up to 75 per cent of plumbing applications could be captured as notifiable works and, therefore, be subject to self-certification. Of course, that also means that the council would not have to divert resources into that process. Ultimately, for the council in the example, this could result in a reduction in the \$1.1 million in fees—and, indeed, savings in terms of the workforce that would have been directed towards doing it—to as little as \$75,000. That is a direct cost-benefit. Additional amendments will augment the disciplinary powers of the Plumbing Industry Council by allowing it to recover, in a simple debt action, disciplinary fines that licensees fail to pay after a reasonable stated period.


The bill also makes amendments to the Building Act 1975. Previously there has been some confusion among building industry practitioners due to a lack of consistency in the terminology used for different levels of building certifier licences and accreditation. To address this, the Building Act will be amended to better align terminology with respect to the classification of building certifiers with that used in the national accreditation framework for building surveyors. This amendment will improve consistency of terminology across the industry, thereby assisting to clarify those terms for practitioners.

The local government superannuation amendments have the support of the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Brisbane City Council, LG Super, the Australian Workers Union and the Australian Services Union. The bill also amends the Local Government Act to prescribe certain circumstances in which the superannuation contributions for LG Super scheme members may be reduced from those prescribed in the Local Government (Operations) Regulation 2010. Firstly, where there is an agreement between a local government employer and employee, the LG Super trustee will provide for Brisbane City Council accumulation benefit members' superannuation contributions to be reduced in instances of financial hardship, continuing the arrangements that existed for those members prior to the merger of City Super with LG Super on 1 July 2011.

A further amendment enables, again where there is a local government employer-employee agreement, for the LG Super trustee to provide for a member's superannuation contributions to be reduced if additional tax would be incurred by the member under the Commonwealth government's concessional contributions cap. The amendment also provides that when superannuation contributions are reduced so that an employee does not exceed the cap, the employer's contribution in lieu of superannuation be directed to the employee's salary.

Finally, the bill amends the Urban Land Development Authority Act to address a number of technical and minor operational issues that have been identified since the act was passed in 2007. These changes clarify provisions of the act to make sure the intent is clear. The bill also amends the act to include new provisions that are in keeping with the policy intent of the act and reflect provisions available under the Sustainable Planning Act. These include a process for a shortened development scheme amendment where certain conditions have been met, including the ability for the minister to amend a development scheme to address a minor administrative issue; a provision to allow for a preliminary approval that approves development but does not authorise assessable development to take place, which allows for a bankable approval that facilitates access to finance, particularly for staged development proposals; clarifying when development approvals lapse; requiring the consideration of interim land-use plans if there is not yet a development scheme or land-use plan applying for the development; enabling only part of a council local order to be ceased and replaced with an Urban Land Development Authority by-law where relevant to the authority's jurisdiction; and the ability to extend statutory time frames in exceptional circumstances. Further, the bill includes amendments that will give certainty to applicants entering into infrastructure agreements with the Urban Land Development Authority. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

 **Hon. PT LUCAS** (Lytton—ALP) (Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State) (12.24 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport, Local Government and Infrastructure Committee.

SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND WATER (DISTRIBUTION AND RETAIL RESTRUCTURING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and Referral to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee

 **Hon. S ROBERTSON** (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Water Utilities) (12.24 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, the Queensland Competition Authority Act 1997, the Queensland Competition Authority Regulation 2007, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2011 [\[5584\]](#).

Tabled paper: South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2011, explanatory notes [\[5585\]](#).

On 7 April 2011, the Queensland government took steps to end the water blame game in South-East Queensland that has been played out strongly and often quite unfairly in the media over the past 12 months. Two key actions were announced to address community concerns about high water prices and councils' lack of accountability in the operation of their council owned distributor-retailers.

Firstly, a price cap would be imposed on the annual distribution and retail water and waste water—sewage only, excluding trade waste and recycled water—prices for households and small businesses from 1 July 2011 until 30 June 2013. The Fairer Water Prices for SEQ Amendment Act 2011 has delivered the CPI price cap, providing much needed relief to South-East Queensland residents.

Secondly, South-East Queensland councils were given a once-only opportunity to withdraw from their distributor-retailer and re-establish a wholly council controlled, owned and operated water business by 1 July 2012. The participating councils of Allconnex Water—the Gold Coast City Council, Logan City Council and Redland City Council—have opted to take back their water businesses. It should be noted that the state government did not force this decision upon councils. Ultimately, this decision came about because the Gold Coast City Council voted—not once but twice—to opt out and establish its own water business. It was the actions of the Gold Coast City Council that then led the Logan and Redland councils to also withdraw from Allconnex. Those councils are duly elected and charged with representing the interests of their communities. Therefore, the state government accepts the decisions of those three councils. Now it is time to get on with the job, to provide some certainty to the residents of those communities, which brings us to the introduction of this bill.

The draft bill accompanying this submission provides for the transition of those water businesses back to councils. The three councils certainly have a challenge ahead—more so the Gold Coast City Council, which is required to pay the consequential costs of Logan and Redland city councils to also withdraw from Allconnex. The Gold Coast City Council has appropriately agreed to bear the consequential costs incurred by the Redland City Council or the Logan City Council in the dissolution of Allconnex and the re-establishment of council specific water businesses. Further, if agreement cannot be reached, the bill provides for referral to independent arbitration.

The intent of the bill is to provide for the automatic re-establishment of council water and waste water business units from 1 July 2012, with the powers and responsibilities as: commercialised business units under the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government (Beneficial Enterprises and Business Activities) Regulation 2010; and water and sewerage service providers under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008.

However, as those council business units will continue to operate as South-East Queensland water grid participants within the South-East Queensland water market, some provisions currently applying to distributor-retailers will continue to be applied; for example, provisions relating to effective regional planning, management of assets, minimum information to be provided on customer bills and customer protection measures such as access to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.

The council run water businesses, like the remaining distributor-retailers, will remain subject to the Queensland Competition Authority's price-monitoring role. The QCA will seek submissions from the businesses and will publish a report of their activities, highlighting where efficiencies have been made and should be made.

The bill contains three principles to deal with the allocation of assets. These are: a council will receive back the assets it contributed to Allconnex, unless all of the councils agree otherwise; assets attached to land will go back to the council where the land is located; and assets and liabilities other than land or those attached to land which were created by Allconnex—that is, co-mingled assets and liabilities—will be dealt with by the councils themselves under their agreed transfer schemes. The transfer scheme process involves the councils and Allconnex certifying that assets and liabilities have been identified and can be transferred.

A customer of Allconnex will become a customer of the council where the customer is a resident. A small customer will still have access to the dispute resolution scheme of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland. A critical outcome of the legislation will be the making of a new workforce framework to provide for the transition of staff from Allconnex to the council water businesses. The development of the framework has commenced, with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General taking a strong facilitatory role in the negotiations between councils and unions.

The bill provides for a retrospective commencement date for the framework. That is, the minister, on the advice of the industrial relations minister, can approve the framework to commence on a date earlier than the commencement of the bill. Even without the legislation in place, commitments can and must be made. I am pleased to advise all parties have agreed that a framework must be agreed by mid-December this year.

There are other proposed amendments that address the activities of the remaining distributor-retailer. The bill recognises that councils are responsible and accountable to their community for water and waste water pricing. The Fairer Water Prices for SEQ Amendment Act 2011 requires councils to have price mitigation plans and quantifiable price paths in place. A council owner of a distributor-retailer has the power to reduce prices to some or all of its residents. However, such a decision could have a business impact on the operations of their distributor-retailer or the other council owners of the distributor-retailer.

The bill provides for a regulation to be made to set out a process to make a financial adjustment if such a decision has a detrimental impact on another council. The regulation will be developed in close consultation with the councils and the distributor-retailers. Again, this regulation will ensure transparency and accountability in prices.

The bill also proposes changes to enable a participating local government to select councillors to be members of a distributor-retailer's board for Unitywater and Queensland Urban Utilities. A councillor will be able to bring their council experiences and community issues to the board. The intent is that councils will have more immediate access to and involvement in the distributor-retailer's strategic decision making and a better understanding of its day-to-day operational issues.

The board must also have at least three independent members. Councillors will not be permitted to be the chairperson of the board of their distributor-retailer and the distributor-retailer will be prohibited from paying a councillor to participate as a board member. However, if a council wishes to appoint councillors to the distributor-retailer board and remunerate them in addition to their normal councillor salary, the council may do so.

Most importantly, councillors will be subject to the same duties as other independent board members. The councillor must, in making any board decision, consider the whole interest of the distributor-retailer. If a decision is in the best interests of the distributor-retailer, a councillor should resolve this issue in favour of the distributor-retailer's interest, just as they currently do in respect to their representation of their council division while serving in the interest of the council region as a whole.

The consideration of the bill and its key provisions is only the first step. There is a lot of work to be done before 1 July 2012. I now pass the bill to the appropriate parliamentary committee.

First Reading



Hon. S ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Energy and Water Utilities) (12.31 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Environment, Agricultural, Resources and Energy Committee.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction and Referral to the Industry, Education, Training and Industrial Relations Committee



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining) (12.32 pm): I present a bill for an act to adopt the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 (Cwlth) and the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Transitional Provisions) Act 2011 (Cwlth), and to refer certain matters relating to the regulation of vocational education and training to the

Parliament of the Commonwealth, for the purposes of section 51 (xxxvii) of the Commonwealth Constitution, and to make amendments to the Building Act 1975, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Liquor Act 1992 and the Vocational Education, Training and Employment Act 2000, for particular purposes, and consequential amendments of the acts mentioned in the schedule. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Industry, Education, Training and Industrial Relations Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Vocational Education and Training (Commonwealth Powers) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2011 [5586].

Tabled paper: Vocational Education and Training (Commonwealth Powers) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2011, explanatory notes [5587].

I am pleased to introduce to the House the Vocational Education and Training (Commonwealth Powers) and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2011. The introduction of this bill initiates a major reform of the vocational education and training sector—the VET sector—in Queensland, which will have a significant impact for students, employers and industry. The bill will refer legislative power to regulate registered training organisations—RTOs—and VET courses to the Commonwealth parliament. The bill will also abolish the Training and Employment Recognition Council—TERC—and transfer its remaining functions to Skills Queensland.

In December 2009, the Council of Australian Governments—COAG—agreed on national reforms to the regulation of vocational education and training. Reforms agreed to included the establishment of a national VET regulator responsible for the registration and regulation of registered training organisations and accreditation of VET courses and a national skills standards council to provide advice to the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment about the development of national standards for VET. To date, all states except for Victoria and Western Australia have agreed to this reform. The passage of this bill will enshrine Queensland's commitment to the new national regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority—ASQA.

Currently, TERC regulates the provision of VET by RTOs in Queensland. TERC is responsible for over 1,500 RTOs delivering training in Queensland and other states. Upon commencement of the referral, regulation of RTOs and VET courses will be performed by ASQA. Referral of powers to the Commonwealth is not a decision that this government has taken lightly. Queensland has a very high standard of regulation which other states can only aspire to.

Under the previous system of state regulation a training provider could register in one state and then be able to provide training in other states. Whilst this gave training providers the ability to operate in any jurisdiction, the system lacked consistency in the enforcement of training standards. For example, Queensland has limited capacity to take action against RTOs registered in other states that breach registration standards when delivering training in Queensland. The establishment of a national regulator will ensure that this can no longer occur. All RTOs that operate in Queensland will be registered with ASQA. If an RTO in Queensland fails to comply with the standards, ASQA will be able to take action against that RTO.

The establishment of ASQA will also improve confidence in the VET sector generally. As the national regulator, ASQA will be able to ensure that standards are applied consistently across the country. ASQA will also be able to quickly respond to emerging issues that affect the VET sector across Australia. The referral of power to a single national regulator will reduce the number of regulators thus contributing to this government's policy to reduce the regulatory burden on local businesses.

The New South Wales parliament referred power in November 2010. The Queensland government believes the benefits to students, employers and industry from a strong national regulator of VET outweigh concerns voiced by Western Australia and Victoria. Our government supports this significant reform of the VET sector.

The referral of legislative power to regulate RTOs and accredit VET courses to the Commonwealth parliament is necessary to facilitate national regulation. Without referral, the Commonwealth parliament only has the power to legislate with respect to RTOs that deliver training to overseas students and RTOs that operate in a referring jurisdiction. To be clear, if Queensland does not refer, ASQA would take over the regulation of approximately one-third of Queensland's RTOs—those delivering training to overseas students or operating in other referring states, such as New South Wales—creating a system of dual regulation in Queensland. A dual system would not be in the best interests of consumers, RTOs or industry.

The bill refers power by adopting the national VET legislation—the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 and the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator (Transitional Provisions) Act 2011. The adoption of the national VET legislation makes a referral of Queensland's legislative power based on the provisions of the national VET legislation.

The bill includes an amendment referral, which allows the Commonwealth parliament to amend the national VET legislation with respect to prescribed VET matters in the bill, including: the registration and regulation of VET organisations; the accreditation or other recognition of VET courses or programs; the issue and cancellation of VET qualifications or statements of attainment; the standards to be complied with by the VET regulator; the collection, publication, provision and sharing of information about VET; and investigative powers, sanctions and enforcement in relation to these matters.

To clarify the scope of the amendment referral, the bill provides that the Commonwealth cannot make a law that excludes or limits the operation of a state law where the state law relates to: primary or secondary education, including the education of children subject to compulsory school education; tertiary education that is recognised as higher education and not VET; the rights and obligations of persons providing or undertaking apprenticeships or traineeships; the qualifications or other requirements to undertake or carry out any business, occupation or other work, other than that of a VET organisation; the funding by the state of VET; or the establishment or management of any agency of the state that provides VET—for instance, TAFE colleges.

This will ensure that the scope of the referral is limited to the regulation of RTOs and accreditation of VET courses. It is important to note that apprenticeships and traineeships, which are closely linked to the provision of VET, will remain a state responsibility.

Queensland will also retain control over the requirements to enter trades and occupations. The bill preserves Queensland's right to withdraw from the national scheme. Section 7 provides for the termination of the amendment reference or the adoption. The Governor may proclaim by notice published in the *Government Gazette* that the amendment reference and/or adoption of the amendment reference are terminated.

The power to terminate the amendment reference or adoption would only be used in extraordinary circumstances—for example, if Queensland lost confidence in the national regulator or the Commonwealth made amendments to the national VET legislation which radically altered the nature of the regulator's operations. The power to terminate the adoption or amendment reference protects Queensland's interests. To ensure that action can be taken quickly, the bill provides for termination by the Governor publishing a proclamation in the *Government Gazette*.

The bill also provides for the abolition of the TERC and the transfer of its remaining functions to Skills Queensland. TERC has made a significant contribution to this state as the regulator of RTOs and the body responsible for overseeing the delivery of apprenticeships and traineeships. I want to pay credit to its chairman, Mr Barry Nutter. With the transfer of its main regulatory functions to the Commonwealth, it is appropriate to transfer TERC's remaining functions to Skills Queensland and to abolish TERC.

Skills Queensland is responsible for advising the Queensland government on skills and workforce development priorities. Skills Queensland is the most suitable body for assuming TERC's remaining functions. The bill amends the functions of Skills Queensland to incorporate its new functions and to give it the appropriate powers to make guidelines about those new functions.

The bill includes extensive transitional provisions to ensure that the decisions of TERC continue to have effect and that matters pending on the day of transition can be dealt with by Skills Queensland. For example, applications for a training contract to be registered that are lodged with TERC but not decided on the date of transition can be considered by Skills Queensland.

Finally, the bill includes amendments to the Building Act 1975, the Liquor Act 1992 and the Gaming Machine Act 1991 to remove the potential for an inconsistency between these acts and the national VET legislation after the referral of power. The Building Act 1975 is being amended to change the process for approving a training course for pool safety inspectors. Instead of the Pool Safety Council approving a course and course providers, there will be an accredited course in the VET system dealing with pool safety inspector training. The Pool Safety Council will then be able to approve this course for licensing of pool safety inspectors. The Department of Local Government and Planning will own this course and license RTOs to deliver the course. The delivery of the course will be regulated by ASQA according to the usual standards that apply to VET courses and RTOs.

The bill inserts a displacement provision into part 5A of the Liquor Act 1992 and part 10A of the Gaming Machine Act 1991. Section 11 of the NVR Act provides for referring jurisdictions to declare that a particular state law will apply to RTOs notwithstanding that it relates to a referred VET matter. By inserting a displacement provision the bill will ensure that the current regulation of RTOs in relation to responsible service of alcohol, responsible management of licensed venue and responsible service of gambling can continue. The displacement provisions will expire two years after they commence. A new regulatory scheme for these forms of training will be developed and implemented prior to the expiry of the provisions.

This is an important reform which will improve the quality of vocational education and training and increase public confidence in the sector. The Commonwealth minister made a determination under section 7 of the Commonwealth National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011, which gives Queensland until 30 June 2012 to refer power before it is deemed a non-referring jurisdiction. The Bligh government has strongly supported the establishment of a national regulator and the referral of power necessary to achieve this. Queensland is currently working closely with the Commonwealth government to ensure that, subject to passage of this bill, ASQA is able to assume responsibility for Queensland RTOs by mid-2012.

In good news for Queensland, our state will have the equal largest regional office for ASQA and will also be responsible for a number of important national functions. To this end, the Department of Education and Training is working closely with ASQA to arrange for the transfer of skilled staff so that ASQA is able to effectively perform its role as regulator in Queensland. I would like to assure this House that Queensland government employees who transfer to ASQA will not be disadvantaged and will have their entitlements preserved under the terms of a bilateral agreement between the Queensland government and ASQA.

Referring power to the Commonwealth to regulate Queensland RTOs by 30 June 2012 will deliver on our COAG commitment and put Queensland RTOs in the best position to transition under the new national arrangements.

First Reading



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Employment, Skills and Mining) (12.45 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Industry, Education Training and Industrial Relations Committee.

MULTICULTURAL RECOGNITION BILL

Introduction and Referral to the Community Affairs Committee



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs) (12.45 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for a Multicultural Queensland Charter, a Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council and a multicultural action plan and for related purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Community Affairs Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Multicultural Recognition Bill 2011 [\[5588\]](#).

Tabled paper: Multicultural Recognition Bill 2011, explanatory notes [\[5589\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce a bill for an act that strengthens and supports the implementation of Queensland's multicultural policy—'A multicultural future for all of us'. The Multicultural Recognition Bill 2011 is a further demonstration of this government's commitment to, and support for, a multicultural Queensland.

Queensland is a multicultural success story—home to more than 200 cultures, 220 languages and 100 religious beliefs. People from all walks of life and all parts of the globe have all contributed towards our great state. Queensland migrants enrich our cultural life and help to power our economy. Approximately 18 per cent of Queenslanders are born overseas and 7.8 per cent of us speak a language other than English at home. The bill cements Queensland's position as a welcoming and inclusive place for people of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds and religious beliefs. Legislation will strengthen and support the implementation of the policy—'A multicultural future for all of us'. Legislation will encourage improved service delivery from government agencies to Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

On 19 July this year, the Premier and I launched the new Queensland multicultural policy. This policy builds on our past achievements to improve access to services and achieve more positive outcomes across employment, education and health for people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and to support positive community relations and promote our multicultural heritage. Further, a key initiative of the policy is the introduction of multicultural recognition legislation in 2011. The tabling of this bill today marks the achievement of this important milestone.

The consultation for the review of the previous multicultural policy indicated significant community support for legislation to demonstrate Queensland's commitment to multiculturalism. Over 1,300 participants, from Cairns to the Gold Coast and from Mount Isa to Gladstone, attended 31 community forums held around the state about the multicultural policy. Specific representations in favour of multicultural legislation were made by key stakeholders such as the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, the Queensland Council of Social Service and the Multicultural Development Association—just to name a few. The multicultural sector also indicated their support for multicultural legislation following the launch of the policy, and the government has listened to their views.

There is current precedent for principles based legislation. For example, the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008 was introduced to recognise the importance of the contribution of carers and establish a Carers Advisory Council. The bill also has similar elements to the Carers (Recognition) Act 2008. The bill will recognise the diversity of the people of Queensland and the valuable contribution of diverse groups to the Queensland community; promote Queensland as a united, harmonious and inclusive community by establishing the Multicultural Queensland Charter; and ensure government services are responsive to the diversity of the people of Queensland by providing for the multicultural action plan, establishing reporting arrangements for departments and establishing the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council.

It is important to note that governance and reporting arrangements are key features of the bill. Queensland has a proud record of welcoming people from diverse cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. Queensland and Australia's success as an increasingly culturally diverse society rests on our strong approach to multiculturalism—one that emphasises the value of citizenship, diversity, harmony and a 'fair go'.

Queensland continues to experience significant population growth, including through overseas migration. There are also evolving challenges amongst some Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, especially from the more recent arrivals from areas such as Africa, Afghanistan, Burma and the Pacific Islands.

The bill also introduces a Multicultural Queensland Charter. This charter outlines principles enshrined in the Bligh government's multicultural policy and recognises the valuable contribution of diverse groups of people to the Queensland community. This charter provides a clear vision for a Queensland that respects and values all community members. The bill does not create rights or impose legally enforceable obligations; rather it is about recognising that diversity is an integral part of Queensland's identity and an invaluable asset for our future.

The bill also establishes the Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council which will consist of 11 members. The council will replace the Multicultural Community Ministerial Advisory Committee in advising government on how to develop and deliver policy, services and programs that meet the needs of people from culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The bill provides for three-yearly multicultural action plans. The Premier and I launched the new Multicultural Queensland Policy with a three-year multicultural action plan in July this year. The first plan under the act will be required to be tabled by 2014.

To provide the level of accountability that the Bligh government demands, the bill requires reporting on the progress achieved in implementing the multicultural action plan. Under the bill, information regarding implementation must be included in departments' annual reports. The community will know exactly how the government is progressing on multicultural issues.

Potential impacts on other Queensland legislation, such as the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, have been considered and the bill has been drafted to ensure that there is no conflict with any other acts. The introduction of this bill is the government's firm commitment to multiculturalism. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs) (12.51 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms van Litsenburg): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Community Affairs Committee.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL

Resumed from 3 August (see p. 2346).

Second Reading



Hon. VE DARLING (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (12.52 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.



Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (12.52 pm): Here we are again—different day, same story, debating another broken Labor election promise. As if the asset sales were not enough, or the fuel tax, or at the federal level the carbon tax, today we debate a waste tax—a business-destroying, anti-waste reduction, anti-recycling, bureaucratic nightmare of a waste tax. It is another cost-of-living increase for each and every Queensland and Queensland business.

Labor is on the record as saying that it had no intention of introducing a waste levy in this term of government—the same as the LNP. When questioned by the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors in the lead-up to the last election, the answer was a clear no. I do not know why I am surprised that Labor has reneged on yet another election promise. What did the Treasurer say about asset sales in the lead-up to the March 2009 election? 'No, we have no plan to sell off assets.' What did the Treasurer say about introducing a fuel tax? 'Make no mistake about it. We'll be delivering a fuel subsidy scheme. It will stay in place.' What did Prime Minister Julia Gillard announce regarding a carbon tax in the lead-up to the 2010 federal election? 'There will be no carbon tax under the government I lead.' I love that line!

So it is not surprising that this tired, 20-year-old Labor government has reneged on yet another election promise. It is just in its DNA. What about the Queensland Greens? What did they say when asked about a waste tax in 2009? The Queensland Greens did not answer that question. I would say that they were hedging their bets, not wanting Queenslanders to see that they are more than an environmental party. But the cat is out of the bag at a federal level now. We all now know that the Greens are really about economic destruction through increased taxation and social destruction through re-engineering.

Labor are masters at breaking their promises to the very Queenslanders who elected them—whether it is Julia Gillard to win over her partner in crime, Bob Brown, or Premier Bligh and environment minister Darling in a desperate attempt to shore up Green preferences in a last-ditch attempt to hold on to the seats like Mount Coot-tha, Brisbane Central, Barron River, Chatsworth, Ferny Grove, Townsville, Everton, Ashgrove and Greenslopes. Labor will do and say anything to hang on to power.

So how do you sell a waste tax that you vowed you would not implement? For starters, you slam and insult the same people you have been consulting with, the same people—the industry—you will rely on to implement your business-destroying tax. The minister in her speech said that this legislation will drag Queensland's waste sector out of the Dark Ages. What an insult! The waste industry has been calling for—strengthened and enforced state government interest in waste avoidance, reduction and recycling.

The industry has been concerned that rogue illegal operators were ruining Queensland's reputation, and that reputation was hard-earned. Without state government interest, the industry, local government and Queenslanders as a whole were achieving a 43 per cent recycling rate. Industry leaders were winning awards in this state, in this nation and internationally, and I will name just a few. In September this year WCRAQ, incorporating 85-plus companies state-wide, won the Queensland Supply Chain and Logistics Award for Environmental Excellence in recognition of its contribution to sustainability. JJ Richards and Sons, as an industry partner in the Women Take the Wheel program, won the 2011 Australian Trucking Industry Award for Excellence in Training. Alex Fraser Queensland, a Queensland recycler, won the Premier's ClimateSmart Sustainability Award in 2011 and the Minister's Award for ClimateSmart Leadership. Thiess Services waste management won this year's Waste Management Association of Australia 2011 National Landfill Excellence Award. They also won this year's United Nations Association of Australia World Environment Day Award for Environmental Best Practice. Kennedy's Timbers was the 2010 winner of the Energex Innovation in Sustainability Award.

As I said, the industry was looking for state government partnership to go to the next step through tighter regulation and enforcement of that regulation to ensure that illegal operators could not thrive. If there was a part of the waste sector in the Dark Ages, it was this tired 20-year-old Labor government. I bet the minister is regretting ever enunciating these words. I am willing to acknowledge that the speech was probably not even written for her. It sounds more like something the member for Ashgrove would say.

So back to selling a waste tax—another broken Labor election promise. How do you do it? You manufacture a crisis or two. The minister invented two: cross-border waste trade and a state running out of landfill sites. Let us look at them separately. Firstly, the claim that we are already becoming Australia's dumping ground with waste from other states, particularly New South Wales, being dumped at our tips conjures up images of an invasion of dump trucks rumbling up the Pacific Highway or the New England Highway or the Newell. I personally sought to verify this claim through the public briefings and hearings undertaken by the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee. For starters, I asked DERM representatives if cross-border waste transfers were quantifiable. Their response, and I quote from the transcript we recorded on 24 August this year, was—

It is somewhat difficult to quantify for materials that are not regulated. We do have information about regulated waste coming across the border. In relation to other more opportunistic decisions that are made, all we have is pretty much anecdotal information in relation to that.

That gives us two further leads to follow up: the quantifiable regulated waste and this so-called anecdotal information. The DERM officers did subsequently provide, for which I am grateful, a table of regulated waste dumped in Queensland. The table indicated that some 10,000 tonnes of regulated waste, predominantly soil and sludge, makes its way here—hardly what I would consider a crisis.


So perhaps instead this anecdotal evidence could shed further light on this so-called crisis. I asked two councils most likely affected by such cross-border raids—the Gold Coast City Council and the Goondiwindi Regional Council. Mr Matthew Fraser, the Acting Manager of Waste and Resources Management at Gold Coast City Council, admitted that the council is concerned about cross-border waste transfers and that they obviously need to have systems in place to try to minimise that. But he also confirmed that at this stage the GCCC does not prohibit waste coming from outside the area. He also confirmed that there were far simpler solutions to this issue—namely, differential rates. That is, you could have different disposal fees applying to waste from external to the state. I suggest another simple solution would be a proof of residency approach, which is currently employed by other SEQ councils.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Caval Ridge Mine, Workforce

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—LNP) (2.30 pm): Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. Today representatives from the peak body for Queensland mining communities have travelled to Brisbane to plead with the state government to back its original decision on Caval Ridge Mine and reject the 100 per cent fly in, fly out workforce. They are also here to present this Labor government and every one of its MPs with a free chiropractic bone check. They tell me that they have been left wondering—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms O'Neill): This is not a matter of privilege.


Mr KNUTH: I table this voucher—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not a matter of privilege and I would ask you to please resume your seat, and you can put that down. That is very inappropriate. It is not a matter of privilege, so you are not able to table anything. I ask you to resume your seat.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (2.31 pm): Councillor Graeme Scheu of Goondiwindi was also helpful in putting this cross-border waste crisis into perspective. He told the committee—

We have never encountered any problem. I can understand that argument and I had that debate with the people down there. I can understand that closer to the seaboard, but in this western area it is not an issue. It really is a non-issue. The initial thought was that New South Wales was going to expand its waste levy, which I believe under the new government is not going to happen now anyway. For our inclusion in this to be based on a cross-border issue is ludicrous.

So at best there is concern—not a crisis—and that, regardless of the scale, there are far simpler solutions than a waste levy that will be applied to 34 local government areas and which will impact on the hip pockets of the majority of the state's businesses and taxpayers.

The second crisis the minister proposed was worse still: that many councils throughout Queensland are reporting that they are running out of space for landfill. That sounds like a problem, so let us go to the facts. When questioned, DERM stated—

The Sunshine Coast ... is one, for example. The Redlands has, or will shortly, run out of landfill space. Rockhampton, I understand, is running out of landfill space and is currently looking for new sites. We are not too sure at the moment.

A real problem? Of 73 local government authorities, three are considered to be running out of space for landfill. Could I be so bold as to suggest that at least one of those three is not so much out of space but is grappling instead with what the DERM officers described as one of the increasing issues facing local government—namely, the siting of landfills and the amenity issues associated with them—and some councils are facing a lot of public angst around these issues. They sure are, but they are also being innovative about how they deal with that angst. They are looking at regional partnerships. For example, councils like Redlands and Brisbane are already looking to some very large holes out in the Ipswich area. Tablelands is working with Cairns, and the list goes on. So again we see the minister exaggerating the state of the waste industry in Queensland by claiming that we are running out of landfill sites. Let us face it: she has to sell this broken Labor election promise.

Perhaps the minister would like to start again. Perhaps what she wanted to say—perhaps what she could have said, was this—

We seek to support the waste industry and the broader community to make the transformation from an inefficient, wasteful, linear economic system where products and materials are disposed of at the end of their productive life to a sustainable closed-loop materials economy. The fact that Queensland has been so far behind the policy and regulatory frameworks developed in other

jurisdictions has allowed lessons to be taken from the experience of incremental reform elsewhere to set a new benchmark in sustainable resource management for the material and other by-products of pre and post consumer packaging and product consumption. While the policy framework of the waste hierarchy has served as a useful starting point, it is of itself neither adequate nor specific enough to deliver the practical results necessary to make the transition to a more sustainable economy. The essential problem with policy setting in this area is that the conceptual framework of waste management has in the past been framed in isolation and without reference to the broader context of resource management and sustainability.

Perhaps the minister could have continued—

With ecological sustainability as the overarching goal, then the legislative and regulatory settings that direct how to deal with the resources that are the by-products of production and consumption should target resource recovery and recycling as the primary goal of any policy system. This entails a number of core principles: one, that all resources are inherently limited and should be conserved by making the most efficient use of the least resource necessary to provide the product or service for which the resource is deployed; two, the by-products of the production and use of such products and services both before and after consumption should not be wasted but recovered for re-use or recycling within the productive economy; and, three, there must be a presumption that every by-product is a resource to be redeployed rather than a waste to be disposed of until all economic options for making use of the resource are exhausted.

Had the minister introduced the legislation with that as a justification, she just may have received a very different reaction from the waste industry, from local government and from the broader community. Here I must acknowledge that those words are courtesy of the Australian Council of Recyclers, or ACOR, which I understand suggested to the minister such statements could have and would have appealed to the broader Queensland community on the grounds of our united efforts to become more ecologically sustainable, not some concocted crises that have no substance when challenged. Before I move on, it is interesting to note that ACOR knows who is to blame for Queensland being in the Dark Ages when it comes to waste management, waste reduction and recycling. What does it say in terms of the fact that Queensland has been so far behind the policy and regulatory frameworks developed in other jurisdictions? It says that they are policies and regulatory frameworks that need government leadership. I think the minister owes the industry an apology.

Clearly, the Bligh Labor government has again misled Queenslanders and again the Bligh Labor government has failed to convincingly justify this blatant broken promise. But justification for the bill aside, perhaps it actually managed to achieve a coherent and sensible bill. Sadly, no; no, it has not. Typical Labor: the focus of the bill is another botched business-destroying tax, yet another cost-of-living impost on Queenslanders. Typical Labor: this bill again shifts the burden to local government, basically kicking councils, mayors and councillors while they are down following the forced amalgamations and the dictatorial removal of water infrastructure from South-East Queensland councils. Typical Labor: this bill is completely ignorant of the broader economic environment—an environment where businesses, councils and individual Queenslanders are reeling from cost-of-living increase after cost-of-living increase; an economic environment in which federal Labor's carbon tax has landfill site operators firmly in its sights. Typical Labor: this bill has the very real potential to actually achieve the opposite of what it has set out to do. It may, in fact, destroy the recycling industry and undo significant council investment in alternative waste technologies. That is not a good start. The outlook for this bill is looking as promising as its justification, but more of that later.

Let me turn to the specific elements of the bill itself. The explanatory notes state that the primary objective of the bill is to create new legislation in respect of waste management and resource recovery in Queensland. The main objectives of the bill in relation to waste management are to promote waste avoidance and reduction; reduce the overall impact of waste generation; promote resource recovery and efficiency actions; promote the sustainable use of natural resources; and ensure a shared responsibility between government, business and industry and the community. As I said before when referring to ACOR's suggested introduction for the bill, these were the objectives. Unfortunately, the bill in its current form fails to achieve them. The majority of the bill is set to commence on 1 December 2011, and therein lies our first significant problem. This implementation date made a mockery of the brand-new parliamentary committee system. As we in the LNP said at the outset, what is the point of a new committee system with greater scrutiny responsibilities if you are going to fall at the first hurdle and rush through a significant piece of legislation? No wonder Queenslanders have stopped listening to this tired Bligh Labor government!

At this stage I would like to acknowledge the incredibly hard work of the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee staff. The parliamentary members of the committee are perhaps more accustomed to this kind of farcical and rushed scrutiny. However, in the face of ridiculous time frames, Rob Hansen, Robyn Moore, Sarah McCallan and Rhia Campillo have worked tirelessly to ensure the committee's report met the deadline. That included distilling the content of 25 written submissions, some of them very substantial, arranging a public hearing and a public briefing, and navigating the committee members through a new reporting process. To Rob, Robyn, Sarah and Rhia I say thank you from the LNP members on the committee.

The implementation date of 1 December 2011 also makes a mockery of the good faith in which many stakeholders have been working with this government. Yes, as the minister almost gleefully points out, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the SEQ Council of Mayors requested and supported a deferment until at least this date. Can I suggest it was on the basis that the detail of the bill, namely the regulations, would be shared with the key players including the industry peaks and the local governments far, far sooner than has transpired? Draft regulations were only distributed in the last month—less than three months from implementation.

In correspondence with the chair of EAREC, the minister states—

I am of the opinion that further delay will only disadvantage those businesses and indeed some local governments who have done the necessary work to prepare for the introduction of the levy.

Could I trouble the minister to name those businesses and local governments who are ready because I have to admit that, despite extensive consultation, I have not managed to find any? In fact, I have found the contrary. In its submission Toowoomba Regional Council argues that, as it was formed due to the amalgamation of eight former local government areas—the most for any amalgamation in Queensland—seven of which are rural zones containing widely distributed small communities, it contains a large number of historically unmanned landfill sites, requiring a staged approach to closure, rehabilitation or conversion to modern sites. The council implores the government to give it five years to implement its regional waste plan first before adding the burden of this bill.

The Central Queensland Local Government Association requests a six-month delay. Gold Coast asks for a delay until the start of the 2012-2013 financial year. Goondiwindi Regional Council would need a phased time frame of at least three years to be able to fully comply with the regulatory requirements. Shall I continue? The Local Government Association of Queensland, the Downs and Surat Basin Alliance of Council—and the list goes on.

I still recall with some amusement one interchange at the public hearing held in August. My good colleague the member for Gympie and shadow minister for local government asked Mr Hoffman of the LGAQ how many of the member councils would be ready on 1 December. While Mr Hoffman and his colleague Ms Blanchard intimated that some of the larger SEQ councils would be close to levy ready on 1 December, I watched the representatives of Moreton Bay and Gold Coast councils shake their heads. When given an opportunity to elaborate, Mrs Portia Rigby of Moreton Bay Regional Council said—

I just wanted to add that, after a very brief talk with Matthew—

Fraser of Gold Coast City Council—

as the No. 2 and No. 3 largest councils not only in Queensland but in Australia, you were saying that the smaller ones are not ready. Us bigger ones are not ready, because we are not. There is a very high chance that nearly all councils will not be ready. I know that that is a very broad assumption, but even Nos 2 and 3 are not ready.

Telling, is it not? I hope the minister enjoys tracking down late payments from councils across the state in February, or maybe she will be preoccupied with an election.

The peak waste body, Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of Queensland, or WCRAQ, is calling for a delay for different reasons. It submits that a full economic analysis be conducted by an independent third party to determine, firstly, the impacts on the Queensland business community; secondly, the likelihood of future secondary resource sector investment; thirdly, the likely impacts on all government department budgets and projects financially committed to and already funded; and, lastly, the full cost to be incurred by a local government as well as private sector owners and operators of landfills of the combined impact that the waste levy coupled with the federal carbon tax will have in Queensland. They are very salient suggestions. I will address the impact on the business community in a moment.

But has the government explored what impact this bill will have on its own operations? Does it know what impact it will have on its budgets other than the revenue that will come pouring in? Does it know how it will affect the contract prices or budgeted allocations for key infrastructure projects such as the Sunshine Coast University Hospital or the Moreton Bay rail link? What about the Springfield rail link, Airport Link, Gold Coast light rail, the Gold Coast University Hospital or the Queensland Children's Hospital? Does the government know how much its budgets or its allocations for those projects will be impacted by this waste tax? Perhaps, most significantly, has it explored the full ramifications of a waste tax and a carbon tax? In short, does this government have any idea what it is doing, or is it that desperate that it needs this tax and blurs the consequences? Similarly, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland—CCIQ—also urges the government to reconsider the introduction time frames of the bill until after the federal Gillard Labor government has finalised details on how the carbon tax is to operate and its applicability to waste emissions to avoid any unsustainable cost impact on Queensland businesses. It calls on DERM to undertake additional cost modelling, including the impact of the carbon tax, prior to the passage of the bill. The minister's response to this reasonable request is not comforting. All other states have a waste levy and these apparently will continue to exist in a carbon tax scenario. So there!

The carbon tax will not address issues of interstate waste disposal in Queensland—we have already proved that to be a bit of a red herring. Cost modelling on the impact of the carbon tax on business will be undertaken by the Commonwealth. That is very reassuring because the Gillard government's level of incompetence is one of the few on a par with that of the Bligh government. The carbon tax has been proposed by the Commonwealth government. It is therefore outside the scope of this bill. Extraordinary! So what if the Commonwealth is proposing it? This government has a responsibility to identify the cumulative impacts of both taxes on Queenslanders and Queensland businesses. In short, this government is turning a deaf ear to the calls of council, the sector and Queensland businesses. Clearly, it needs this bill to pass now. One can only surmise that it is for political motivations.

Moving to the objectives of the act and the waste and resource management hierarchy, I know of the comments made by some of the submissions, in particular the Queensland Conservation Council—QCC—the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee and the Moreton Bay Regional Council. The QCC states—

... Reducing waste is NOT avoiding waste; they are two separate functions. The hierarchy must include waste avoidance as its first principle.

The QMDC submits that the objectives need to be strengthened to reflect the need to primarily avoid impact caused by waste generation and disposal and not merely reflect a mitigation or minimisation objective. Moreton Bay Regional Council concurs by recommending that dealing with waste at the source of generation should be driven by the state. Based on these comments, it is apparent, as mentioned previously, that the government and minister have fallen short of what could have been achieved through this legislation. Waste avoidance should be primary in our aspirations.

In passing, again like some submitters, I notice that the state is not responsible for complying with the legislation whilst the councils and private operators are. This clearly sets double standards but I am told this is historically consistent; that the Crown has not been liable for criminal prosecution.

Clearly, the most contentious element of this bill is the introduction of the waste tax itself. It was the focus of the majority of the submissions to the EAREC and it is the focus of my and the LNP's concerns. Let me list the key components of the waste tax. Initially, it is to apply only to commercial and industrial—C&I—and construction and demolition—C&D—waste. However, it is worth noting that municipal solid waste—or MSW—and self-haul waste, commonly referred to as domestic or kerbside waste, is not so much exempt as leviable at the value of \$0 per tonne. Both levy rates—the \$0 for MSW and the \$35 per tonne for C&I and C&D—are established through regulation. So it would not take much for this dishonest Labor government to up the ante and slug all waste generators higher fees.

All local government and private sector waste disposal facilities in South-East Queensland and major regional local government areas up the eastern seaboard—Fraser Coast, Bundaberg, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns—as well as inland councils such as Toowoomba, Goondiwindi, South Burnett, Central Highlands and the Tablelands, will be required to collect the levy. The levy liability is created on leviable waste that is delivered to a leviable waste disposal site. The obligation to pay the levy resides with the operator of the site. There are serious penalties for offences such as levy evasion and provision of false or misleading information. These penalties are in the order of 2,000 penalty units—currently \$200,000—or two years imprisonment plus twice the amount of any waste levy amount the payment of which the offender sought to evade and twice the amount of any interest payable in relation to failing to pay the levy by the set date. The court can also impose court costs.

To ensure recyclable waste does not incur a levy, the operator can designate a resource recovery area. There are a number of automatic exemptions, including for disaster management waste, asbestos, contaminated soil, dredge spoil, waste collected that was illegally dumped and other waste prescribed by regulation. The bill also establishes a process by which charitable recycling organisations and organisations like Clean Up Australia that hold community clean-up events can apply for exemption. Recyclers who send residual waste generated through their operations to landfill are offered a transitional discount of 50 per cent off \$17.50 per tonne until 30 June 2014.

The bill requires the installation of weighbridges to correctly calculate the amount of tax to be paid. Sites disposing of more than 10,000 tonnes per annum have 12 months to install. Such sites disposing of between 5,000 and 10,000 tonnes have two years. Smaller sites and larger sites in the interim will use a weight conversion measurement prescribed through regulation to calculate the tonnage in lieu of a weighbridge. The government has promised significant compensation from the proceeds of the tax to councils to allow them to comply with these requirements.

Payments need to be made to the state on a monthly basis and extensive record-keeping provisions must be met. The tax payments will go into a waste and environment fund. The bill provides that revenue from the fund will be used for programs and initiatives aimed at reducing and recycling waste, on offsetting the state government cost component and funding the expansion of DERM to administer the legislation, on compensating local councils in the short term for infrastructure and software requirements and for the rather mysterious environmental initiatives.

For those listening carefully to that very brief summary, a number of alarm bells will be ringing. Firstly, the fact that the levy applies only to C&I and C&D waste effectively makes it a business tax. Based on tables provided by CCIQ, for example, a business—say a restaurant—that has two four-wheel steel bins emptied twice a week is looking at an additional \$3,120 per annum through this tax. Do not forget that that does not include any additional imposition through Julia Gillard's carbon tax. As the CCIQ has submitted, due to ongoing depressed economic conditions many businesses do not have the financial capacity to absorb additional waste costs, nor do they have the resources to investigate and make changes to their waste practices and systems. With a minimal likelihood of being able to pass costs on to customers at present, the additional cost will significantly affect the profitability and viability of many Queensland businesses.

I think that it is worth putting on the public report CCIQ's subsequent statement and that is that, according to the National Waste Report 2010, the C&I sector contributed only 26 per cent of waste to landfill and was responsible for 48 per cent of waste recovered, compared to the household sector which contributed 40 per cent of total waste sent to landfill and only 36 per cent of waste recovered in Queensland. It concludes that CCIQ does not believe that there is any strong argument other than political reasons to exclude household waste from the levy, given that the household sector is Queensland's largest growing contributor of waste. The levy will also dramatically increase the cost of building a house. Every scrap of waste typically disposed of via skip bins will be levied as C&D at \$35 a tonne.

The levy has the potential to destroy existing waste sector businesses. The decision to exclude self-haul operators will hurt innovators such as Mr John Erhard, the Director of The Rubbish Removers. When I asked him if his business was sustainable should this bill pass in its current form, his response was—

It is really 'watch this space'. My wife and I have worked very hard to get where we are. We care about our employees and that is why I am here today. We are very positive people. We work very hard... We believe we are glass-half-full not glass-half-empty people. We can only hope that the changes to this legislation will be done right. We welcome it, like I said. We want it to happen. We believe it needs to happen. But we also believe it needs to happen right. If it is done right, our business will not only succeed; it will thrive and I believe that there will be great benefits to the community because of it. If this legislation is not brought in correctly, I do not believe our business will survive.

Similarly, the Australian Council of Recycling believes the levy in its current format is unworkable. They believe the exemption of MSW creates an economic environment that will not encourage councils to work with their ratepayers to sort and recycle waste; create leakage of C&I and C&D into the MSW waste stream—that is, you will start seeing kerbside bins full of business, industrial and construction waste; it will create unnecessary policy and regulatory complexity and increase corresponding costs; and lead to greater potential fraud through levy avoidance.

ACOR is concerned that the design of the levy system in responding to opposition from local government by exempting municipal waste creates undesirable and unnecessary administrative complexity and likely higher transaction costs for industry operating various waste and recycling facilities. ACOR's simpler solution would be to provide the primary non-hazardous materials levy at a flat rate on waste from all sources with the capacity to provide rebates for specific purposes—for example, recycling residues, non-profits et cetera—especially to promote resource recovery and recycling. I think even councils are seeing the sense of such a suggestion. I can appreciate why councils or the LGAQ at least fought so hard to exclude MSW due to the added impost it would have had on each and every ratepayer, but many are coming to the realisation that the alternative is an administrative nightmare that will ultimately cost them and their ratepayers anyway.

For example, the Moreton Bay Regional Council has identified that the monthly data collection and reporting requirements will be very costly and a major burden on council resources. MBRC estimates it will require an additional \$1 million per year to cover administrative costs, consisting of \$800,000 for increased landfill staff to collect and enter data whilst maintaining customer service levels, \$100,000 for additional council staff to prepare the monthly submission to DERM, and \$100,000 to provide additional staff on site to check waste loads and ensure they are disposed of in the correct resource recovery areas.

The government will make a lot of noise about the millions of dollars being thrown at local government to offset infrastructure upgrades, but it is silent when it comes to compensation for ongoing administrative expenses. In the absence of an offset from the waste and environment fund, that is \$1 million a year the Moreton Bay Regional Council is going to have to recover from its ratepayers. So whilst the focus is clearly on the business sector, no-one is going to be exempt.

The Moreton Bay Regional Council has also provided one of the best graphical representations of how ludicrous this bill is to administer. This is its current waste disposal flow chart showing the various waste types coming in, being processed and recycled or sent to landfill. These are the types of movements it is currently capturing through its data system. This is what it believes will be necessary following the introduction of the waste levy. I think it speaks for itself. I table these documents.

Tabled paper: Moreton Bay Regional Council flowcharts regarding waste disposal [\[5590\]](#).

Several weeks ago the Minister for Main Roads made a mockery of this chamber by performing the hokey-pokey during question time. Clearly, he has been talking to the Minister for Environment, because together they have concocted the waste equivalent of the hokey-pokey with bits and pieces being put in and out all over the place. What a farce! How could any self-respecting minister—or government for that matter—allow such a dog's breakfast piece of legislation to proceed?

That is still not the worst of it. This bill will actually achieve the opposite of what it claims as its objective. It will create a huge disincentive to recycle and a disincentive to explore alternative waste solutions. Let me use two examples to demonstrate what I mean. Firstly, let me present the case of Kennedy's Classic Aged Timbers at Narangba. Kennedy's has been in the timber recycling industry for 17 years and over that time has contributed to some significant improvements in the industry. It takes used telegraph poles from Ergon and Energex and sleepers from Queensland Rail and recycles them

into hardwood products. Kennedy's products have been used in the new Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine, at Suncorp Stadium, the Gallery of Modern Art, the new six-star Energex building at Newstead, the new Emergency Services building and the Noosa Transit Centre. Even with leading-edge, world-class recyclers there is still residual waste that must go to landfill. In the case of much of this waste, as the original product was treated with chemicals such as creosote, arsenic trioxide, CCA or bifenthrin, there is no alternative but landfill. In fact, at best Kennedy's recover 40 per cent, so 60 per cent is still destined for landfill. Even with the discounted levy rate of \$17.50 per tonne, Kennedy's is under threat.

As CEO Michael Kennedy revealed at the public hearing, the waste levy is going to have the 'very severe and perverse effect of actually providing a market advantage for tropical rainforest timbers from Asia and South America. When an organisation such as a state government organisation specifies to use certified timbers, the timbers coming from the tropical rainforests of South-East Asia, which may or may not have been illegally logged, will have a distinct market advantage over our recycled timber products.' Michael Kennedy stated—

I urge the committee to think very strongly about this and, if you have one ounce of an environmental bone in your body, to consider the severe and perverse outcome it will have on timber recycling in this state.

Surely organisations such as the Queensland Conservation Council and the Queensland Greens must shudder at the thought that we would lose an Australian based recycling industry and start importing South-East Asian hardwood timber.

However, it gets worse. The other example comes from the Cairns and Tablelands councils' Bedminster facility. Mr Nigel Crumpton, the Acting Manager of Waste and Environment at Cairns Regional Council provided the following summation of the situation to the EAREC—

The Cairns Regional Council agrees with the broad objectives and strategic intents of the bill and they are generally in line with our own waste strategy. As Bill from Tablelands has just said, it is really the waste levy regarding the municipal solid waste component of the residual waste from the resource recovery. Cairns Regional Council delivers all municipal solid waste and Tablelands Regional Council delivers a portion of municipal solid waste to the Bedminster facility, where the waste is aerobically composted and diverted from landfill, hence eliminating a generation of greenhouse gases. This kind of facility is unique in Queensland. Both councils already pay a premium to recover and divert waste from landfill via the Bedminster facility.

By potentially imposing a commercial/industrial levy on the municipal solid waste residual component, council will be significantly financially disadvantaged, so we believe in implementing innovative resource recovery technologies. Levying the municipal solid waste residual component at the commercial/industrial waste levy of \$35 a tonne would equate to additional costs to Cairns Regional Council of approximately \$1 million per year and to Tablelands council of approximately \$110,000 per year. While state government officers acknowledge it is an unintended outcome, even if a proposed discount on the commercial/industrial levy of 50 per cent or \$17.50 per tonne was granted through a provision, Cairns Regional Council would still have significant additional costs of approximately \$500,000 per annum.

Not only will imposing the commercial/industrial levy on the municipal solid waste residuals be a significant financial burden for Cairns Regional Council, it also appears to contradict the intent of the waste disposal levy outlined in the bill and acts as a disincentive for other councils considering implementing resource recoveries of this kind. The levy of municipal solid waste residuals at the Bedminster process places Cairns Regional Council residents at a significant disadvantage to residents in other council areas where municipal solid waste is not levied.

It is clear that in its current form the bill will actually deliver the opposite of what it claims, shutting down innovative facilities that are already diverting waste from landfill.

I have not yet mentioned the aged-care sector or residents of high-rise complexes who, because of the nature of their businesses or their abodes, rely on commercial operators to collect their residential waste. This government says it cares for our senior Queenslanders, but clearly it does not care enough to prevent them from being one of the only residential groups to be slugged with the waste tax. Will the pension cover the increase? I doubt it! Many of those wonderful people are already suffering through the cold of winter and the heat of summer because they cannot pay their electricity bills. I cannot see how they will pay for this one.

The Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee has tried, albeit vainly I suspect, to lessen the administrative madness of this legislation. It proposes four amendments. The first is to clause 28, which deals with applications for approval of waste as exempt waste. The National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations, NACRO, submits that there are seven major charitable recyclers in Queensland that are estimated to generate 85 per cent of the charitable waste volume. The remaining charitable recyclers are local church or scout groups. It is estimated that the seven organisations will potentially require 73 exemptions across 22 local government levy areas. Given the nature of their business, NACRO suggests that a master exemption certificate be issued to the applicant for 12 months and vehicle details be registered for monitoring and control purposes. The committee supports this suggestion and, therefore, recommends that clause 28 be amended so that charitable recycling organisations that operate in more than one local government area are able to secure a single authority for waste to be treated as exempt waste in all areas, rather than seeking separate exemptions for each area.

The second proposed amendment is to clause 41 and pertains to the remitting of waste levy amounts to the state. If this bill is to proceed, the committee implores the minister to consider quarterly rather than monthly reporting and payment. That would potentially address some—not all—of the anticipated administrative costs I mentioned earlier. Similarly, the committee recommends that rather than keeping hard copies of volumetric surveys at the waste disposal site, hard and electronic copies of volumetric survey results be kept at the administration centre for waste disposal sites—that is, rather than clogging up a landfill site with mounds of paperwork, let them be kept, electronically where possible, at the council offices or company state headquarters.

The committee agrees with the WCRAQ's suggestion to amend the bill in order to give greater protection to commercially sensitive information provided by landfill operators as part of their waste data returns. After all, many of those operators operate in a commercial environment and if DERM were not strict in its management of those records it could prove to be disastrous for a business.

Unfortunately, even if these amendments are accepted by the minister, they will not stop this legislation from being what it is. It is bad legislation. It is flawed legislation. It will destroy businesses, cost local governments and act as a disincentive to recycling and cutting down on waste going into landfill. It is one of those bills—and I suspect one of those acts, given the government seems maniacal in its determination to pass it—that is beyond salvation. No amount of amendment will save it or make it more palatable, less onerous or easier to implement.

Therefore, whilst the LNP supports transformation from an inefficient wasteful linear economic system where products and materials are disposed of at the end of their productive life to a sustainable closed-loop materials economy and whilst the LNP supports waste avoidance, recycling and re-use, the LNP will oppose this bill. What is more, should the LNP win government at the impending election, the LNP will repeal this legislation. An LNP government will not shy away from its responsibility to drive policy and regulatory reform with regards to waste management, but it will not be in the form of a business-destroying, anti-recycling, cost-shifting, cost-of-living tax.

Before moving from the waste tax, I want to express concern about the revenue that will be raised and how it will be distributed. At the LGAQ conference it was fascinating to watch the reaction from the key players when Campbell Newman announced that an LNP government would repeal this legislation. The announcement was met with instantaneous and resounding applause from the mayors and councillors in the room, despite the fact that councils are set to benefit in the form of millions of dollars in grants and subsidies for upgrading waste infrastructure. They know that investment from the government was not going to stop this legislation from being bad. What was surprising was the reaction by the Queensland Conservation Council and the National Parks Association of Queensland. Clearly, both organisations are more concerned about the \$56 million that was earmarked for national park expansions and the \$45 million for koala habitat purchases than they were about waste avoidance, recycling or even illegal dumping.

Does the QCC really want that \$45 million for koalas, knowing that it has come at the cost of local timber recycling and, potentially, an increase in illegal logging in South-East Asian forests? Does the National Parks Association really want that \$56 million so badly that it is willing to overlook the massive increase in illegal dumping, particularly in state forests and national parks, that this legislation will create? I echo the words of Michael Kennedy and urge the QCC and the National Parks Association to think very strongly about this and if they have one ounce of an environmental bone in their bodies to consider the severe and perverse outcomes this legislation will have.

The LNP has already made commitments regarding national parks and their management in this state. We are also consulting with the broader environmental sector regarding the protection of koalas. Should the LNP win government I give my commitment to working with the QCC and the National Parks Association on these two matters. However, I am not going to fund it at the expense of small business or through another sneaky tax. I will not fund it through an anti-recycling, anti-waste reduction, business-destroying, cost-shifting, cost-of-living tax.

Before I address the other elements of the bill pertaining to carbon farming, coal seam gas and the National Water Initiative I do want to speak briefly to a couple of other components of the waste legislation. Chapter 4 of the bill legislates for the management of priority and other products through mandated or voluntary product stewardship programs or disposal bans.

A number of submissions to the EAREC believe the government has again missed an opportunity. For example, the Queensland Conservation Council has supported the introduction of a phase out of single-use plastic bags. The QCC is extremely disappointed that the program designed to address this process, which existed in the preliminary draft of the bill, has been completely removed. Interestingly, I know a number of members of the retail industry would agree with the QCC. I have spoken to retail operators who believe and accept that a phase out of single-use plastic bags is inevitable. They are looking to the government to provide certainty and direction in this regard. So again the Labor government has failed to heed such calls.

Chapter 5 of the bill deals with offences relating to littering and illegal dumping. Interestingly, the government has taken the step of banning certain types of unsolicited advertising material, specifically windscreen flyers. Before members in this chamber and of the broader public leap to the conclusion that all those parking fines they have amassed are now considered illegal and null and void, I can confirm that a person does not contravene this section if the action is made in the lawful performance of a function under an act or if the action is reasonable in the circumstances. The specific example is given of a parking inspector affixing parking tickets to a vehicle.

At this stage newspapers, magazines or other publications distributed without charge to intended readers are not banned, but perhaps some closer consideration is required. When visiting the electorate of Cleveland recently I spoke to Dianne Hausler. I note Dianne was recognised in the most recent *Sunday Mail* as an entrant in the Pride of Australia Medal. Dianne works tirelessly for the environment in Redlands and she believes there is another missed opportunity.

Dianne reports that when monitoring sites in the Redlands, such as Tarradarrapin Wetlands, 80 per cent of plastic bags found in waterways come from discarded bags from local newspapers. The reason is that local papers are mostly thrown on footpaths, roads and gutters. The bags then end up in local stormwater drains and local waterways. The other 20 per cent of plastics in local waterways that end up on our foreshore and bay are drink bottles and other plastic waste. To reduce the amount of plastics in local waterways and Moreton Bay we have to investigate myriad sources.

This chapter also introduces new means of public reporting of vehicle littering or illegal dumping offences. Whilst the means are supportive, you have to ask the question: who is going to police it? Illegal dumping is already a significant problem. Just ask Forestry Plantations and Hancocks in my patch. Places like the Beerburum State Forest are regular dumping grounds. With this disastrous piece of legislation I can only envisage it getting far worse. It did in every other jurisdiction that introduced a waste tax.

So say the public take up the offer of reporting. DERM have advised that it will be a state responsibility to follow-up and act upon the reports. How many extra DERM staff will that take? How much will that cost? I look forward to more detail from the minister in this regard.

I believe I should also put on the record concerns regarding the omission of chapter 7 part 7, special provisions about waste management, of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 as contained in clause 304. The LGAQ submits that section 369 of the EPA be retained for a period of two years to allow local government to develop alternative tools to manage nuisance associated with a commercial waste collection complex. What the LGAQ is referring to is the ability of local governments to prescribe when and how kerbside waste is collected. The provision means councils can ensure ratepayers are not unduly impacted by noise at unwarranted times. Again, I look forward to the minister's consideration of this request. Her department acknowledges local governments could develop local law to manage this. All the LGAQ is asking for is the time to do that.

Moving to the other elements of the legislation, this bill also amends the Forestry Act 1959, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994 and the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to allow Queenslanders to participate in the national and international carbon sequestration efforts possible through the Commonwealth's Carbon Farming Initiative or CFI. As the explanatory notes explain, the CFI is a carbon offset scheme being established by the Commonwealth government to provide new economic opportunities for farmers, forest growers and landholders and help the environment by reducing carbon pollution. The CFI aims to give farmers, forest growers and landholders access to domestic and international carbon markets, providing an investment incentive for environmental conservation and greenhouse gas emission reduction.

By undertaking emission abatement activities that reduce or store carbon pollution, landowners can generate carbon credits known as Australian carbon credit units, ACCUs, that can then be sold domestically or internationally either voluntarily or to meet regulatory requirements. To meet the CFI requirements, the proponent must have the legal right to carry out the abatement activity and as such hold the exclusive carbon sequestration right and this right must be long term—ideally 100 years or more—and recognised as an interest in land under state law.

The amendments in this bill provide for a cross-tenure long-term legal right to carry out a carbon sequestration project in Queensland, the power to vest in a landholder the crown statutory ownership of carbon in all forest products in a project area and improvements in the administration of state land by clarifying, updating and improving provisions for the keeping of registers of land and of particular interests, including carbon sequestration interests, in that land.

At the time of debate on this Commonwealth bill my federal counterpart Greg Hunt MP, the member for Flinders and the shadow minister for the climate action, environment and heritage, said the following—

We [the coalition] made our position very clear in both houses that we support the general thrust of the bill. It comes from work we have done over a period of years. It was initially rejected by the government in terms of abatement incentives. We are pleased that that has been put in the form of legislation. But, ultimately, given our experience with the Home Insulation Program, the Green Loans Program, the warnings we gave in relation to the cash-for-clunkers program and many other elements, we are not willing to

take programs on face value if they appear to be inadequate and unfinished. The Senate has improved the legislation, and we will accept the amendments as were agreed upon by the Senate through cooperative action between the different parties. We will, however, maintain our position of the House and the Senate that the bill, whilst desirable in its intent and whilst desirable in its general construction, remains inadequate, with the failure to complete many of the processes with respect to the regulations—in particular the failure to assume what we regard as a reasonable definition of permanence which will not be destructive, damaging and of a hindrance to the fair and proper functioning of this bill and of the general carbon farming area. Having said that, our position remains this: we support the intention, we support the goals, we support the amendments.

It is interesting to note what Greg Hunt said, 'It seems Queensland Labor is not the only Labor government to make a hash of legislation.'

I am pleased these amendments will allow Queenslanders, including long-term leaseholders, to participate in this initiative. Were it not for the inclusion of this amendment in this waste tax bill, the LNP would not have opposed this element. I do have a number of questions though that I will put to the minister during consideration in detail.

The bill also amends the Water Act 2000 to implement the National Water Initiative risk assignment compensation framework for reductions in the value of water access entitlements. I will defer to my colleagues the honourable members for Hinchinbrook and Bundaberg to speak at greater length on these amendments. Suffice to say, like the carbon farming changes, the LNP would have supported this amendment in a stand-alone piece of legislation. Again, we have concerns which the shadow minister for agriculture will outline, but not sufficient enough concerns to oppose this part of the bill.

Finally, the bill also amends the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to remove the requirement to gain separate approval through this act for the temporary discharge of coal seam gas recycled water where equivalent approvals are issued under another act such as the Environmental Protection Act 1994. Similarly, it will allow sewerage service providers to consent to the discharge of seepage water from tunnels, car parks, basements, lift wells and similar constructed fixtures but not mines or petroleum activities in the same way they can do so for trade waste. This is of particular interest to the Airport Link project. Again the shadow minister for resource management, the member for Bundaberg, will address this amendment in greater detail. But I reassure members that this is not a diminution of environmental standards; it is a removal of overregulation, where a company previously needed approvals under more than one act to achieve exactly the same outcome.

Before closing, I refer members to the conformance of the bill with fundamental legislative principles. There are detailed notes in the EARC report, but I want to point out the extraordinary amount of legislative power that will be prescribed under a regulation. The following clauses make reference to subsequent regulation: 25, 28, 30, 37, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 48, 51, 52, 60, 64, 65, 66, 70, 77, 84, 88, 97, 99, 101, 116, 122, 131, 132, 138, 141, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 152, 156, 159, 167, 182, 183, 240, 244, 270, 271, 277, 279, 280, 295, 296 and 297. My apologies if I missed one. That is a staggering amount of regulation and it says to me one of two things: either this bill is not complete in itself, which is likely given the government has not got it right, or the government intends to tweak—read increase—levy rates to its benefit in the future, or perhaps it is both.

What is equally alarming, though, is in the notes on the proposed provisions for the Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011 provided to the EARC, DERM states—

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 makes reference to the regulation in several (more like many) of its clauses. However, it is not intended that there will be a regulation provision for each of these clauses in the Bill.

I am sorry but that needs repeating. Whilst many references are made to subsequent regulation, 'it is not intended that there will be a regulation provision of each of these clauses in the bill'. I think that is a good note to end on. It sums up this bill—incomplete, nightmarish, complex and downright dangerous. As I said earlier, while the LNP supports 'transformation from an inefficient, wasteful linear economic system (where products and materials are disposed of at the end of their productive life) to a closed loop sustainable materials economy', whilst the LNP supports waste avoidance, waste recycling and re-use, the LNP will oppose this bill. What is more, should the LNP win government at the impending election, the LNP will repeal this bill. An LNP government will not shy away from its responsibility to drive policy and regulatory reform with regard to waste management, but it will not be in the form of a business-destroying, anti-recycling, anti-waste reduction, cost-shifting, cost-of-living tax.



Mr CRIPPS (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (3.21 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill. From the outset, I would certainly like to congratulate the shadow minister for the environment, the member for Glass House, for his very comprehensive response to the bill on behalf of the LNP. I would also like to say that, given that the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill was one of the first bills to move through the Environment, Agriculture, Resource and Energy Committee under the new committee process in this parliament, the work of the member for Glass House in scrutinising the provisions of the bill and identifying the significant deficiencies contained within it was also very comprehensive.

The shadow minister for the environment has today very thoroughly dealt with those provisions of the bill that pertain to Labor's proposed waste tax. I endorse his contribution in that regard. It is my intention to focus on those provisions of the bill which pertain to the National Water Initiative. The concerns of the LNP members on the committee, as outlined in our dissenting report, as they relate to the amendments concerning the National Water Initiative are about the impacts on regional and rural communities in that part of the Murray-Darling Basin within the state of Queensland.

Part 9 of the bill proposes amendments to the Water Act 2000. The National Water Initiative is a water reform policy of the Commonwealth government. The amendments in this bill seek to insert into the Water Act a framework to facilitate the payment of compensation to water entitlement holders for reductions in the value of water available to them resulting from the implementation of the National Water Initiative.

The proposed amendments seek to make it clear that the Commonwealth government will be financially liable for the compensation to those water entitlement holders for the reductions in the value of water available to them resulting from the implementation of the National Water Initiative. To avoid the possibility of the state government being liable for the buyback of these water entitlements, the Queensland parliament must implement the framework by passing these amendments before the commencement of the Commonwealth's Murray-Darling Basin Plan in 2012. The buyback of water entitlements at this point in time will be a voluntary process from willing sellers only.

Failure to adopt the framework through the proposed amendments could make the state government liable for the compensation. The committee was advised by DERM officials during its public briefing on the bill that the Commonwealth government had made over \$500 million available through the National Water Initiative for purchasing water entitlements in that part of the Murray-Darling Basin inside the state of Queensland. I understand that the magnitude of the entire National Water Initiative for the buyback of water entitlements in the Murray-Darling system right throughout all of the basin states is in the order of \$16 billion.

The LNP certainly agrees that the Commonwealth government ought to be financially liable for the compensation to those water entitlement holders for the reduction in the value of the water available to them as a result of the implementation of the National Water Initiative. As a result, the LNP does not necessarily oppose these particular amendments in and of themselves. If they were in a bill in and of themselves, these amendments would not be as concerning as they are if they were supported with additional information about the impact of the buyback of these water entitlements on those communities of the Murray-Darling Basin inside Queensland.

However, the concern of the LNP about the framework that is proposed to be inserted into the Water Act by the amendments in this bill is that they do not provide for the Commonwealth government to be financially liable for any other costs that result from the withdrawal of those water entitlements under the National Water Initiative. The amendments propose to make the Commonwealth government financially liable to compensate water entitlement holders for the reduction in value of the water entitlements only. Nothing in the bill indicates the Commonwealth will be liable for the value of lost agricultural production, the subsequent job losses, reductions in land values, or any other associated costs that result from the withdrawal of over \$500 million in water entitlements from that part of the Murray-Darling Basin in the state of Queensland.

So, while the amendments in this bill will establish a framework for compensation to be paid by the Commonwealth for the reduction in the value of water entitlements in the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland as a result of the National Water Initiative being implemented, the framework does not provide for the Commonwealth government to be financially liable for any other costs associated with this federal water reform policy. This is a real concern for the LNP. It is a major shortcoming of the bill, the explanatory notes accompanying the bill and the information provided to the committee during its consideration of the bill that the full implications of implementing the National Water Initiative compensation framework does not reflect the obvious flow-on effects of withdrawing this volume of water entitlement from these rural and regional communities.

It is clear that DERM has not even attempted to determine what the subsequent costs of withdrawing more than \$500 million of water entitlements from the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland will be. The committee was advised by DERM that any broader impacts on the community as a result of the loss of water entitlements were outside the basin plan process. The LNP considers any impacts on the wider community ought to be central to the basin plan process. The failure of DERM to recognise this and of the minister to introduce a bill that takes this major issue into consideration or, at the very least, offer some sort of explanation to the parliament about how it will be overcome is unacceptable.

In Queensland, the Murray-Darling Basin consists of the catchment of the Condamine-Balonne, the Warrego and the Paroo rivers. For the relatively modest amount of water Queensland draws from the Murray-Darling Basin, southern inland Queensland is a vibrant and productive region sustaining many vibrant and productive communities. The key economic activity in this region is irrigated

agriculture. As this activity suggests, irrigated agriculture is dependent upon water as a critical input into production. Agricultural industries are the most significant employer in the region. The productive capacity, earnings potential and expenditure patterns of irrigated farms are directly related to the water supplies available to them.

I am somewhat familiar with this issue because I was the shadow minister for natural resources and water when this parliament debated the Water (Commonwealth Powers) Bill in November 2008. That bill referred certain powers relating to the management of water resources in the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland to the Commonwealth parliament. That bill resulted from a March 2008 memorandum of understanding amongst basin states and the Commonwealth that agreed to refer to the Commonwealth parliament certain powers that previously rested with the states to manage water resources within the Murray-Darling Basin within their respective jurisdictions.

At that time, I raised the same concerns with the then Minister for Natural Resources and Water, who is now the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure, about the impact of what was at the time a proposed \$350 million buyback of water allocations from water users in the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland on the economic and social fabric of the communities in southern inland Queensland. As I said during the debate on that bill in November 2008, the lifeblood of those communities is the rivers that flow through them and the jobs they sustain through the principal economic activity—irrigated agriculture.

I asked if we could expect further buybacks as a result of the referral of this power to the Commonwealth parliament. I noted during the debate that, importantly, the agreement between the basin states and the Commonwealth that the Commonwealth would be required to consider the social and economic impacts of the buyback of water licences, known as priority projects, in addition to the environmental outcomes of those priority projects in the Murray-Darling Basin. The minister's response to my question on this issue in November 2008 was as follows—

I can assure the House that, through continuous consultation on the intergovernmental agreement, our stakeholders keep us well informed of their issues and priorities, and those were at the forefront of our negotiations with the Commonwealth. Foremost in the development of the priority projects is consideration of their impact on communities. There is a consultative process underway with stakeholders for the development of the priority projects.

I table the relevant page from *Hansard* with the minister's statement highlighted for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Extract from Record of Proceedings, 11 November 2008, page 3406, in relation to the Water (Commonwealth Powers) Bill [5591].

So we had an assurance in November 2008 from the then Minister for Natural Resources and Water, now the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure, that we should not be concerned about the impact on these local communities because those impacts were at the forefront of the development of projects associated with the development of the Commonwealth's Murray-Darling Basin plan. Honourable members will excuse me then for being a bit surprised when I posed some questions to the Department of Environment and Resource Management during the public briefing on this bill in August 2011 about how the proposed amendments in the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill followed on from the Water (Commonwealth Powers) Bill in 2008 and what impact the proposed withdrawal of those water entitlements would have. I was told that those impacts were outside of the basin plan process. The relevant section of the transcript from the committee's public briefing reads as follows—

Mr Claydon: Yes, the Commonwealth amended its legislation in 2008. It put its Commonwealth Water Act in place in 2007. Then in 2008 the basin jurisdictions transferred some of their water planning powers to the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth amended its legislation in 2008 as a result of the transfer of those powers.

Mr CRIPPS: So that statement simply refers to the fact that the Commonwealth will assume liability for any compensatory amounts that need to be paid as a result of the loss of the water rights by those people who currently hold those rights?

Mr Claydon: Yes. It indicates where that has come about as a result of that basin planning process and new knowledge that has been put into that process.

Mr CRIPPS: It does not take into account any cost benefit analysis that may need to be done to ascertain the loss of productivity through the loss of those water resource entitlements?

Mr Claydon: The matter of if, for example, there is broader community impacts as a result of those water access entitlements not being used is outside of the actual basin plan process.

I table the relevant page from the transcript with DERM's advice highlighted for the information of the House.

Tabled paper: Extract from EAREC transcript of proceedings, 24 August 2011, page 26, in relation to a briefing on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 [5592].

So from November 2008 to August 2011, we have gone from the impact on local communities being at the forefront of the development of projects in the Commonwealth's Murray-Darling plan, to the impact on local communities being outside of the basin plan process. This is quite extraordinary and

justifies the scepticism and lack of confidence that many people in the communities in the catchments of the Condamine-Balonne, the Warrego and the Paroo rivers have in government at both a state and a federal level when it comes to managing water resources in the Murray-Darling Basin. The obligations of the plan are very unclear in respect of the need to give consideration to the impact of these buybacks on local communities.

As I said earlier, there is no indication in this bill, its explanatory notes, the minister's introductory speech or any information forthcoming from DERM during the committee's consideration of the bill of what the impact of withdrawing half a billion dollars of water entitlements from the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland will be. What could some of these impacts be? If you have up to or a little bit more than half a billion dollars less of a critical input into production not being utilised by industry in that area of the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland, you obviously have a significant loss of production. If you have a significant loss of production, you potentially undermine the viability of capital infrastructure—such as storages for agricultural produce, the viability of irrigation infrastructure and the number of customers supporting and maintaining that infrastructure—there is less demand for transport services, there are fewer employment opportunities in those communities and so on and so forth.

The amendments in this bill will provide for the Commonwealth to be financially liable for the reduction in the value of water entitlements as a result of the implementation of the National Water Initiative in the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland. However, the potential for other significant financial costs to be incurred as a result of this federal water reform policy has not been properly considered. How many agricultural production enterprises will not be possible? How many jobs will be made unviable? How will land values be affected in communities in Queensland's Murray-Darling Basin? No cost-benefit analysis has been done by DERM. We have no idea what the impact of the implementation of this policy will be on those communities. We are pretty much flying blind.

The LNP believes that the Commonwealth government should also be financially liable for these and any other potential costs that will occur as a result of its water reform policy being implemented. In the absence of any other provision or explanation, it has not been demonstrated that the framework proposed by the amendments in this bill provides an adequate mechanism to compensate Queensland for any reduction in water entitlements as a result of the implementation of the Commonwealth's National Water Initiative.



Ms JONES (Ashgrove—ALP) (3.38 pm): I do apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker. I am not used to the honourable member for Hinchinbrook not taking all his time. I was counting on him taking his full time, given how passionate he is about these issues, but he let me down today. It is my great honour to make a contribution to the bill that we are debating here this afternoon. I want to commend the minister for the work that she has done in bringing the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill before the House. It is actually very apt, Mr Deputy Speaker Elmes, that you are sitting in the chair this afternoon because I am going to start my contribution by quoting you when you were the shadow minister for climate change and sustainability.

When the honourable member for Noosa was the shadow minister for climate change and sustainability, he described the reforms that we are debating in this chamber this afternoon as a win for the recycling industry and a win for the environment, and what good words they were by the former shadow minister. The honourable member for Noosa is one of the only true Liberals left in the Queensland parliament and I hail his efforts and contribution to Queensland in this regard. Back in those good old days when we still had a Liberal Party in Queensland, that is how the LNP described the reforms that we are now debating. We understand from the contribution of the shadow minister that the opposition will be opposing the legislation and arguing that when it gets into government—because it is so certain that it will, and it does not hide that it thinks that the election has already been and gone and it has won and it does not have to convince people to vote—it will be repealing the legislation. I will touch on that at the end of my speech, because we have seen the experience of conservative governments that say one thing before an election and then when they win the election do the complete opposite.

Last year the LNP described the reforms that we are debating today, and which it is now opposing, as finally dragging Queensland's waste management into the 21st century. Let us be very clear: last year there was bipartisan support for action to cut landfill by half in Queensland, and there was bipartisan support last year for very good reasons. Queensland's households and businesses currently generate over 32 million tonnes of waste each year. In Queensland we send more to landfill than any other state in Australia. We have among the lowest recycling rates in the country, particularly when it comes to the construction, commercial and industrial sectors. The shameful part of this is that we only recycle around 33 per cent of this waste, so let us paint that picture. There are very legitimate concerns in this regard. Queenslanders are the highest generators of waste but have the lowest recycling rates in the country.

At the time the LGAQ said that finding a solution for Queensland's waste was an urgent priority for local and state governments. The LGAQ said this in December when I stood there with the LGAQ and a representative from the council of mayors—

Costs are growing. Landfill is getting harder to find. Business and industry need to recycle more, so to do nothing is not financially or environmentally sustainable.

That is what the LGAQ said. It continued—

Councils are facing unprecedented levels of industrial and e-waste and in some places we are running out of space for landfill. Bigger and bigger slices of council budgets are going to landfill management. In fact, waste now ranks in the top 4 costs for councils. That is unsustainable.

That is what the LGAQ said about these reforms. It also talked about the fact that the Queensland government's previous waste strategy was released in 1996, and in the minister's second reading speech to the House she focused on the fact that we were going to modernise the waste legislation in Queensland to reflect the new items that councils have to confront in their landfill, whether that be plasma TVs, nickel cadmium batteries, mobile phones and other e-waste that now enters our waste stream. Furthermore, there are other significant reasons why we need these reforms. Other mainland states not only have a waste levy but are actually increasing it, exposing Queensland as an even cheaper place for interstate companies to dump their waste.

Mr Powell: What about Tasmania? Isn't that the greenest state in Australia?

Ms JONES: I take the interjection from the honourable member acknowledging that conservative governments in both New South Wales and Victoria have increased the waste levy since they have been in government despite saying that they would not. In addition to that, what we also highlighted at the time when these reforms did have bipartisan support was that we knew that in Queensland we were missing out on valuable green jobs. Victoria has over 13,000 jobs associated with the waste and recycling industry, but Queensland only has around 5,000. On that point, in December Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of Queensland's Executive Director, Rick Ralph, said—

When fully implemented, the strategy was a win-win for both the waste industry and the environment. We want to see landfills turned into recycling facilities in Queensland. You get four times as many jobs from recycling than you do from burying your waste. That is good for building a new greener economy and a great outcome for the environment.

None of these facts have changed. In fact, they have only grown, and that is why this government continues to be determined to ensure that we do not allow Queensland to become the dumping ground of Australia. As the LGAQ highlighted in its contribution—quite rightly—councils, whether in Queensland or in other states, are having to deal with increasing levels of waste and it is costing council budgets more. It wants to see what this bill delivers—that is, reducing the amount of waste generated in the first place. That is what this bill goes to the heart of. It is confronting that what we have seen in northern New South Wales is councils doing a cost analysis on the fact that it is cheaper for them to put their waste in big semitrailers and drive it over the border into Queensland and dump it in our backyard. This is not a legacy that I want to leave for my son and it is not a legacy I want to leave for the children of Queensland.

Today is a day when we can go back to when there was bipartisan support under your sensible leadership, Mr Deputy Speaker, when you were the shadow minister for climate change—that is, when we actually had bipartisan support which looked to the future of Queensland. My question to honourable members opposite is this: what has changed? What has changed in the last six months that those opposite went from having a bipartisan position in the future interests of Queensland and Queenslanders to the position that they are now arguing in this chamber? What we know very well is that their words are hollow—just like their conservative counterparts in other states that have already increased their waste levies, which are already substantially higher than anything being proposed in Queensland.

We have worked extensively with all of the sectors that are involved in this industry. We have set up an industry task force—a stakeholder advisory council—that includes the Urban Development Institute of Australia, the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Council of Mayors SEQ—and everybody in this parliament has already heard the conversations that the then chair of the council of mayors and I had at that time—the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Master Builders Association, Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland, the Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of Queensland, the Australian Council of Recycling, the Queensland Conservation Council, the Waste Management Association of Australia and the Australian Industry Group. These are the people that we have been working very closely with for almost two years now. The fact is that today is an opportunity for us to stand up—stand up for Queensland and stand up for Queensland's environment. But what we have seen under the leadership of Campbell Newman is that the LNP keeps on squirming away from accountability whenever it is confronted with it, and today is another key example of where it walked away from its bipartisan support of reforms that will actually deliver new jobs in Queensland and where there is a very fair deal for councils. Contrary to what those opposite say, this does not apply to households. I have seen the scaremongering in their local newspapers where those opposite have

claimed that it is going to apply to mums and dads. That is not true. Where does the money generated from this go? It goes back to exactly where all of those groups that I just listed wanted it to go—back into encouraging more people to avoid sending things into landfill.

This is about waste reduction. This is good policy. There have been very good people who have worked on this from all of those groups, including industry which has had a very strong voice in this, encouraging and working with businesses. This fundamentally is something that can be an avoidable charge, and that is why we are working with businesses to make sure that we get that balance right. Today I call on the LNP to stand by its word just once—stand by what it said it was going to do. The stark contrast between the current shadow minister and his predecessor is very obvious here today.

(Time expired)



Mr WATT (Everton—ALP) (3.48 pm): The Bligh government has an extremely strong record on environmental protection. We have taken various measures to protect the Great Barrier Reef, we have protected wild rivers, we are protecting North Stradbroke Island and we have introduced a range of ClimateSmart programs to help Queenslanders reduce their emissions and power bills at the same time. This bill is another plank in our agenda to protect Queensland's unique environment for future generations. Queensland, sadly, holds the dubious honour of being Australia's waste capital, and this bill is the start of changing this.

We aim to halve the amount of waste going to landfill in Queensland by 2020, and this bill is central to that. Among other things, it imposes a levy on industrial and commercial waste. It makes it more expensive to send rubbish to landfill and it encourages recycling. Of course, there are compensation arrangements in place, particularly for local governments, to help them adjust to this scheme, and it is a good scheme.

Importantly, the bill will not impose the levy on households. I have spoken to the minister about concern in my community about the potential for a waste levy on households. I am pleased that, in response to my lobbying, the minister will introduce an amendment to the bill which puts it beyond doubt that household waste will be exempt from the levy. I will say more about that during the consideration in detail. I do thank the minister for listening to and acting on my community's concerns.

There is one other issue, though, on which I want to focus my remarks on the bill. It is the position of the opposition and, in particular, that of their wannabe leader, Campbell Newman. We are becoming used to Mr Newman ditching long-held views in his quest to take forward the Newman family dynasty. He has previously said that he supports daylight saving but now he says he opposes it. When he is in Brisbane boardrooms he is a big supporter of coal seam gas, but he is not so sure when he is in the bush. Sadly, the issue of waste management is another on which he has sold his soul to satisfy his lust for power. On this issue, he really has sold his soul.

Campbell Newman used to support strong waste management laws. When he was Lord Mayor he supported our draft waste strategy, which included a waste levy. In May 2010 he told the council chamber that reducing the waste going to landfill was his biggest piece of unfinished business. He went on to say that the then minister, Kate Jones, shared his views on how to reduce waste going to landfill. I table the minutes of that council meeting.

Tabled paper: Extract from Brisbane City Council meeting minutes, dated 11 May 2010, pages 18 and 19, regarding waste reform initiatives [\[5593\]](#).

Our reform also has the support of the SEQ Council of Mayors, and guess who chaired that organisation when it supported the waste levy? That is right, Campbell Newman. On 8 February this year when Campbell Newman was the chair of the council of mayors the executive director of that organisation wrote to the then minister agreeing with the imposition of a waste levy, provided its introduction was delayed until 1 December this year. Again, I table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 8 February 2011, from Mr John Cherry, Executive Director, South East Queensland Council of Mayors, to Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, regarding waste reform initiatives [\[5594\]](#).

A month later, in March this year, Mr Newman as Lord Mayor of Brisbane himself wrote to the then minister agreeing to the levy, provided it started on 1 July 2012. I, again, table that letter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 2 March 2011, from Mr Campbell Newman, Lord Mayor of Brisbane, to Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, regarding the draft Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2010 [\[5595\]](#).


There are now three times that Mr Newman has expressed a view on the waste levy and three times he has supported it subject to its start date. Yet just last week Campbell Newman had another of his well-known conversions on the road to Damascus. Last week he told the Local Government Association conference that he would repeal a waste levy should he become Premier. Not only does Mr Newman's backflip condemn Queensland to remain the nation's dumping ground, but there are even more serious issues at play and they go to the very heart of Mr Newman's character. They go to the very heart of whether Queenslanders can trust him and they go to the very heart of the kind of government that Mr Newman would run if he was elected Premier.

We have to ask: why has he now changed his tune? Why is this man, who three times publicly backed a waste levy, now supporting a repealing of the waste levy? Has he looked hard inside himself and realised the error of his ways? No, it is much simpler than that. He has been bought. He has been bought by some of the biggest waste companies in Queensland. We know that the LNP will not rule out taking donations from big tobacco and now we know that it is also captive to big trash. It is a fact that large waste companies do not like waste levies. Waste levies mean more recycling, and that is bad news for waste transport companies. Waste companies have a way of making their views known to politicians. They give big donations to politicians who toe their line. Recent disclosures to the Electoral Commission tell an interesting tale. On 10 May 2011, only two months after Mr Newman's last comments supporting the waste levy, Smartskip, a company which distributes skips for hire, made a \$5,000 donation to the LNP. Under our legislation, Smartskip will be paying the waste levy and I am sure they do not want to. It gave Mr Newman 5,000 reasons to change his mind and toe its line. It does not stop there. On 15 June 2011 JJ Richards, the largest privately owned waste company in Australia, made a \$55,000 donation to the LNP. This placed that company in the very top tier of donors to the LNP. Here we have JJ Richards, which bought Mr Newman's soul for \$55,000.

But there is more. Two weeks later, on 27 June 2011, SITA, another enormous waste company, made a \$10,000 donation to Forward Brisbane Leadership, the LNP's fundraising arm. What do you know? Just last week Mr Newman did a backflip and announced that an LNP government would scrap the waste levy. Under Joh, it took the Fitzgerald inquiry to uncover the corruption of the political process by the old National Party. Thanks to our disclosure laws, the links are there for all to see. What we see is that, under the LNP, the future of Queensland is for sale to the highest bidder. Under Campbell Newman, the LNP lets big companies buy a policy. Under Campbell Newman, the test for whether something gets done is the size of your chequebook, not the benefit to Queenslanders.

This cash-for-comment style of government is a return to the bad old days of the Bjelke-Petersen National Party regime. It is a disgrace. For a month this government has been asking Campbell Newman to reveal his financial dealings and today shows why. Today we learn that, if you give money to Campbell Newman, you can even change his long-held views. Queenslanders are entitled to question the judgement of this man. What sort of leader would let himself be bought so easily? Can we trust someone who maintains a position provided someone else does not pay him to change his mind? Campbell Newman has spent the last week complaining about muckraking. Now we know that he has looked at the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill and worked out how he can use muck to rake it in. The word is out to big corporations in Queensland: all it takes is a combined donation of \$70,000 to get your way with the LNP. This is a very sad day for Queensland.

I support this bill and its measures to stop Queensland being the nation's dumping ground. Unlike Campbell Newman's LNP, this government will always act in the interests of Queenslanders. Unlike Campbell Newman's LNP, we will never sell out the future of Queensland to the highest bidder. Unlike Campbell Newman's LNP, we will run a clean and honest government, not a money-laundering operation for big corporations who want to pollute our environment. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.57 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011, introduced on 3 August by the honourable member for Sandgate. It was subsequently referred to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee, albeit for a short period which amounted to about eight weeks. Honourable members would recall the shameless move by the new minister to intervene in the due process of the bipartisan committee system in the same week as the new committee commenced. Surely a bill of such substantial nature deserves the allowable six-month time frame for bills. To truncate the period to suit this government's political agenda, which in no way benefits the good folk of Queensland whom they pretend to represent, is a disgraceful act of arrogance.

Why should we—or Queenslanders for that matter—be surprised? I guess we could be forgiven for thinking this new Minister for Environment, the honourable member for Sandgate, was merely being used as a patsy to do the Premier's bidding—a scapegoat, the person upon whom the blame falls. She certainly proved she was out of her depth in question time this morning. If the minister is not a patsy, will she tell all of the small businesses, manufacturers and tourism operators in Queensland that she is proud of the nasty, early Christmas present she has in store for them? On 1 December, when Christmas stores will be decked with holly, this minister will be responsible for wrecking their peak trading with this new tax.

This bill will create new waste management legislation with the following purported objectives: to promote waste avoidance and reduction; reduce the overall impact of waste generation; promote resource recovery and efficiency actions; promote the sustainable use of natural resources; encourage the use of recovered resources; and ensure a shared responsibility between government, business and industry and the community. Subsequent amendments will be made to the Environmental Protection Act 1994, and the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy of 2000 will be repealed along with changes to a number of other associated acts.

I commend the shadow minister, the honourable member for Glass House, for his well-measured address to the parliament and his genuine concerns regarding this bill. As the shadow minister for tourism, manufacturing and small business, and given the enormous implications this legislation will have on Queensland businesses, my comments will be directed to provisions relating to the proposed waste management strategy. In June 2010 the state government released Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010-20: Waste Avoidance and Recycling Consultation Draft and the accompanying Proposed Industry Waste Levy Consultation Draft for public comment, which closed on 16 September 2010. There were 96 submissions received and 44 stakeholder consultation briefings were held. However, having read a number of key submissions I observed major concerns with the proposals of where collected levy funds are to be redirected, the true cost implications of the levy on businesses and the impact of the impending carbon tax.

Clause 26 states that a leviable waste disposal site is any waste facility owned by state or local government or privately owned which has leviable waste delivered to the facility where the operator is required to hold a registration certificate for waste disposal, and waste delivered commonly includes waste destined to become landfill. The bill also allows for an application to be made at the chief executive's discretion to exempt certain waste from the levy, including waste that has been received by charities as part of donations or collected by an organised event. The rate of the waste levy is to be prescribed under a regulation. However, the draft waste levy consultation paper did specify the price per tonne for disposal of each stream of waste and these prices were reaffirmed during the public departmental briefing. They ranged between \$35 and \$150 per tonne for the higher hazard regulated waste. It was also interesting to note that these fees will rise with annual CPI increases but without Gillard's carbon tax being factored into the setting of these new fees. Clause 41 details that the waste levy is to be calculated on a monthly basis and to be paid by the landfill operator to the state. How the landfill operator recovers levy costs does not appear to be prescribed in this legislation. However, the explanatory notes state that leviable waste—for example, commercial and industrial waste—will attract a \$35 per tonne levy on its delivery to the leviable waste disposal site.

In answer to question on notice No. 1170 of 2011 the Minister for Environment stated—

The levy will drive behaviour change by creating a price disincentive to dispose of waste to landfill.

The logical turn of events, then, would be to provide incentives for recycling. Yet recycling residuals will also be taxed by this new levy system, albeit at a discounted rate of 50 per cent but this discount will be removed after two years. CCIQ's submission to the draft consultation papers really highlighted the inadequate facilities and resources for recycling in small towns and country regions across Queensland, which is not the fault of a lack of industry investment, as the government's explanatory notes suggest, but a direct failure of this long-term toxic Labor government to adequately resource our towns and regions. It is the duty of government to provide these services where it is not feasible or economical for private industry to do so. It is grossly unfair that this government can rake in the taxes from businesses in these areas, not supply any services and then propose to tax the businesses further even when they have no options. A whole-of-society approach is needed to drive behavioural change.

Meanwhile, Queensland businesses are leading the field in waste recovery in the commercial and industrial stream, accounting for 48 per cent of recovered waste in 2006-07 compared to 36 per cent from the municipal stream. Importantly, the results of CCIQ's canvassing of the business community across Queensland has found that most businesses display a general willingness to support recycling and sound environmental practices. However, the majority believe they have little to no opportunity to increase their recycling and recovery capacity. Again, this highlights a fundamental flaw in this incompetent government's policy of introducing a tough levy on businesses before providing the adequate facilities and resources to enable change.


Undoubtedly, the department consulted widely on this particular legislative reform. However, it would seem that it was just a front, as, despite some very convincing arguments against the government's strategy, little has changed from the draft to the final product. This callous attitude to small and large businesses reveals just how out of touch the Bligh government and its ministers have become. They are grinding businesses into the ground and could not seem to care less. In terms of cost impacts, CCIQ has advised that all of its previous consultation, and indeed the government's, was done prior to the introduction of the looming federal carbon tax—another Labor disaster that will see costs skyrocketing for businesses and consumers. The imposition of a carbon tax on top of this proposed waste levy means a double whammy for Queensland businesses. Consultants believe the base waste levy of \$35 a tonne could increase to \$60 or \$70 a tonne. With the uncertainty surrounding the impact of the carbon tax on Queensland business, this is an unacceptable time, especially before Christmas, to be introducing such a burdensome tax which has essentially the same purpose as the carbon tax. This was a sentiment shared by many of the contributors at the public hearing.

I understand that this week in Canberra the debate on the carbon tax is underway—a tax the Prime Minister promised Australians she would not impose. Due to the impact it will place on so many Queenslanders, it is important to place on the record that not one Labor member of this parliament has stood up for their constituents to oppose it. The Labor members representing the Gold Coast—Burleigh,

Broadwater, Southport and Albert—have shown contempt for the people they are supposed to represent, whilst the Minister for Tourism, Manufacturing and Small Business has openly supported this carbon tax and now this waste levy regardless of the devastating effects they will have on Queenslanders, especially those in her own tourism dependent region.

This government estimated that the additional cost to a regular business would be \$101 a year and between \$118 and \$227 for businesses generating regulated hazardous waste. However, after consultation with members, CCIQ believes that these costs are grossly underestimated. To put it in some perspective, CCIQ estimates that the waste levy will cost the average restaurant an additional \$3,120 a year just for their waste collection. How can the average struggling small business be expected to survive this new 'Scrooge' tax? Many smaller businesses will simply not be able to pass these costs on and in the unpredictable hospitality industry this could be the straw that breaks the camel's back, forcing more job losses and closures on top of an already tough year.

On listening to the public hearings, there was an overwhelming message from the various affected industries that the bill will not achieve its stated objective but send business to the wall and result in a perverse and unstable market. Worse, their concerns were falling on deaf ears. Their frustration can be understood. Many of the presenters were from award-winning organisations leading best practice in the industry. But why would Labor listen? It is typical for it to totally discard the views of business. We will be opposing this bill.

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (4.07 pm): I rise to speak to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. I have heard what the shadow minister had to say. Can I say at the outset that an LNP government will reverse this tragic event that is taking place here today. All we have heard from the government is a blatant attack on Campbell Newman—what Campbell Newman is doing or what Campbell Newman is not doing. There is one thing Campbell Newman is doing: he is out there telling the people of Queensland what we will do. What those opposite did before the last election was absolutely a case of deceit. We did not know anything about the selling off of Queensland Rail and other necessary infrastructure that have been icons in the history of Queensland. Again we hear, 'Where are we going to get the money from?' We know the money is not there. This piece of legislation is another cash grab. It is another attack on small business who are already overtaxed. In my electorate, especially in places such as Emerald and Blackwater—in particular Emerald where residents are struggling as a result of the floods earlier this year—we have a social divide between the people who earn good dollars in the mines and the people who work in the shops in town. I know one lady in Emerald who cannot even get staff in her little cafe. She is struggling all the time. It is because people can walk into the mines and get the big dollars. I do not deny them that, but it results in a situation where small businesses are adversely affected because the government wants to again impose another tax.

These taxes are going to be a further impost on small businesses. I do not think the fallout of this has been taken into account or calculated. The fallout will come as a smack in the face to a lot of people over a long time, because over the last 10 or 15 years all Queenslanders have become environmentally conscious. When I say 'environmentally conscious', I mean that they are protecting the landscape and they are making sure that the place is not rubbished. All those sorts of things are part of being environmentally conscious and responsible. In recent years, the economics of small business and better management practices has been a very integral part of their survival. This government is challenging the businesses of Queensland with a further impact punch that they cannot sustain.

While members opposite are criticising Campbell Newman about what he is saying and doing, he is out there telling the people of Queensland, through local government initiatives and other initiatives, how an LNP government will take people forward. We will embrace their ideals and we will make certain that their bottom line is sustainable. In this state we need good and purposeful government with strong leadership that will give people something to hang on to and that will take the state in a direction where people will know that they can get employees to work for them on Monday morning and throughout the rest of the week. I bet there are people in small businesses right along the coast of Queensland and in larger towns in my electorate and others who will be wondering how in the name of God they will find employees after this further attack on business.

The federal government, which is the same colour as the Queensland state government, is hell-bent on putting in place a carbon tax. This Labor government will not deny its support for that. This morning the minister said that she supports it. This is about supporting the Gillard-Brown Labor government. These environmental issues will be a further impost on business, but they want to keep the vote in Canberra so that those opposite can get the support of the federal Labor government. Look at electricity costs under this government. Look at fuel costs under this government. Look at transport costs under this government. All those costs are imposts on small business, regardless of where they are. I have heard people talk about the cost of living in the south-east corner, but they should come out into the backblocks and go further north where transport is a very integral and important part of small and big business in this state. If we were to do an analysis of Queensland and look at where the dollars are being generated at the moment, we would see that it is in the coal areas, in the mineral areas and in

the agricultural areas. Yesterday, Dick Warburton said that the federal government should put its carbon tax on ice and so it should. Dick Warburton has worked in manufacturing. We know what the unions are saying.

I wonder whether the unions will be there for the Labor Party at the next election, because many of their jobs will go because of the carbon tax and the environmental tax that this government is trying to introduce today. Ultimately all these costs will impact on business and profitability. However, this government does not know anything about profitability. How many members opposite have been in business? I know that the member for Mount Isa has. A couple of members have put their hands up, but not too many have put their hands up. Profitability is exactly where Campbell Newman is coming from. If businesses in this state are profitable, they will employ more people who will want to buy new motorcars, build new houses and so on. That is how success works. It is not about tearing down the tall poppy or tearing down somebody who is having a go, which is what this mob here is all about through imposing new taxes. At the next sitting of the parliament, we will probably see another tax imposed through the introduction of another piece of legislation.

This waste management bill should be about getting rid of this wasteful Labor government. Today the shadow Treasurer asked the Treasurer where the \$2.5 billion—or however much it was—they got for Queensland Rail has gone. It has not gone into something good for Queensland. Out my way, the roads are falling to pieces and a lot of other things are of a Third World standard. Recently I was in Western Australia, where the people were complaining that they needed some dollars for their roads. I have to tell members that the WA roads are like billiard tables, whereas our roads are like patchwork quilts and they are getting progressively worse.

Unfortunately, I only have a couple of minutes left, but I must say that I do not think we can comprehend the heartache and stress that this legislation will cause small business in Queensland. When the media analyses this legislation and publishes its findings so that small businesspeople can see what they are in for, the government will be sorry for not negotiating and talking with people about how they are going to move forward and get out of the dilemma that they are in. This afternoon the member for Everton had his moment of glory, slandering private companies for donating to the LNP. Regularly we hear what the Labor Party has done after the event, such as with the sale of Queensland Rail. At the next election, will the unions donate to the Labor Party when their members in the coalfields lose their jobs because of Julia Gillard's carbon tax? People in small businesses across the state will lose their jobs because another environmental impost has been put on them. We will wonder in vain as this parliament draws to a close in the next couple of months.

The LNP will not desert the small businesses of Queensland. Campbell Newman, in conjunction with the shadow cabinet, has highlighted and identified that. We will look after small business; big business will look after it itself. The most important factor is the people of Queensland who deserve to be heard and recognised in their hour of need. Under Labor they have been thrown on the scrapheap of negativity and have nowhere to go. Under an LNP government, we will reverse that.



Mrs SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (4.17 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. I chair the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee. This was the first bill that we reported on under the new committee system. In fact, I think it is the first bill introduced into the parliament under the new system. We submitted our report with its findings and recommendations and I hope members have had an opportunity to review our report. I am delighted to say that after reading my committee's report the Minister for Environment, the Honourable Vicky Darling, has said that she will move several amendments to the bill. I am looking forward to her making those announcements in the near future. In certain circumstances there needs to be more consistency and clarity with definitions in the bill.

At the outset I thank all of those who were instrumental in the process of the bill's review, particularly my secretariat. I thank Mr Rob Hansen, our research director; Mrs Robyn Moore and Mrs Sarah McCallan, our principle research officers; and Rhia Campillo, our executive assistant. We were given seven weeks to complete our findings. A huge amount of effort was needed to correlate all the information into the final report. Everyone who worked on it should be very proud of the part that they played in it.

My committee, which consists of three opposition LNP backbenchers and three government members, had a good level of cooperation during the process, but unfortunately the opposition members added a dissenting report. They did not support the bill and presented a number of excuses as to why Queensland should remain the dumping ground of Australia. However, I note that the dissenting report did support four out of the five recommendations. As Minister Darling said—

It is unclear as to the issues that the dissenting report has with the bill in its current iteration and unless further clarification comes, there cannot be an appropriate response.

The opposition simply does not get it.

I wish now to concentrate my remarks on the waste levy. From figures gathered from the Department of Environment and Resource Management, DERM, it was revealed that over 20 tonnes of sludge is barged here annually from Tasmania. Other states are guilty of dumping waste here too and this is totally unacceptable and must stop. The table that I refer to is on page 109 of the committee's report. A waste levy for the state is necessary to bring waste disposal costs in Queensland into line with other Australian states and create a disincentive for waste from other states to be disposed of here.

But, unlike other states, household waste in Queensland will be exempt. This was agreed to in order to reduce the potential cost impact to householders. I was instrumental in voting for the introduction of a yellow lidded recycle bin in what was the Caboolture shire, now Moreton Bay Regional Council, area. Ratepayers are doing a good job recycling. I understand the importance of recycling in any area.

During the committee's consideration of the bill in detail committee members were able to ask a number of questions of officers from DERM who were very forthcoming in their discussions and were able to answer in-depth anything that was put to them. I congratulate and thank them for their input. They did a sterling job. I know the minister is very proud of their efforts. It gave us a better understanding of why it is necessary to introduce new legislation to promote waste avoidance and reduce waste.

We were able to talk to people who had been initially consulted about the bill and host two public hearings for those who wanted to attend and discuss their written submissions. We received 24 written submissions, many of which were from councils that were given adequate time to push their respective cases and answer some questions that the committee posed to them. A better understanding of the bill and why it is so important was gained through this new committee process.

As a way of introduction I would like to give some background as to why we need a new waste management act. Queensland is the only state in Australia without up-to-date waste management legislation to help us to reduce our generation of waste and improve the recovery of resources from the waste we produce. The recently released 2011 national litter index compiled by Keep Australia Beautiful shows that across 983 sites nationally Queensland is the most littered mainland state. We are the worst recyclers. This is an unwanted and unhealthy record. To add to that, each year we are generating and disposing of more and more waste. This is unsustainable and people shake their heads at the LNP who want to continue this trend without offering a solution. But we in government are responding to this challenge. In June last year a draft waste management strategy was released for public comment. The draft highlighted the development of new legislation as the cornerstone to the waste reforms.

This bill provides for an explicitly adapted approach to address waste management and resource recovery matters now and well into the future. It also provides a number of innovative regulatory mechanisms to enhance accountability, partnerships, self-regulation and voluntary initiatives as well as provide a broader enforcement capacity and stronger penalties for littering and illegal dumping.

Illegal dumping is a problem across the state. Illegal littering and dumping not only costs our communities money, it is unsightly and dangerous to both our health and the health of our environment. The Department of Transport and Main Roads estimates that road users throw out approximately 20,000 cubic metres of rubbish along roadsides each year.

This bill will decisively reform Queensland's waste management and will assist with the state's continuing battle against illegal littering and dumping. It has provision to set up a system for people to report illegal littering or dumping from vehicles. Introducing a public reporting system, to be launched in November, to discourage illegal littering and dumping, as is used successfully in other states, should help change behaviours here. While public reporting puts litterers and dumpers on notice, they can be seen and will be caught. The government's waste reform programs also provide a range of measures designed to address the issue around illegal littering and illegal dumping.

The government will also assist with other measures that discourage further dumping such as the use of bollards, mounding, fencing, warning signs, lighting and cameras. There is strong scientific evidence that dumped waste left in the environment attracts more dumping and that environmental changes can reduce the likelihood of dumping in a location.

The bill offers substantive financial assistance to councils to get them ready to charge the levy. Other states have offered little to councils. But here in Queensland we have DERM officers who have said that they are willing to work with individual councils on issues if they arise.


For the first time a range of programs are being developed under the waste avoidance and resource efficiency fund that will provide support and funding to assist business. Proposed programs include grants to help fund the purchase and installation of infrastructure used for the purposes of managing waste. This effort may minimise the offset costs to businesses, like skip bin proprietors, in changing their operations to improve their waste diversion from landfills or dumps.

Some of the funds from the landfill levy have also been allocated towards the clean up of historical wastes in Indigenous communities. The remote nature of these communities can add significantly to clean-up costs. There is also provision for the establishment of a dedicated waste and

environmental fund into which the levy revenue will be paid. This addresses concerns of stakeholders about transparency around the use of the levy revenue. Stakeholder comments during consultation on the draft strategy and on the bill supported a dedicated fund.

I know this waste strategy has dragged on. Councils were keen to see the delay of this levy. We did accommodate them because of the devastating impact on council areas during the December and January floods. But they have had plenty of time now. There can be no more delays. It will be implemented on 1 December this year.

I would like to bring to the attention of the House that Planet Ark's National Recycling Week runs from 7 to 13 November. Further details on activities during the week, including 'How to' guides, are available by visiting recyclingweek.planetark.org or by ringing 1300733712. I would ask people to actively become involved. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Burleigh—ALP) (4.26 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. The bill will provide a new framework for how we manage waste in Queensland. Currently our legislative framework is quite effective at managing waste after it has been generated. However, we need to think more broadly than that and consider the long-term sustainability of the way we treat waste and resources. We need to consider the impact of waste throughout the whole life cycle from resource extraction, to product manufacture, to waste at the end of the cycle. The new legislation will do this by promoting waste avoidance and reduction and resource recovery and efficiency.

I was involved with a family business that collected building waste from sites on the Gold Coast and was staggered by the amount of waste that was generated and dumped into landfill. Most of this waste was trucked to the Ipswich area and dumped down abandoned mine shafts. To deal with the quantity and to reduce costs we opened our own recycling yard. Through this yard, the amount of waste going to landfill went from 100 per cent to about 25 per cent. We cannot continue to dump waste with no thought to the future and how it will affect our environment.

The bill will also help bring Queensland into line with the waste management frameworks in other states. Until now, Queensland has offered other states a very cheap alternative for dumping their waste. Indeed, in some respects, we have been thought of as Australia's dumping ground for waste. For example, some interstate councils, those from northern New South Wales spring to mind, actually have it in their waste strategies that they will bring their waste to Queensland in order to avoid paying the waste disposal levy in that state.

At the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee hearing into the bill on 7 September, Gold Coast City Council representatives spoke about this concern. Council explained that—


While the disposal rates are higher somewhere else there is always going to be a tendency for people wanting to transport waste to a cheaper location. Obviously, transport costs are significant so there is a limit to how far people will go, but obviously DERM is considering people are coming from as far as Tasmania. We obviously need to have systems in place to try to minimise that, but at this stage Gold Coast City Council does not prohibit waste coming from outside the Gold Coast City Council area.

When deciding on the levy rates, the government was very mindful of these issues. A levy of \$35 on every tonne of commercial or construction waste disposed in Queensland landfills will help reduce our appeal as an attractive waste disposal option. That being said, the Queensland levy will still be at the lower end. New South Wales has a differential levy depending on the area of the state. In the levy area which extends up to the Queensland border, it is currently \$30 a tonne and rising by \$10 a year. At the committee hearing, the Gold Coast City Council also expressed the desire to receive back from the state government the same amount of levy money they remit from waste disposed at their landfills. This is not a levy for one local government area or one part of Queensland; the levy funds will be used to improve waste and resource management outcomes over the whole state. The amount of \$100 million of levy funds will go into the Sustainable Futures Fund for the exclusive use of local government. This is a \$100 million windfall for local government. You will not find such an arrangement using levy revenue anywhere else in Australia. All local governments, large and small, will have a chance for the use of this money.

Let us not lose sight of the real objectives of this legislation—that is, to avoid waste, improve recycling rates and relieve the pressure which is mounting on Queensland's landfill sites. The government plans to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020, and this will lead to substantial cost savings for local government. The government also understands that there is concern that the introduction of the levy will increase the level of illegal dumping in our community. We are expecting a slight increase in illegal dumping as some people try to avoid paying the levy. There is already illegal dumping happening now, and there will always be a minority of people willing to do the wrong thing. However, when the government committed to the levy, it also committed to strengthening the enforcement and compliance of illegal dumping.

This bill will serve to meet this commitment by introducing a new system that allows members of the public to report illegal dumping or littering from vehicles. Also, a new illegal dumping squad, funded by the levy, will be established to work with local governments where illegal dumping is a problem. The

government recognises the significant cost imposts of illegal dumping on local governments. The levy will not apply to any waste from government clean-ups of illegally dumped waste or litter. Queensland should not be a cheap dumping ground. The measures in this bill will really raise the bar for the way we manage waste in Queensland. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs PRATT** (Nanango—Ind) (4.32 pm): I rise to speak to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. I have had a bit of correspondence from various councils with regard to this legislation and, believe me, none of it has been very flattering to the government. When I was reading through the documentation and the minister's explanatory speech, the first line states—

The Queensland government has a 10-year plan to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020.

I do not think there is anybody who would believe that that is a terrible plan. I think we would all be advocating that that is the way it should be, so it is a commendable aim. But, from reading what local governments have written to me, local governments believe that it is they who will bear the brunt of the primary cost and it is the citizens of the town who will not understand why the fees are being implemented. They will only see the fees and will fail to support their local government in any future rises in waste management costs further down the line. So we have to be mindful that the effects of this bill will go far beyond what the government realises. One would hope that the government has read the submissions that have come through. I will be reading from one of those later which outlines a lot of councils' concerns.

I listened to the member for Gregory, and he is right. When you go into rural areas in Queensland you can see that the gap is getting wider and wider. Businesses I know in rural towns are struggling. Every week there is another business closing down and, yes, there are other businesses opening up believing that they can perhaps do it better. But the general costs across-the-board that are rising far outweigh the benefits of opening a business. We all know that small business is the backbone of any state or country. They are having trouble competing with mining, whether it be for workers or in other areas. They are being hit harder and harder. Many of them have not even recovered from the floods in January. They are either still rebuilding or just did not bother reopening. Many have not picked up the losses they made at that time. In general, their customers are concerned about the future. Nobody is digging deep into their pockets. Nobody is spending their money for fear of what is coming. Regardless of what people say, what the government says and what the federal government says, people are concerned about the carbon tax and the impost of it, because they know full well that there is not a business around that does not pass on the cost of doing business, and they—the little people, the customers—will eventually wear the cost of the carbon tax. So we cannot fool ourselves that people are not hurting out there.

Another trend that has been high on people's list at the moment is to buy cheaper. If there is a possibility of buying a cheaper product they will do that. We find that some of the more select businesses which have higher quality goods are closing their doors at a much faster rate than the businesses like what was once known as Silly Solly's or the dollar shops and places like that. It shocked me the other day when I came through Esk to find that Waynes World, which sells some very cheap items, has closed its doors, which proves that it is having a hard time and having to rationalise its businesses. So that concern is out there. It is quite palpable. I personally do not blame people and businesses for having a lot of concern for their future, because we seem to have so many taxes, levies and fees coming around the corner month after month. I was also interested to read in the minister's speech—

It is cheaper to dump in Queensland for free than to recycle.

I am not quite sure whether she is just talking about businesses there. But I know in our area that if you have commercial rubbish then there is a fee. Most dumps or waste stations around the state that I am aware of have a fee for commercial waste—maybe not all of them but the ones I deal with do. Are we talking about any personal household waste when people take trailers of waste from their gardens or anything like that?

Ms Darling: No.

Mrs PRATT: That is good. I would oppose that if that came in, because there is nothing worse than people being charged to dispose of rubbish appropriately. They pay for the fuel to get it there and their time and their effort and everything else, which is to their benefit, we know. But we also know that people are very likely to dump it on the side of the road or down a dirt track or somewhere else if you start imposing a fee. So I am glad to hear that the levy is not going to apply to general household rubbish that people take to the tip on their own. So that is good.

How quickly 10 minutes passes. Maybe we should have had 20 minutes after all. I refer to the office of the Mayor of the Toowoomba Regional Council. I know that this is a submission that has gone to the minister. They see a very negative impact for their area with regard to this particular bill. From the Mayor Peter Taylor, he states—

This submission expresses council's strongly held opposition to the imposition of this new hidden state tax which local governments will be obliged to collect on the state's behalf whilst being prevented from separately identifying that it is doing so.

I have to ask the reason why. There are some pretty good arguments why it should be allowed to be identified and I will try to go through those before my time is up. He went on to say—

The implementation of a regional waste management plan, openly applauded by the Minister for Environment, will be hampered by this change.

In that sentence, he is actually talking about that council's waste management plan. The minister said—

I recognize that considerable work has been undertaken by you to map out a strategic direction for waste management. You are to be congratulated for taking a proactive and strategic direction toward the management and rationalisation of your waste facilities. I would hope that other councils would take the opportunity to learn from your experiences.

I do not think they took those words lightly; I think they thought they were being patted on the back for what they did. I think what they have presented in their submission is fair and reasonable, and I hope the minister has taken on board what they have said. They went on to say—

- The Toowoomba Region is unique among those covered by the Bill.
- The Toowoomba Region was formed from the amalgamation of eight former local government areas (the most for any amalgamation in Queensland), seven of which are rural zones containing widely distributed small communities.
- As such, it contains a large number of historically unmanned landfill sites, requiring a staged approach to closure, rehabilitation or conversion to modern sites.

They went on to explain in detail why they need to be considered differently to many other councils. They asked that either they be excluded from the action of the bill or at the very least its application for the Toowoomba Regional Council be postponed for five years. I do not know whether that is feasible or whether it can be done, but I believe quite strongly that this council may not be able to comply in the very short space of time. When you think about it, 1 December is coming very quickly. They went on to say—

It should be noted that TRC's fundamental position is that it objects in principle to the introduction of a state-imposed waste tax.

There are so many points outlined here and I will table this document if possible so others can read it because I think it has been very, very well stated.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 31 August 2011, from Mr Ken Gouldthorp, Chief Executive Officer, Toowoomba Regional Council, to the Research Director, Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee, regarding submission to the review of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 [\[5596\]](#).

The council went on to say—

Furthermore, another measure not yet promised is essential—that clean fill introduced or accepted by councils for daily cover, intermediate cover and capping at landfills must also be exempt from the Levy.


...

Our council and its waste professionals stand ready to assist you—

that is, the government—

further in any way to address the shortcomings of this legislation.

I think Toowoomba Regional Council are not the only ones who see the shortcomings of this particular piece of legislation.

 **Mr LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (4.42 pm): The government has a 10-year plan to halve the amount of waste going into landfill by the year 2020. This requires significant waste reforms, including a new waste strategy and new legislation to modernise waste management in Queensland. The first part—Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020—was released in December last year. This strategy establishes goals and targets for waste avoidance, recycling and resource recovery over a 10-year period.

This Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill is the second part of the reform. Queensland is the largest generator of waste in Australia. We produce 32 million tonnes per annum—the highest per capita of any state. We only recycle a third of our recoverable waste, and we are becoming a dumping ground for other states, particularly New South Wales. Northern New South Wales councils, for instance, suggest to their ratepayers to dump waste in Queensland—in this regard, the most convenient place is the Gold Coast tips. Because Queensland is the only mainland state without a waste disposal charge, it is cheaper to dump in Queensland for free rather than recycle. We have not got a waste strategy and supporting legislation, and this bill will remedy that situation. Many Queensland councils are running out of space for landfill. This is especially so on the Gold Coast. By making reusing and recycling the first option over landfill, the pressure on councils' tip sites will be alleviated.

To give effect to the strategy and to bring Queensland in line with other mainland states, a price is to be put on business waste that goes into landfill. Households will not be affected. Businesses can avoid charges by avoiding landfill. To assist with the transition, the government will provide assistance for businesses. There will be \$159 million invested over four years on programs to assist companies to avoid landfill and recycle. For local government, \$100 million over four years will allow them to move to better waste management. Queensland is the only state to set aside the entire waste levy revenue for the exclusive use of councils.

The objects of the bill, as stated by the minister in her second reading speech on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill, are as follows—


... to promote waste avoidance and reduction and resource recovery and efficiency actions; reduce the consumption of natural resources and minimise the disposal of waste by encouraging waste avoidance and the recovery, re-use and recycling of waste; minimise the overall impact of waste generation and disposal; ensure a shared responsibility between government, business and industry and the community in waste management and resource recovery; and support and implement national frameworks, objectives and priorities for waste management and resource recovery.

The key provisions of the bill, which were also stated in the minister's second reading speech, include—

... a business plan to be prepared that sets out the major projects, goals and priorities to deliver the strategy; introduce an industry waste levy with different levy rates for different waste streams; establish a waste and environment fund where levy revenue will be used for programs and other initiatives aimed at reducing and recycling waste and environmental initiatives; set out a process for identifying and managing priority products, such as items that have a benefit associated with their recovery or that have been identified as a product of national significance, such as e-waste; strengthen provisions in relation to littering and illegal dumping—for example, to allow members of the public to report people they see littering from a vehicle; and strengthen provisions that require local and state government to prepare a waste management and resource efficiency plan by specifying recycling targets.

The levy applies to commercial and industrial as well as construction and demolition waste. Levy exemptions apply to disaster waste, contaminated soils and dredge spoil. Other exemptions include waste donated to a charitable organisation, waste collected by events, such as Clean Up Australia Day, and also biosecurity waste. The levy does not apply to municipal solid waste, such as domestic kerbside collected waste, domestic self-haul waste and waste from local government services, such as street sweeping and emptying street bins.

The bill gives effect to the waste reforms announced by the government in June of last year. The levy commences on 1 December this year. The government has provided funding to individual councils of over \$4 million to install weighbridges and other equipment, and further funding will be provided. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WETTENHALL** (Barron River—ALP) (4.47 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. The bill is a crucial part of the government's waste reform agenda. Members of the community are very concerned about the waste that is filling landfills and about the loss of resources every time we just throw something away. Human societies have always generated waste, but as our lifestyles change so does the type of waste we produce. In the modern world, we are generating larger and larger amounts of waste, such as e-waste or end-of-life televisions, computers and other electronic goods. With the switch over to digital TV, there will be more discarded TVs than ever, putting pressure on local government tips and the environment. People are rightly concerned about this and are asking what the government is doing to stop waste like old TVs going to landfill. They are not only concerned about it; they want state and local governments to provide opportunities for materials such as that to be recycled, where possible, and disposed of properly.

This bill sets out a process for identifying problem or priority products such as e-waste and the best way to manage them. Problem wastes, or 'priority products' as they are referred to in the bill, are those which have a significant environmental, social or economic benefit associated with their recovery or avoided disposal. For example, the heavy metals in e-wastes such as televisions can cause leachate in landfill. If these wastes are saved and recycled instead, they are a valuable source of limited metal resources. The bill provides a range of options for improving the management of these high-priority wastes. For example, industry could be invited to prepare a voluntary product stewardship or take-back scheme which would collect and recycle the products at the end of their useful life. This product stewardship approach encourages everyone involved in the life of a product to share responsibility for ensuring that there is effective management of the impacts of the product throughout its life, including at the end of its life.

The product stewardship principle is one of the guiding principles behind this bill. If voluntary approaches do not work, the bill also allows the government to take alternative action such as mandating a take-back scheme or banning the landfill disposal of certain wastes. This approach will enable Queensland to support national approaches or to adopt state based action to better manage these wastes. Queensland has been part of the national e-waste product stewardship process which has been working with the television and computer industries on a product stewardship scheme. The analogue television service, as we know, is being switched off in much of regional Queensland on 6 December 2011. A television take-back scheme would enable members of the public to take their old TVs to a participating facility, such as a local government transfer station, where they will be collected for recycling. We are working with the Commonwealth and local governments to get such a scheme in place.


The government is doing everything it can to improve the way waste is managed in Queensland and the reforms in this bill will pull Queensland into line with other states and will help us to effectively tackle these problem wastes. The Queensland government is taking a new sustainable approach to waste management with a 10-year plan to cut the amount of waste going to landfill in half by 2020. This

will generate new green jobs and millions of dollars of economic investment throughout the state. For example, we know that in Victoria the recycling industry currently employs about 6,500 people and generates approximately \$3.6 billion worth of economic activity. By comparison, current investment in the waste and recycling sector in Queensland is estimated at around \$850 million and employs an estimated 4,500 people.

It is estimated that nine jobs are created for every 10,000 tonnes of waste which is recycled instead of three jobs if the same 10,000 tonnes are sent to landfill. The government's new reforms through its strong regulatory approach and injection of funds back into the waste and resource recovery sector will not only improve our environmental performance; they will provide the right climate for investment and create the potential for over 2,000 new green jobs for the future. We plan to cut the amount of waste going to landfill in half by 2020, and that is why we need this bill.

In conclusion, I want to mention a couple of features of the bill that are going to have a particular application and relevance in the area that I represent, which is within the Cairns Regional Council area and also within the Tablelands Regional Council area, and that is the requirement under the bill that the waste levy will be applied to residue waste left over from recycling activities. Municipal solid waste is processed through a facility at Portsmith in Cairns but, like every processing facility, there is a residue that is left at the conclusion of that process and the waste levy as it currently stands applies to that residue. Concerns have been raised about the application of that levy to those residues by the Cairns Regional Council and ratepayers in the Cairns Regional Council area.

I want to mention—and I am pleased to note—that the bill has transitional provisions to ensure that recyclers who are exercising and applying best practice will not be unduly affected by the levy on residue waste. It does that by enabling a recycler to apply for a discounted levy where there is a proven record of efficient practices. It also enables a recycler to obtain a full exemption from the levy where they can demonstrate that the levy on their recycling residues even at this discounted rate will cause them financial hardship and the bill provides that a regulation may prescribe a waste that is exempt from the levy. I understand that negotiations are continuing between the Department of Environment and Resource Management and the Cairns Regional Council and the Tablelands Regional Council to reach an acceptable position in relation to the waste residues from each of those councils that are processed at the Portsmith facility, and that is of course facilitated by those transitional provisions that are in the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—LNP) (4.55 pm): This is a dishonest approach to a real problem. There has been a consistent pattern with all problems confronting Labor in government in Queensland over the last 10 years. That consistency is magnified by a deliberate misrepresentation of a new state tax base masquerading as driving waste reduction strategies by the state. The Queensland state government is the greatest waste generator of any group. Queensland is the waste capital of Australia, as has been stated today, because Labor has done nothing on its watch in government. It today is implementing a new tax of \$35—

Mr Wettenhall interjected.

Dr DOUGLAS: You have had your chance, member for Barron River. The government is today implementing a new tax of \$35 per tonne—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! The member for Barron River will cease interjecting and the member for Gaven will refer his comments through the chair please.

Dr DOUGLAS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The government today implements a new tax of \$35 per tonne on commercial waste, yet hypocritically it says that it is not taxing domestic waste. Commercial operators just pass on the tax to domestic users via new home construction or from multi high-rise units and also from shopping centres, affecting rents and outgoings. Is Labor so academically and economically bereft of capacity that it believes no ordinary citizen will see through this hypocrisy? In my own electorate, where new home construction has near collapsed and builders and their families are starving, the average home built produces at least one skip with five tonnes of waste and costs \$385, with a council waste levy of \$77. This extra cost put on by the government adds \$175 to that, meaning a new charge of \$560 for no extra benefit.

The Gold Coast City Council operates the landfill sites and pays for their operations. The government is driving the charge required to improve their efficiency but is adding potential harm to the system. This hopelessly destructive Labor government has lurched down into those who have the least capacity to resist in order to enrich itself, to fill its socks with cash that will allow it to spend millions of dollars on ClimateSmart meters, sustainability certificates, lots of overseas travel and, most embarrassingly, employing staff without proper and due process. Nothing in this bill gives any reassurance that the funds raised will do anything other than drive a financial disincentive mechanism to generate waste that goes to landfill. In simple terms, the logic of this argument put forward by the government is that the monopoly regulator adds a 10 per cent charge on average that adds no benefit for the raising of the charge. It does nothing other than reduce activity and thereby it is a failed tax since the monopoly cannot be bypassed.

I ask: why \$35? Is the 10 per cent charge the same as GST? Who thought this up? Is this activity that we are seeking to decrease? Has anyone in Treasury thought to explain to these economic illiterates that new home construction alone is what drives GST rebated activity? All of the GST collected goes to the states. We are normally a growth economy. We in Queensland need economic activity to drive GST income. We received \$10 billion plus last year alone and that drives our GSP—gross state product—and our state economy. The Treasurer has predicted a five per cent growth statistic over the 2011-12 financial year.

I say to all government members: this waste tax drives down economic activity. It magnifies the knock-on effect of the GST alone and it should not come in. This is a job-destroying tax for the sake of its raising. It is effectively going to drive down state income generated tax.

Mr Wettenhall interjected.

Dr DOUGLAS: No, you need to listen to this. Worse still, by not being directed to a true cost beneficial—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): Order! Member for Gaven! Member for Barron River, I have asked you to cease interjecting. Member for Gaven, I have asked you to refer your comments through the chair.

Dr DOUGLAS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will do so.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! It is hard to offer you the protection of the chair if you continue to participate in debate across the chamber. You have the call.

Dr DOUGLAS: It has not been directed to a true cross-beneficial waste handling/recycling innovation process. It is not justified and it makes no economic sense. Rightfully, councils have been driving their issues with waste over time and that has been driving massive recycling, methane generating and by-product producing systems. But this is all at risk. By virtue of their massive land restrictions from regulatory impediments such as the SEQ plan, landfill sites are becoming increasingly rarer and destined for historical discussion.

The real insult beyond that already discussed is the decision to implement the tax in 34 local government regions affecting 99 per cent of the population. Remember this tax is on new homes beyond that of industrial or commercial waste. Have government members really considered the impact of that alone on those who are homeless, young married couples, those in regions where incomes are certainly not of those in mining areas or Indigenous aspirational families? What have they done? Repeal this immediately!

New housing construction must not be taxed anymore. Have government members considered that the removal of the stamp duty exemption has nearly killed the real estate market in Queensland? The \$10,000 grant is only 30 per cent of the predicted take-up. There is absolutely no justification for this step. For the government to state that we are the only state not to raise a charge, that we produce 32,000 tonnes of waste and that we do not always use bins is preposterous. Has anyone considered that we might just see this as an opportunity?

I refuse to accept any of the lame excuses from the minister, the former minister and now member for Ashgrove, and most of the government members who have spoken on this bill so far. The weakness of their arguments can be summarised quite easily. Firstly, they have ignored the basic requests of the key stakeholders, that is, not to raise a fee that would not be fully returned to them. Secondly, they have misrepresented statements of aspirations from all sorts of people. However, this nonsense regarding Campbell Newman's ambitions in reality is a far cry from the statements that he originally made—this nonsense of the outrageous statements, particularly from the former minister and the member for Everton, who spoke earlier. Thirdly, Labor has refused to acknowledge how little it has done to date. I urge any government member to name any serious waste implementation strategy brought in by the Queensland Labor government from 2000 to 2008. There is not one. Locally, Labor did nothing to facilitate any mass pelletisation of waste and, in fact, did everything it could to kill off the high temperature incineration waste process that potentially had an enormous effect on dealing with our hospital waste. Fourthly, what of the combination of the carbon tax and this waste bill? These are being considered in tandem when business income is not just declining; it is not sustaining wages. Fifthly, it is simply an environmental slush fund set to be in place by 1 December 2011.

What has really happened here demonstrates what can happen to a really good idea when Labor takes over and sees it as a means of revenue raising, offering it as a pretence to a massively reduced party base that it is doing something for the environment. This is not good policy. This is the generation of a lower quality of rubbish that this bill seeks to address. Do I need to repeat this? This bill has a negative effect on the problem it seeks to address. I have presented the evidence for that. Potentially, it will reduce recycling and will reduce new investment in alternative waste technologies. It may severely financially affect those existing recyclers. It probably will prevent new investment technologies that we have not yet even thought of which would be a more enlightened approach, and that is to be entirely regretted.

To use a taxing method in old Queensland-style Labor theory is the worst possible way of implementing a strategy in an area such as waste, which should be a new-age technology. It is a failed strategy globally. It leads to avoidance, evasion and, in this case, probably illegal dumping of waste. The government is not doing everything it can do because its thinking is poor. In fact, I do not even think it is thinking at all.

I am sorry to correct the member for Barron River, but new taxes do not drive business investment; they reduce it. They will not reduce waste for all the reasons that I have stated. There is certainly money in rubbish. The major crime syndicates—

(Time expired)



Mr HOBBS (Warrego—LNP) (5.05 pm): I am pleased today to rise to speak to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. The haste in the development of this bill and its regulations, as well as the ill-thought out and incomplete sections of the bill and regulations, need to be discussed today. We do need a good waste management strategy. Of course we do. This haste has resulted in developmental problems in the understanding and appropriate assessment of the intent of the complex details of this legislation. It is causing great concern to local government, community and waste service providers. Councils have to budget, and they did not have sufficient time to financially prepare for this implementation.

In the time available to me I want to give some examples of the concerns expressed by a major regional council at the recent annual local government conference. I note that some amendments have been tabled today. They may address some of the issues, but it is important for members to understand the difficulties that this government has placed on local government with the implementation of this bill.

The first example I wish to give relates to day cover soil. In the latest version dated 11 June of the proposed legislation and associated documents that have been released, a number of formulas were provided that were intended to clarify the calculations needed to be undertaken to determine the amount of levy that landfill operators would have to remit to the state government within 50 days of the end of the month. Within those formulas provided, a figure of six per cent is provided as a final subtraction from a self-assessed levy. No reference to six per cent could be found within the bill or the draft regulations. This matter was raised at the LGAQ conference by its members and it is noted that the explanation provided would indicate that the soil used in day operations of a landfill would now be subject to the levy and the six per cent figure is to compensate councils for this bewildering inclusion. This is a significant change that was introduced so late in the process. It is of concern and it raises further doubts about the maturity of the proposed legislation.

Ms Darling: It's all fixed.

Mr HOBBS: This is what is happening out there in practical terms. I am letting the minister know exactly what happened. Further communication with the LGAQ and officers from other local governments have revealed that this matter has been further refined since the release of the original draft documents and that soil extraction on the site of the landfill would be exempt. However, soil permitted into the landfill free of charge would attract a levy and the soil purchased at full value would not attract the levy. The definition of 'full value' has not yet been clarified to the council's knowledge.

The council recently amended its landfill fees to permit soil into its main landfill free of charge. The tonnage being brought in ranges from 1,200 to 2,000 tonnes a week. This soil is for operational day cover purposes as well as fill associated with operational works for the proposed waste transfer station to be constructed on the Lakes Creek Road site following the closure of the landfill currently operating on that site. Under the most recent changes described above, this would impact on the council in the order of \$42,000 to \$70,000 per week—or \$2.9 million per year on average—for just one of the three council landfills. This uncertainty makes it very difficult for the council to prepare a budget or implement operational processes when significant changes are being made on an apparent ad hoc basis and extremely late in the legislative consultative process.

In relation to landfill capping, under clause 28 of the bill an exemption can be sought for soils and materials used in progressive capping, batter construction, final capping, profiling and site rehabilitation. This is also a new addition that only appeared in the June release. This means that the council will have to now apply for an exemption of materials that were not previously listed. The approval process for clause 28 has no time frames for the decision to be made and generally lacks any detail to assist the council in its application process. These are just some examples.

There are several grants and support programs being discussed and proposed by the state government to assist local government and industry to undertake works that will or may be required to meet the proposed requirements of the bill and associated legislation. The council is supportive of this proposed assistance. However, many, if not all, of the payments and associated grants are provided on a dollar-for-dollar basis. As described, the council has little solid information available during its budget preparation period to enable it to make any considered allocation in the budget for these grants. As a result, in 2011-12 it will not be able to apply for any assistance. Those are some of the issues that the council has had to face in working its way through this legislation. It is important that the minister understands these issues.


It should also be noted that the council, like the majority of local governments in Queensland, has gone through considerable change in the immediate past. The impact of this change, coupled with a situation that sees this council currently in the process of relocating to a new regional landfill site and undertaking the construction of a new major waste transfer station and a total reorganisation of its waste management facilities and collection services to work under stronger business principles as a type 2 business activity, is that the council is financially constrained in the funds that are or would be available in the proposed support processes. It is assumed that there are other councils facing similar constraints and needs. Due to those issues outlined, this council and many of its counterparts around Queensland are extremely restricted in their ability to respond fully and effectively to the proposed introduction of such opaque legislation in the truncated time frame proposed by DERM.

In relation to the residue waste from recycling processes, clause 27 of the draft bill included a subclause (c) relating to residue waste from recycling activity, but there was no clear definition as to how a council is expected to be able to put in place a plan to manage this residue waste. It is intended that waste from a council recycling facility will now attract a waste levy on the material going into the plant and may not generally be liable for the levy as it was included before in the MSW. How does the council allow for the expenditure in its budget in future years? Also, as this provision is another new addition, the council is not provided with any such allocation in its current budget. Is the intention of this clause also to capture material from other recycling processes that the council undertakes: the sorting of commercial quantities of recyclables from the incoming commercial waste stream? How does the council make a decision on what to charge at the landfill entrance? How does this clause incorporate waste from the operations of a landfill shop?

The requirement to survey all landfills is a doozy. All landfills, including stockpiles and other areas, must be surveyed twice a year. There is also a requirement that all landfills must be surveyed fully within 14 days of the commencement of this legislation. That will increase the cost and management aspects on local governments with possibly little beneficial outcome as the local government area has to weigh the possible double weight of all material entering and moving around the landfill site. There will be some loss of material during operational practices on site and also due to natural decay—that is, green waste and green waste mulch. The imposition of a full survey twice a year of all its landfills would be considerable and should be reconsidered in regard to the outcome the state government is seeking and the other controls proposed.

The provision of a resource recovery area has been added into the latest version of the legislation. Although there is a description of the area, there is no clarity regarding its intent. The area must be declared by the site operator. However, there is no approval process for the site by DERM. The site must be barricaded off from the remainder of the site and have only one entrance. All material entering or leaving the site must be measured, not weighed, and the site operator must record the name of any person who takes material from the area and the destination to which this material is being transported. If this area is intended to be applied to a landfill shop or green waste loading location, is the council expected to record the name of every community member who removes green waste mulch from the site? There may be a simple answer to these questions. However, the lack of clarity, the lateness of the introduction of this clause and the haste of the processes allow insufficient time for local governments to fully explore all matters to a reasonable conclusion and to convey this information to the community.

The next issue is in relation to strategy targets and support programs. These issues go on and on and on. If the government wants to bring in legislation that is complicated it needs to have a reasonable lead time and a good process. It should not be based on a cost-shifting arrangement whereby local government will end up paying more money. The government, quite frankly, should be condemned for the way this bill has been handled.

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (5.16 pm): I have long been one of those people who like to keep things until they are actually worn out and beyond their useful life. I find it unconscionable to throw items into the local tip which could well be of use to someone else. I enjoy seeing people out scavenging for items on our kerbside clean-up days. I believe my electorate of Woodridge is a great recycling area, with our community flea markets and op shops and people like 'Phil Can Do', the original 'can do'.

A government member: The only 'can do'.

Mrs SCOTT: The only 'can do', who picks up items from homes and supplies them to people in need. All are recycled treasures. However, I would like to give a big gong to our latest recycling centre, the Rubbish Removers, which occupies a large shed in the Slacks Creek commercial district. John and Wendy Erhard have been removing rubbish for 22 years. They have always had a desire to set up a recycling centre. This legislation prompted them to take this ultimate step, plunging their life savings into setting up their business. Following John's presentation at a public hearing here at Parliament House, he and Wendy were thrilled to have a visit from Minister Vicky Darling to view their operation. At the moment they are doing the hard yards, working long hours without extra staff, sorting items from their skip bins into categories such as metal, IT, green waste, furniture, clothing and all manner of saleable

items. Their shed is a treasure-trove of sporting equipment, furniture, household items, toys, music and art, antiques, gardening equipment and tools. One item Wendy showed to Minister Darling was a set of letters found in an old wooden chest. The letters were written in the 1940s between two mates, one in Australia, the other on board HMAS *Sydney*. They end just before the sailor's ship went down. The address in Queensland was Sandgate and was of great interest to the minister, being the patron of her naval association in the Sandgate electorate. Wendy was thrilled and gave the originals to the minister to reconnect with the Sandgate area. It was a very meaningful reconnection. John and Wendy open their shed to the public on a Saturday and word is spreading. At the moment they are recycling some 40 per cent of their bins, but could raise that to 80 per cent when they are able to take on more staff. They can be found on Facebook or their website and they would welcome a visit any Saturday morning. They have great faith that recycling is the future. I wish them every success.

It is also pleasing to see many of our landfill sites with recycling areas where goods are sold, usually for a charitable fund. We live in an age of built-in obsolescence, where manufactures want us to purchase a new product rather than fix one which may just need a new part. This bill is one which we should all embrace and applaud.

The Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 is the second part of a 10-year reform outlined by this government in 2010. The goal is to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020. Many in our community need an entire attitude change. We still witness passengers and drivers throwing rubbish, wrappers, cigarette butts and the like out of car windows. I note that within this legislation is the ability to report people seen littering from a vehicle.

Sadly, Queensland has become a dumping ground for rubbish from other states as we have not had a price signal on waste and our own personal waste per capita is the worst in the country. While householders will not be affected by this levy, the government has put aside \$159 million over the next four years to assist businesses to recycle and avoid dumping in landfill. It is time that Queensland came into line with other states and adopted a new way—an environmentally friendly way—of recycling and avoiding as much as possible the careless dumping of so much that could be of use. Of course, there are important exemptions such as waste from disasters such as we have seen in our state this year, the waste collected by volunteers on Clean Up Australia Day and charity items that cannot be recycled. Local government services are also exempt.

This bill will be a great turnaround for our state. While it will involve businesses looking at strategies and learning to think in a new way, the environment is precious. We can do nothing more than to put in every effort to clean up our special part of the earth.



Ms MALE (Pine Rivers—ALP) (5.21 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. The bill provides for a modern and tailored approach to address waste management and resource recovery issues now and into the future. The bill introduces, for the first time in Queensland, the requirement for the government to prepare, maintain and review a waste management strategy for the state. The bill also requires state agencies and local governments to prepare waste reduction and recycling plans.


Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020 was released on 22 December 2010. This strategy provides a plan to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020. The strategy sets progressive targets for cutting landfill and improving recycling of waste from household and business activities over the next ten years, in order to achieve the vision of a low-waste Queensland. The strategy also outlines the reform that is needed of the state's waste management legislative framework. This bill sets the new framework in place.

The bill will require, for the first time in Queensland, regular reviews of the strategy and public progress reports against the state-wide targets. This will ensure the strategy remains current and can be updated to reflect changing technologies, community concerns or national priorities. In order to track our progress, it is important to collect accurate data of waste disposal and recycling tonnages. The bill establishes a requirement for annual reporting by operators of private sector waste disposal and recovery facilities. Currently, the private sector reports by means of a voluntary annual survey, which results in a varied level of completeness and accuracy of the data. The introduction of mandatory reporting for the private waste sector, together with the existing government sector reporting, will give us, for the first time, a comprehensive state-wide picture of trends in disposal and recovery. This reform will enable progress to be measured against the targets in the strategy.

Importantly, the strategy sets three-yearly milestone targets on the way to 2020 for reducing landfill, improving recycling and reducing per capita generation. The industry waste levy introduced by this bill is a key part of the waste reforms and will drive the behaviour change needed to achieve the strategy's targets by creating a price disincentive to dispose of waste to landfill. At the same time, the levy will help create greater certainty for investment and further opportunities for job creation in Queensland's resource recovery industries. However, the levy alone will not achieve the strategy's targets. The key to success lies in investment of the funds raised by the levy in targeted programs to cut

waste, recycle smarter and develop markets for recycled materials. A suite of programs will be funded by the levy to help business, industry and local governments improve waste avoidance and recycling over the next decade.

By significantly increasing the state's recycling effort and helping business to be more sustainable, we can create great new industry investment opportunities and green jobs for Queensland, while also protecting our environment. One of the objectives of the strategy is the creation of green jobs in resource recovery. It is estimated that 9.2 jobs are created for every 10,000 tonnes of waste that is recycled, instead of 2.8 jobs if the same 10,000 tonnes is sent to landfill. By improving the way Queenslanders manage waste we will not only be creating a more sustainable Queensland but also be creating green jobs for the future. For this purpose, I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr HOOLIHAN** (Keppel—ALP) (5.24 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. While we have heard a variety of threats and dire consequences from those on the other side, including the non-existent leader of the opposition, this bill seeks to address the rising tide of waste in Queensland through a range of measures. It includes provisions to keep priority waste, such as electronic waste, out of landfill and a levy on landfill disposal to drive improvements in waste management practices. We could refer to this as a landfill levy rather than a waste levy, because if you do not put it into the landfill you will pay no levy at all.

We are all familiar with the environmental costs of waste disposal. The production of waste has impacts from the extraction of resources right through to disposal in landfill. The impacts of landfill include transport of the waste for disposal, potential leachate, odour and greenhouse gas emissions. Landfill disposal also has economic impacts. Recent media articles have highlighted the cost burden that waste disposal infrastructure presents to local governments and communities.

The investigation of suitable sites, landfill development and maintenance, long-term environmental monitoring and eventual rehabilitation all involve significant expenditure. Local governments have expressed concern over the cost of readying their landfills for the levy, which is due to commence on 1 December. The government has listened to those concerns and has already provided significant funding to help local governments get ready for the levy. Further funding is also available in 2011-12. At the same time, I submit that the cost to local government of remitting the levy pales in comparison with the rising cost of running and maintaining landfill infrastructure.

Another issue is that while some local government areas have ample landfill capacity for years to come, some are running out of space. I heard the member for Warrego mention Lakes Creek Road. Although he did not attribute a lot to it, I gather that he read in part from a submission by the Rockhampton Regional Council. I met with my regional council about the proposed introduction. They did have some concerns, but subsequently I have spoken to the chairman of the council's waste and recycling committee, who thanked me for the opportunity to put their point of view before the committee because some of their concerns have been addressed.

The Rockhampton Regional Council is facing difficult issues as a result of a growing population and a looming shortage of landfill capacity. I suggest that that is occurring everywhere. Even the investigation of potential new sites for a regional landfill is very expensive. This highlights the fact that, apart from the environmental and economic impacts I have spoken about, landfills also impact on local communities. The concern over potential impacts and loss of amenity are serious issues for communities and the difficulties of siting new landfills will only grow as Queensland's population increases. No-one really wants a tip in their backyard. We could refer the acronym NIMBY, not in my backyard, directly to landfill.

Having said that, the reality is that not all waste can be recycled. With improved environmental regulation and waste industry investment, the best practice landfills that are being constructed today are a far cry from the old style landfills that are now causing legacy problems. The best of those modern landfills capture and use the gas from decomposing waste to generate energy. In this way, a part of the valuable resources in the landfill is recovered. There is already a place for landfill in waste management, as there is a place for recycling, and that will continue for the foreseeable future. However, it should not be the first port of call.

What this bill does is give us a framework to understand these issues and help us make waste management choices that will benefit future generations. The waste and resource management hierarchy—an internationally accepted guide to the preferred order of management options for waste—is a foundation principle of the bill. Under the hierarchy, waste reduction is the preferred approach, followed by waste reuse, recycling, recovery and treatment, with waste disposal being the least preferred.

Through the waste reform process the government is seeking to transition waste management choices from landfill to options higher up the waste hierarchy such as recycling. One of the points that has been raised by a number of speakers is that this levy will not be imposed on households. Although there may well be some small increase in ratings, the levy will not be imposed on household waste.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hoolihan, adjourned.

MOTION

Legislative Assembly, Marks of Respect



Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—Ind) (5.30 pm): I move—

That this House notes that:

1. To date 29 soldiers have lost their lives in Afghanistan and enjoined our nation's roll of honour.
2. On only one of those occasions since 2001 has this House observed silence for an individual soldier killed serving in Afghanistan: Trooper David Pearce.
3. Queensland RSL president, Terry Meehan, writes—

We believe that our fallen men and women are deserving of such a mark of respect and were surprised to learn that the House did not observe a minute's silence.

And calls on the government, supported by the opposition, on the first sitting day immediately following the death of any members of the Australian military on active overseas service to move, as a mark of respect, a motion for a minute's silence for our fallen heroes.

It is my great honour to move this motion in this place this evening. I would like to thank my fellow Independents for agreeing to allow me this privilege and to allow me to be the first speaker to this motion. I would also like to thank the Leader of the House for choosing, on behalf of the government, to debate this motion.

While some might describe this motion as procedural and symbolic, I believe it is one of the most important motions that has come before this place for a number of good reasons. Symbolism plays an important role in the life of this chamber from its design and construction, the use of ceremony and ceremonial items—witness the mace—to the way we address each other and are sometimes dismissed from this chamber. Symbolism is vitally important and creates the spirit and soul of this democratic chamber of debate.

In this place, one of the ways we bestow a great honour on individuals and groups of people is by bringing this place to silence. During that silence we can reflect on the contribution that special individuals and groups have made to our community, state and nation. There has only been one time in this place when I thought that the use of silence was inappropriate. That was on 2 December 2005. Parliamentary Library research states—

A minute's silence observed as a mark of respect for an Australian man executed in Singapore after being found guilty of drug offences and to express sympathy to the man's mother. Motion moved by the Premier.

According to a Parliamentary Library study, since 2001 there have been 16 occasions, including that infamous 2005 drug trafficker silence, on which the House has observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect for a person or persons who died. In November 1997 the Governor-General proclaimed 11 November each year to be Remembrance Day to honour those Australians who had died in the service of their country in all wars and conflicts. When the House is in session on 11 November two minutes of silence is observed at 11 am. Of those 16 occasions since 2001 when the House has observed silence, four occasions have been to commemorate Remembrance Day. Some 15 of those silences have been the right thing to do and the proper use of the time of the parliament of Queensland.

Of late, every time the House has been called to silence after condolence motions, while I try to reflect on the individual the subject of the minute's silence and the grief that their family must be feeling, I have felt a gnawing and growing anger knowing that this same honour is not bestowed on soldiers who have lost their lives in overseas active duty, especially in Afghanistan. Those soldiers are there willingly, doing their jobs, risking their lives for the same reasons that those in all wars have fought and died. As a country we are fighting and opposing the forces of tyranny, totalitarianism and absolutism. As individual soldiers they are fighting for their mates, their pride and their love for their families and country. I have felt that there was an injustice in the way the House was dealing with the matter of a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

With this motion today that injustice can be addressed and fixed if members vote to agree to this motion. The RSL president of Queensland, Terry Meehan, will certainly be pleased when he hears that this chamber supports this motion. Currently he is overseas and arrives back home on the 15th of this month. In recent weeks I have had correspondence with him. Initially it was in reply to an email he wrote, which read—

Dear Rob,

My PR Staff forwarded me your email of 23 September, having read your Notice of Motion and taken the opportunity to discuss this matter with some of my Senior Management Team and my Executive. I am happy to advise you that you have our full support in this matter—we believe that our fallen men and women are deserving of such a mark of respect and were surprised to learn that the House did not observe a minute's silence.

I also support your proposal to re-establish the Defence Force Apprentice Scheme. It has been my experience that in the past this scheme did in fact dramatically increase the number of skilled workers in the Defence force and these members generally went on to have very long careers ...

He continues on supporting that initiative. He finishes by stating—

Thank you for your email and I wish you well in your endeavours.

He follows up that correspondence by again writing to me saying—

Good Morning Rob,

I am happy for you to quote my words in letters and also to have them tabled in Parliament.


I am travelling overseas tonight and will be returning to Brisbane on 15th October, on my return I will make myself available to speak with the media—I feel very strongly about observing a minutes silence in Parliament and am happy to support your endeavours.

There may be those who would be pedantic, nitpick and argue that as a Queensland parliament we should only observe a minute's silence for Queensland service members in the Queensland parliament. A New South Welshman, a Victorian, a Western Australian—a sandroper—a Northern Territorian, a Tasmanian who dies in the course of their military service fighting the forces of tyranny, totalitarianism, absolutism dies for every Australian and every Australian democratic institution. Their death rocks and saddens the mountains and snowfields of New South Wales, the outback and Uluru as much as it does the Daintree forest of Queensland and the beaches of Agnes Water.

In the death of a member of the military we should not make a distinction about in which state that person was born. That is a luxury. That is something that we can do in matters of sport, not matters of life and death, democracy and the bloodshed of our fallen heroes.

On further reflection, after moving this motion, I feel as though in order to further guarantee this important ceremony to our parliament and also as a debt we owe to our military members we should look at making changes to the standing orders to observe a minute's silence to our fallen heroes and thereby raise its status. If passed and agreed to by the government and the opposition, this motion will fix and solve a problem that has existed in this place for a long time—for as long as I have been here. It will prevent this place from forgetting.

The RSL motto is 'Lest We Forget'. The reason we are debating this motion before parliament is that I believe that we have forgotten. By failing to acknowledge each fallen soldier with an official minute's silence, all members of this House share a collective guilt. Today we can take a positive step to address that guilt and to redress an injustice and to fix a wrong. Every one of us here would know of or be related to or have a constituent who is concerned about a serving member of the military in Afghanistan. For those people as well, we owe them a duty to pass this motion before the parliament this evening.

 **Mr FOLEY** (Maryborough—Ind) (5.40 pm): I rise to second the motion moved by the member for Burnett to observe a minute's silence for our military heroes who lose their lives in various theatres of war. To say that my family has a tradition dating back a long way with the Army would be an understatement. My father and mother have both passed away, but my dad fought on the Kokoda Trail in the 7th Field Ambulance and my mother was a signal woman. I know full well the trauma that that can bring to a household to at least the second generation. My father suffered from mental illness all throughout his life as a result of contracting Blackwater fever in his time that he served in Papua New Guinea. He ended up very unwell and that really impacted the quality of his life.

On every Remembrance Day, on every Anzac Day and at every RSL ceremony that we go to, we remember. You often hear the words quoted from John 15:13, which says—

Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Indeed, when our troops go to serve overseas, especially in theatres of conflict where they may lose their lives, they are doing that for us as their friends. They are laying down their life for us as friends. I do not think that there is a member in this House on any side of parliament who would for one moment be flippant or dismissive about an Aussie soldier losing their life. Back in World War II days things were a little more cut and dried in that there were uniforms and you knew what you were shooting at. But theatres of war like Afghanistan are just grinding, soul-destroying theatres of conflict. I cannot think of any sadder moment in my life than when I hear of our soldiers losing their lives in a conflict like Afghanistan—and not just Afghanistan but East Timor and all of the theatres of war that are talked about on Anzac Day.

In this House there is precedent for having a minute's silence. We stand for a minute's silence when a member of parliament passes away, and so we should. We honour the memory and the service that those people gave to the parliament, but it could be argued that when soldiers die in a military conflict they have literally sacrificed their life for their friends, for other people. We enjoy the freedom that they fight for every day.

I remember being a member of this parliament at the very terrible time when the Aussie drug mule man was executed in Singapore. That was a terrible, terrible time. I, for one, was just embarrassed that we stood and recognised that person. I remember people saying, 'That is inhumane. He was not a drug

trafficker. He was only a drug mule.' But any way you look at it, while I felt deeply sorry for the mother of the gentleman who was executed and could not imagine the pain that she felt in that circumstance, I certainly did not feel that this House should have honoured that memory on that occasion. I think that was a slap in the face for military people who have died.

I think we need to not just limit it to military service. I remember that on 28 October 2003 the Premier made a ministerial statement concerning the loss of Craig Liddington, Stewart Eva and Andrew Carpenter aboard an emergency services rescue helicopter that crashed on 17 October. The Premier asked members to observe a minute's silence. I have no problem with that. At any time someone loses their life in perilous circumstances while serving the community—such as our fires and volunteer firefighters—I think it is more than appropriate that we should stand. In the situation of the drug mule person, it would have been great to see a conscience vote allowed then so that people could fully express their views. I commend this motion moved by the member for Burnett to the House.



Hon. AM BLIGH (South Brisbane—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Reconstruction) (5.45 pm): I move the following amendment—

That the following words be inserted after 'heroes':

'And further, refers this proposal to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to draft the necessary changes to the Standing Orders to provide for this to occur.'

I am pleased on behalf of the government to support the motion that is before the parliament tonight. The amendment that I move is simply procedural in nature to ensure that the motion will be forwarded to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly in order for them to draft appropriate standing orders to put into practice and to entrench in the standing orders of this parliament the will of the parliament in supporting this motion this evening.


I do not think there is any doubt that everybody in this chamber would agree that the loss of life is always painful. When it is the loss of a young life, it touches us even more painfully. But when that young life is lost in the service of others, particularly in the service of our country, the pain we feel takes on even more meaning. I think it is important in the context of tonight's debate to acknowledge that this parliament has always taken the opportunities before it to pay respects as appropriate to those who have lost their lives in the service of our country.

Whenever parliament has been sitting when an Australian soldier has lost their life, we have taken the opportunity to have a minute's silence. Unfortunately that has not happened on a simultaneous basis very often, and I acknowledge that. As the Premier of Queensland, it has been my practice to attend every single funeral of every Queensland soldier that has been held here in Queensland and that has been open to the public. Not only have I done that because I thought it was an important part of my role as Premier, but I have done that on behalf of Queenslanders. It is important to make sure that those who represent the government of the day are there to pay respects formally, and I have done so with nothing but the most solemn and deep respect.

I believe that there is a genuine and deeply held bipartisan acknowledgement of the very difficult circumstances that soldiers representing our country face in many theatres of conflict and indeed peacekeeping around the world. I think it would be unfortunate in this debate if anything that is either currently in or not in the standing orders was interpreted as being intentionally disrespectful on behalf of any current member of the parliament or indeed any of our forebears, or indeed intentionally forgetful. I do not believe that any member in this House is anything but constantly mindful. With the increasing number of deaths, we cannot be anything but. For those of us who are parents, I think every time we hear the terrible news of another soldier hurt or who has lost their life, particularly in Afghanistan, we are deeply aware of the effect that it has on those families. We also know that many of our own constituents have family members who are in dangerous circumstances. Many people in this House have friends and family who are in that theatre of war right now, and I am one of those.

I did give some thought to whether or not this standing order should be reserved for Queensland soldiers or extended to every Australian soldier. I agree with the reasons outlined by the member for Burnett that any Australian soldier who gives his life gives it for every Australian, including every one of us who are fortunate enough to live in Queensland. I am also mindful that we have a very large military presence in Enoggera and Townsville and that that military presence is set to grow under current plans from the Australian military in all of its forces. That means that many Australian soldiers, wherever they are born, are very likely to spend some part of their training and military lives in Brisbane, Townsville or other parts of our state, such as Scherger. While they are in those bases, they do what everybody does—they form connections. Some of them end up marrying local girls or boys, some of them end up having families and some of them end up becoming Queenslanders, even if they did not start out that way. They certainly have many, many friends who are Queenslanders as a result, and that is as much as any reason to pay those respects. So I support the part of the motion that says this should be for any Australian soldier.

I find myself in very rare agreement with the member for Burnett, but I think it is a good example of the sorts of things that do unite us—that unite us as Queenslanders, that unite us as Australians and that unite us as deeply compassionate people who support not only all of the freedoms of our democracy but, most importantly, those who are prepared to stand up in the most dangerous of circumstances and put their own lives at risk in the defence of those freedoms. For all of those reasons, I am very pleased on behalf of the government to advise the House that we will be supporting this motion. I would like to think it is a motion that we will never, ever have to act on and that we will never, ever see another Australian life lost. But, if we do, I am pleased we will have this in our standing orders.


 **Mrs KIERNAN** (Mount Isa—ALP) (5.52 pm): I rise this afternoon to second the Premier's amendment to the motion that this parliament acknowledge the brave sacrifice of Defence Force members killed during active service overseas. My mother waited for my father's return from his war service, and then many years later she waited for my brother's return from two tours of duty in Vietnam. I was not born when my father served, but I vividly remember my brother's time in Vietnam and when he returned home safely both times. I remember to this day the deep sense of responsibility and respect that I guess we learnt from our parents that we should acknowledge those who have served and certainly those who have sacrificed their lives. Each time we hear of the loss of a life in our current missions, I think all Australians weep for their families.

There is little doubt that we have suffered some great sacrifices of our men and women over in Afghanistan. It is certainly the view of both major political parties that it is in our country's interest to be in Afghanistan. We are not alone there. We are with 46 other members of the International Security Assistance Force operating under a United Nations mandate. Australia is the largest non-NATO troop contributor in Afghanistan, the 10th largest troop contributor and, importantly, the third largest contributor of special forces.

The mission in Afghanistan is to prevent Afghanistan from again being used by terrorists to plan and train for attacks on innocent civilians, including Australians, in our region and beyond. To achieve that goal, we must help the Afghan government to take responsibility for providing security for their people. To do so, we must stabilise the situation and train their security forces so they can make their country secure. What we are also doing there is building confidence and effectiveness. Today, thanks to the Australian forces, there are more capable Afghan soldiers and police officers. Australian soldiers and their Afghan partners have killed or captured insurgent leaders, taking them off the battlefield and stopping terrorist activity across Afghanistan. It certainly is a vital mission over there, but it is also a dangerous one. We know that because of the loss of lives that we have experienced.

We at home in Australia, safe in our homes at night, must be mindful of the human toll of the fight. Every death is a loss to the Australian community. We know that amongst the Afghans our soldiers are highly respected. Their professionalism and bravery is known all around the world. It is only right that all members of the House acknowledge the greatest contribution when one of our own is killed. Every death of a soldier is a vital reminder to us that there are Australians far from home acting with courage, bravery and determination.

We are the leaders of the Queensland community and we should honour them. We should also use those minutes of silence to reflect on not just the passing of one soldier but all Australian men and women who have served and died in wars and conflicts, on peacekeeping duties, in disaster relief and on humanitarian assistance missions. We should reflect on the tragic sense of loss of lives cut so cruelly short, reflect on the Anzac spirit which flows through every digger with their loyalty to their mates through good times and bad, and reflect on how that spirit embodies who we are as people. On that note, I certainly commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr McLINDON** (Beaudesert—KAP) (5.55 pm): I rise in support of the member for Burnett's motion before the House—and I congratulate him for it—as well as the amendment circulated by the Premier. It was with some enthusiasm and a sense of excitement that I joined the Army Reserve at the ripe old age of 17 at 9RQR at Loganlea. I spent several years there with the comradeship of my mates. It was not until a dozen of my mates had to go to East Timor that we realised the impact of what we were doing in our training here on home turf. When I read this motion this morning, I was reminded of many stories that I was told as a young boy by my grandfather, Bernard, who served in Burma. Many stories that he told me have stuck with me throughout my years, even though he passed away when I was 10 years old.

This is a very timely motion. We show respect to our elected representatives with the minute's silence we have for those current or past members of the Legislative Assembly who have dedicated their lives to and served their community. We often look over the sacrifice that those who serve their communities make. Each and every one of us in this House will at times make sacrifices in terms of absences from our families in order to achieve the goals and aspirations of our communities.


If we believe we should have that 60 seconds of silence to reflect on the contributions made by a member of parliament to their communities and to this great state, then I think it is very fitting that we do the same for those who have been of service in terms of protecting the democracy that we have. The very reason we have this Legislative Assembly here today is because of those many men and women

who have laid down their lives before us to ensure such a system of democracy, regardless of its flaws, exists in society today. That is something we all have to be very grateful for and sometimes we can take it for granted.

One of the stories I remember from year 12 was of a lady in her late 70s who would run out to the front deck every time a car rolled up to the driveway, thinking it was the return of her husband. That moved me and it has stuck with me and it will stick with me for the rest of my time here. Her husband was killed in World War II, but every time she heard an engine in the driveway she would run out thinking he was returning home. This is an impact that is lifelong to many people in our community. Our thoughts and prayers also go out to those 29 soldiers outlined by the member for Burnett in his words when he moved the motion.

I remember a book called *No Greater Love* about Maximilian Kolbe. As the member for Maryborough alluded to, there is no greater love than to lay one's life down for another and that, of course, was the story in that when one person escaped from the prison camps 10 were ordered to be killed through solitary confinement. Maximilian stepped forward when the father of 10 children pleaded for his life and he actually put his hand up to replace his life for another. It was a very touching story. As I said, I think it is fitting that we do this as MPs. Believe it or not, we are all going to miss each other one day regardless of our spite and angst against each other sometimes in the sandpit of politics. We do not mind throwing a bit of sand, but the reality is that when we end up leaving this place we will certainly reflect on all of the time that we have had together and realise that we were all here, although from different walks of life, for the greater good and the cause to champion our communities.

I acknowledge the many stories of my grandfather when we travelled through Victoria and New South Wales and Queensland up to Darwin. Every time we came to a country town, grandad would always make sure that we visited the war memorial. The member for Burnett ought to be congratulated. I know that he has stuck this motion out a few times over the couple of years that I have been here, and it is great to see that this mark of respect will now be embodied and enshrined as part of parliamentary process. I look forward to seeing it enacted once it has gone through that committee, and no doubt it will have bipartisan support from one and all in the House today. I congratulate the member for Burnett and also the government and opposition for supporting this very worthy motion. It is a time to reflect on the sacrifices that have been made for each and every one of us to be here today to represent our communities.

 **Mr KILBURN** (Chatsworth—ALP) (6.00 pm): I also rise to speak in support of the motion brought to this House by the member for Burnett and commend the member for raising this important issue and for, as the member for Burnett said, not only raising it but doggedly chasing it down to make sure that it did eventually get a run in this House. I also note that the motion states that 29 ADF members have lost their lives in operations in Afghanistan. Whilst this motion specifically mentions Afghanistan, I am sure we all acknowledge that the ADF has also lost members in Iraq and Timor as well while participating in many peacekeeping operations throughout the world. I also commend the Premier and members of the government for their support for this motion. In fact, I know that all members in this House are in support of this motion.


As we have already heard, many members of this House have served in the ADF. I served for nine years full-time in the Royal Australian Navy and then 12 years as a reservist working at HMAS Cairns on my days off when working shiftwork as a firefighter for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service. Whilst I was doing that I was never required to serve in a war zone. However, I know many people who did. They served in Iraq and many other theatres of war around the planet and it is important for the community to recognise the huge sacrifice that members of the ADF make. As a country we have moved on from the appalling way that returned ADF members were treated when they came home from the Vietnam War and earlier conflicts. I am pleased that our society is now largely able to reconcile opposing a particular conflict while still being able to support and recognise the ADF members for the job that they are doing as required by the government of the day.

Fortunately, most of us will never have to experience life in a war zone, but I know that there are members of the ADF sitting over there in Afghanistan who need to know that the community that they have left behind continues to support them. We only need to listen to ADF members who have returned or watched documentaries about recent wars to see the emotional and psychological impact that war can have. But this is not only isolated to the members actually serving. Quite often the spouses and families suffer and struggle with the huge imposts that military service places on family, and it is sometimes these simple acts of recognition and respect that can help ease that burden and let people know that they are being supported.

I believe that past practice in this House was that a minute's silence was held for Queensland members of the ADF who were killed in the line of duty. Queensland is home to many ADF members. Military bases are located throughout the state, including the Gallipoli Barracks at Enoggera, which is currently home to over 3,000 personnel—a number which is expected to rise to 5,600 personnel by 2014. There are other bases such as the Victoria, Borneo, Kokoda and Lavarach barracks, the RAAF Base Amberley, Scherger, Townsville and HMAS Cairns. In all, over 10,000 military personnel are based throughout the state. If we add to that their spouses and children, we can see the significant impact that the ADF community has in Queensland.


We only have to reflect on the floods and cyclones that struck Queensland earlier this year to see what an important role the ADF plays in Queensland. So it becomes largely irrelevant whether an individual ADF member who may be killed in the line of duty is born in Queensland because they become part of the Queensland family when they arrive, either individually or with their families. Their spouses stay here and work while their loved ones travel to far-off countries under constant threat of harm. Their children go to school and continue on with the day-to-day practicalities of daily life while their parents spend their day under constant threat.

Like the Premier, I hope that this is a motion that we are never required to use. However, it would be naive to think that at some time in the near future or in the distant future members of this House would never have to stand in recognition of another life being lost in the service of this country. Members of the ADF who are posted to a conflict zone spend 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days of the year under threat of violence. They do that so that we can be here largely free of that same threat. So when the worst happens and one of those dedicated people pays the ultimate price and is killed, a minute's silence is the least we can do. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak in support of this motion. We are a patriotic state and a patriotic nation and tonight we debate this motion before our Australian flag, our Queensland flag, our Aboriginal flag, our Torres Strait Islander flag and our greater community who may choose to listen to this debate. The taking of a short time of silence is a well-established symbol of respect for a person who has died and for the family left behind.

Today I contacted a number of RSL subbranches on the Sunshine Coast to gain their views on this motion. Unfortunately, due to the short time frame many were not able to respond, yet one subbranch did. The acting president of the Palmwoods RSL subbranch said that their subbranch at Palmwoods recognises any digger who is killed in action fighting for Australia with a minute's silence and says their name. The subbranch also honours any serving member of the RSL—not just limited to subbranch members but any member of the RSL family—who passes away in a similar way. He further said that he would not expect parliament to recognise all serving members who passed away, but he was adamant and he agreed that parliament should honour diggers who are killed in action with a minute's silence as a mark of respect for their fallen. He said he believed the federal government honoured all fallen with a minute's silence, and I believe it is very appropriate that we do likewise.


Before I resume my seat, I also thank the Premier for having the strength of character to give credit to a motion from a non-government member and choose not to play politics on such an important matter.

 **Mrs PRATT** (Nanango—Ind) (6.07 pm): One minute's silence for a lifetime sacrificed—so little offered for so much given. It is perhaps to this parliament's shame that we have not recognised and entrenched such actions in parliament before today, and I congratulate the member for Burnett and also offer my congratulations to the Premier for her amendment, which is more than appropriate.

I do not think there is a single person in this chamber or in this state or Australia as a whole who would not honour our service men and women. I do not think there is a single person in this state or Australia who believes that life is not precious, because it is, and a loss of life for any reason is incredibly sad. Many people have recalled Van Nguyen, but I do not believe they recalled him because he was a drug dealer. I do not believe they even recalled him because he lost his life. I think they remember him because of the minute's silence that was held—and so contentiously held—in this parliament where many members walked out.

It is an honour to have members of parliament or any workplace hold a minute's silence for a workmate—a colleague—and it is appropriate that workplaces do this, and it is appropriate here in this chamber. At government level I believe it is also appropriate to hold a minute's silence for the loss of life during major natural disasters, and we have seen a few of those over the last few years—disasters such as the Boxing Day tsunami and others. Loss of life is also to be honoured in acts of terrorism such as September 11. It is more than appropriate to recognise those catastrophes. I remember that on September 11 we actually closed parliament for the day because it affected us all so terribly. I do not think there is a more appropriate reason for a minute's silence than for the service men and women who have lost their lives in the service of our country and in preserving the rights of other people around the world. It is an honour that service men and women served. They did it unquestionably and they gave up their lives for all of us, as they did in past wars. They go on and on in every war. We must honour all those who have lost their lives. It should not just be left to the Vietnam veterans, the Returned and Services League and all of the other organisations that honour their servicemen to look after their own and remember their own. As was said at all the services that I have ever attended, lest we forget—and we tend to do so.

Anzac Day is appropriate. Remembrance Day is appropriate. However, I also believe that it is appropriate in this chamber that we never forget. As I said, so much is given, so much lost.

 **Hon. PG REEVES** (Mansfield—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport) (6.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of this motion and also the amendment moved by the Premier. I recognise and pay tribute to all of our men and women offering their services for their country. I would like to recognise the bravery and sacrifices of our country's soldiers.

Beginning just over 10 years ago on 7 October 2001, Australia has provided significant support to the war in Afghanistan. Today we have more than 1,550 troops deployed in Afghanistan. We have seen successes as a result of this war. We have seen the Taliban forced out of power in Afghanistan as a result of this war. However, we have also had much heartbreak and loss. To date, we have lost 29 soldiers in this war. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of all those who have lost their lives in serving this country. These deaths are a constant reminder of the dangerous and courageous work that they do on a daily basis.

As a former parliamentary secretary to the Premier with special responsibilities for veterans in Queensland, I was honoured to be the first person appointed to such a role. Since then, the member for Yeerongpilly and now the member for Mount Isa have taken on this very important role. Support for men and women who are serving or who have served this country is an issue that is close to my heart. During my time as parliamentary secretary, I worked closely with the RSL in recognition of our returned service men and women. In my regular meetings with the state branch of the RSL and other ex-service associations we discuss ways in which to support returned service men and women and those still serving overseas. I was very pleased to have a close working relationship with the then president of the Queensland RSL, Doug Formby, a terrific Queenslander. I also had the pleasure to work with Terry Meehan, then vice-president and now president of the Queensland RSL, in my role as parliamentary secretary. In that role I also met regularly with ex-service men and women from Vietnam and World War II. Our soldiers today will be our vets of tomorrow. I continue to work closely with Sunnybank and Holland Park RSL, particularly Reg Walls, Robert Lippiatt and Alan Hellier, respected representatives from both our southside clubs.

In 2008 I was pleased to represent the Premier and officially launch the Queensland Poppy Appeal. To mark the 90th anniversary of Remembrance Day, I was able to organise for a commemorative slide to be projected onto the QPAC building in the week prior to Remembrance Day. It is of great significance to acknowledge those soldiers whom we had lost and what Remembrance Day marked. The slide served as a reminder to the Brisbane community of our country's sacrifice of our service men and women.

It is important to acknowledge the upcoming 100th anniversary of the ANZACs. On 25 April 2015 we will mark this historic occasion. As we know, the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed at Gallipoli. The ANZAC centenary provides us with an opportunity to remember those who have fought and served in the past 100 years and to honour those who have given their lives in service. Anzac Day is a day when we can reflect on many different meanings of war. All of us across our electorates feel enormous pride when the amount of support for days of significance such as Anzac Day increases instead of decreases. It demonstrates that people believe strongly that we should acknowledge what people before us have done for us.

We honour our ANZACs because of the sacrifices, because of their bravery and because of their courage. I encourage all Queenslanders—in fact, I encourage all Australians—to participate in services. Every service that I have attended is an emotional and moving event and one that is never forgotten. Our troops who have served overseas or who are currently serving overseas are true heroes, and it is fitting that we show respect.

This motion, which calls for a minute's silence on the next sitting day of parliament immediately following the death of any member of the Australian military on active overseas service, is a demonstration of respect to our war heroes. I offer my continuous support to Australian troops overseas and at home and my sincere condolences to those who have lost loved ones. I am very much pleased to support this motion.




Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (6.14 pm): The loss of any Australian is tragic. Our service men and women, however, are posted overseas for a specific purpose: conflict such as in Afghanistan, peacekeeping forces or even training of people in other countries so they are able to better protect their own nation. I feel strongly that an acknowledgement should be made that, as a global community, there remains many areas of tension. Thankfully, there are lesser areas of direct conflict and in some countries that conflict is more accessible and understood than in others. In some countries there is tension that we do not understand at all and, indeed, many of us do not even know about it.

In some ways, the fact that we can honour our service personnel on an individual level, as this motion proposes, shows the changes in conflict in which Australia has been and is involved. In World War I and World War II thousands of our compatriots—our mothers, our fathers, our grandmothers and our grandfathers—lost their lives. So great was the loss that it would have been impossible to honour each one on a daily basis. I think it needs to be acknowledged that the only recognition of that loss was a telegram to the family or a knock on the door.

To family members of World War I servicemen, to returned service men and women of the Second World War—and my dad served overseas for six years—and to their families, to service men and women and their families of conflicts in Malaya, Korea, Vietnam and all of those other theatres of war of the past, I say: this motion is not intended to be disrespectful or hurtful to you in any way, nor is it intended to give greater value to those service men and women who currently serve overseas. Each of

you from the past, in the present and in the future are and will continue to be of infinite worth. We value each of you. We value your sacrifice. We value the price that has been paid by you and your family. The price of conflict on each service man and woman is that the people who return from service are forever changed. Those who carry the scars of conflict can never be repaid for the cost to them as they defended our nation.

This motion gives us the opportunity to remember service personnel who pay the ultimate price. In doing so, it gives us the opportunity to reflect on the cost of war and the price of peace. I support the motion. Lest we forget.

 **Mr O'BRIEN** (Cook—ALP) (6.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion that has been put to the House by the member for Burnett. Like the Premier, I do not often agree with the member for Burnett, but I do think that the motion that he has put before the House this evening is an important motion and I am glad to hear that it has the support of all members of the House.

In common with a few of the other speakers who have spoken here today, I come from a military background as well. I joined the Navy at 16. My father was in the Navy, my grandfather was in the Navy as well and I have a brother who is still in the Navy to this day. In fact, he is out on a ship in the Indian Ocean looking for asylum seekers as we speak. Matt, my brother, has done two tours of duty in the Persian Gulf on active service. When he is out, not a day goes by when we do not think about him or worry about him. Obviously, being on a ship he is in a safer position than the ground troops are in Afghanistan. However, from some of the stories that he has told on returning from active service he was certainly at risk. We certainly do worry about all people, particularly our family, when they are put in those sorts of situations.

While the motion talks about any death in active service, it does refer to what is going on in Afghanistan. I think that the fight against the Taliban is a necessary battle. Organisations such as the Taliban and Al Qaeda seek to impose their world view on others by using violent methods. Unfortunately, the only way to deal with those people is by using violent methods. They cannot be negotiated with, they cannot be reasoned with; they have to be defeated on the battlefield. It is regrettable that in the 21st century we still resort to those methods. I would rather that conflict is resolved through peaceful negotiations. I think we all would. But we still have to fight tyranny and fight those people who would seek to undermine our freedoms by using violent methods. We support democracy and freedom. As the old saying goes, freedom ain't free. It comes at a price. Regrettably, that price is the life of young Australians, young Americans and those in other coalition forces who are fighting in that particular battle at the moment.

I like that this motion does not seek to glorify war. The modern message of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day is clearly not to glorify war but to remember sacrifice. For this parliament to take a minute out to remember the sacrifice of those who provide us with the freedoms that we enjoy I think is a very small price to pay. I support the motion before the House.

Amendment agreed to.

Question put—That the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Motion, as agreed—

That this House notes that:

1. To date 29 soldiers have lost their lives in Afghanistan and enjoined our nation's roll of honour.
2. On only one of those occasions since 2001 has this House observed silence for an individual soldier killed serving in Afghanistan: Trooper David Pearce.
3. Queensland RSL president, Terry Meehan, writes—
We believe that our fallen men and women are deserving of such a mark of respect and were surprised to learn that the House did not observe a minute's silence.

And calls on the government, supported by the opposition, on the first sitting day immediately following the death of any members of the Australian military on active overseas service to move, as a mark of respect, a motion for a minute's silence for our fallen heroes.

And further, refers this proposal to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to draft the necessary changes to the Standing Orders to provide for this to occur.


Sitting suspended from 6.21 pm to 7.30 pm.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3050, on motion of Ms Darling—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr HOOLIHAN** (Keppel—ALP) (7.30 pm): Before the adjournment I dealt with the waste and resource management hierarchy and the basis for this bill. We have heard from a number of speakers, including the shadow minister, that this is a great new tax. If you live on the Gold Coast, you are already paying a tax that is not supplemented by the people from New South Wales who use the waste facilities

on the Gold Coast. The intention of this levy is to use the waste reform process so that we can transition waste management choices so that people do not look to go to landfill. Those choices go from landfill to options higher up the waste hierarchy, such as recycling. As I said earlier in my speech, not everything can be recycled, but we owe it to this generation and future generations to endeavour to reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfill. In the long term, the government's plan is to halve waste to landfills by 2020. Ultimately, that will result in cost savings and environmental benefits for the whole community. On that basis, I commend the bill to the House.



Mr DEMPSEY (Bundaberg—LNP) (7.32 pm): The bill before the House is the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011—or, as I have heard it called, the 'let's rip off Queensland and find another tax bill'. There was great intent in the forming of this legislation. From its beginnings, even before the first reading stage and even though little consultation went into it, we know what it was supposed to reflect. Many people, including members of previous Labor-led parliaments, had a lot of aspirations about the benefits that the bill would bring to Queenslanders. However, now we see a lack of reason and logic and a lot of politics. A lot of politics was involved in this bill, particularly when we look at the committee stage of the bill's passage through the House. I was involved in that process. We see the politics in, for example, the setting of the price at \$35 per tonne. On a number of occasions representatives from the department were asked, 'Where did you get the \$35 from?' Each time they answered, 'It's a policy decision.' A policy decision is driving another stealth tax by this government.

Tomorrow is 12 October and most Labor members, particularly the Treasurer, will celebrate Pudding Day. That is a great reflection of this Labor government, because the day commemorates not only the great author Norman Lindsay but also the pudding that could be eaten over and over again. That is how I see the bill before the House and the other taxation measures of this government. The government keeps going back and feeding on the people of Queensland. Time and time again it takes money from them. In the same way, it would seem that this tax or levy will simply come from nowhere. A charge of \$35 will be imposed on the people of Queensland because of a policy decision of the government. As I said, when asked how they arrived at that figure, time and time again they could not come up with any rhyme or reason as to why this price was set.

Another political issue that has come to the forefront throughout this debate is the time frame. Why was 1 December set down as the time frame? The majority of councils said that they did not agree with the time frame. Even the Local Government Association had reservations about the time frame. We have seen that they set the price through a policy decision, so let us look at how the time frame was set. We only have to go back to this year's budget to realise that nearly \$100 million has been set aside if this bill is passed and the time frame of 1 December is adhered to. Particularly when dealing with business organisations and large organisations such as councils, any logical and reasonable person would set it to a financial date to give the organisations time to get up on their feet and have the systems in place to ensure they get the best and most efficient processes in place. However, we have to rush the legislation through the House. It was declared an urgent bill and we have pushed it through to ensure that these measures are in place for 1 December. That has been done not for the benefit of the legislation but for the benefit and the politics of this government, which will receive an extra six months revenue before the end of this financial year.

I have alluded to some of the background to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill. The bill was introduced in early August. Its latest pass date is set to be 11 October to 13 October for a 1 December start. I note that that is six months prior to the carbon tax coming in, which will also impose a significant burden on the people affected by the waste tax. Those people will not get hit once; they will be hit several times. Queensland is the most decentralised state in Australia and we have to bear significant fuel costs. On top of those costs will be the carbon tax and the enforcement notices that a lot of people receive. I believe that if you do the crime, you do the time. However, with a lack of cautionary responses, these measures will have very dramatic impacts. Indeed, at the extreme end of the scale some have penalties of up to \$200,000.

Obviously, councils will bear the burden of costs relating to IT, staffing, equipment and resources that will need to be paid for. I note the government has given some money towards weighbridges and certain amounts have been allocated in relation to different councils, but ongoing costs will be incurred by councils for many years to come. Whilst the levy starts at \$35, one can only imagine it will increase as it has in other Labor states. At the end of the day, the constituents who put us here are already suffering a lot in relation to cost-of-living expenses and now another tax will be imposed on them. When we impose a tax on one part of the community, we cannot close our eyes and ears and think there will be no impacts on anyone else in the community. For example, the people who work in the industry also contribute within their communities.

Queensland has no waste crisis and a 43 per cent recycling rate. There is no critical need to pass this legislation and add another impost on Queensland's slow economic recovery. In Australia, South Australia has the highest recycling percentage at 68 per cent and New South Wales has 58 per cent. When these initiatives, particularly in waste management, are done properly, we can see some real positive outcomes. One only has to visit South Australia to see the positive outcomes there and the

change in the culture and attitudes of the community in relation to recycling. I am talking about not only the popular idea of recycling plastic bottles and the like but also the overall culture in relation to maintaining and looking after the environment.

If implemented as is, the legislation will create a disincentive for the recycling industry by charging the levy on residual waste from such endeavours. Transport will be captured under the carbon tax in months to come. The Queensland Trucking Association estimates a fall in diesel credits for road use from 1 July 2014 to match the planned carbon price of \$25.40. This will cost the industry and consumers \$510 million in 2014-15. Local councils are big users of diesel either directly themselves or indirectly through contractors. Every house in Queensland has a rubbish and recycling truck visit them at least once a week. These extra costs will be passed on in the way of higher rates. We are not talking about a levy on domestic use; we are talking about commercial use, but the costs have to be spread throughout the whole community, particularly in small communities throughout regional Queensland.

Where are the funds collected through this new tax going to be spent? The councils in South-East Queensland originally signed up to this on the basis that all revenue raised would go into research and development of alternative waste strategies. The government is now on the record admitting that significant proportions of the revenue will go to response strategies and the purchase of new national parks. While they are wonderful to have, that was not the original spirit and intent of this bill.

I will go through aspects of the committee's report. The waste levy was intended to provide a price signal to encourage waste avoidance and resource recovery behaviour and discourage disposal as the option of first choice. The levy will also provide a source of funding for waste management programs and local environment initiatives. This levy is going to result in a significant burden especially for the small business sector when it comes to the disposal of their waste. It still stands that initially the revenue was to be directed into research and development and into other ways of reducing waste. It was not to go to other environmental areas throughout the state.

The issue of weighbridges in this legislation is another area which will create a great deal of conflict. The bill requires waste disposal site operators to install weighbridges and maintain them in proper working order for calculating the levy liability. For small sites, the bill provides for a weight conversion measure that may be used to calculate the tonnage in lieu of having a weighbridge. Bundaberg has approximately 11 dumps but only one with a weighbridge. There are other places that have 30 to 40 dumps but only one or two with weighbridges.

It will cost people to bring their load to a site with a weighbridge and again that is an added transport cost. Otherwise they can go to a rubbish dump without one and they will make an estimate of the load. The majority of councils are saying that they cannot afford to work out whether a truck is a quarter or half full so they will predominantly give an estimate of 80 to 85 per cent.

If I am a collector of many forms of rubbish that I take to the dump for people, I am not going to turn up to a dump with my truck 45 per cent full, having charged my customer for that, to then be charged 85 per cent. When I get to the dump I may have four or five different varieties of rubbish on the truck. I would have to go across the weighbridge and take my tyres out, go back around and take my concrete out and then go back around and take my other forms of waste out.

Ms Darling interjected.

Mr DEMPSEY: We found out during the committee's consideration that the majority of councils will take a percentage of the overall weight of a truck. If a truck has different types of waste there will be different prices for the waste and they will not be able to determine one base price for that truck. They will have to be able to distribute that waste in different areas so all that waste does not go into one bin at the end of the day. That is a credit to them, but the management of that process means that we will have this truck going around and around to do this properly, otherwise they will be charged 85 per cent of the weight of the truck. Why are they going to be charged 85 per cent when they have 50 per cent of their truck loaded?

Then there is the other circumstance that you charge a person from whom you take the rubbish a fee but you will not actually know the price until you get to the dump. How are you going to charge for that? The other way to do it is to charge them the maximum of 85 per cent. Then what are you going to do? You are going to be ripping off your customers through the process. At the end of day you need to have proper engagement—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Member for Bundaberg, you are asking questions and that is why they are interjecting. Continue your speech by directing your comments through the chair. The member for Bundaberg has the call.

Mr DEMPSEY: The other issue relates to littering and illegal dumping. We need to look at what has not been taken into account. In Victoria there were over 18,000 incidents relating to littering from vehicles. We can imagine what is going to happen in Queensland. I know that Queenslanders are going to do a better job in relation to waste management, particularly the people in Ipswich West and Bundaberg. At the end of the day it is enforcement action that will be needed to ensure that this legislation is properly followed. Who is going to pay for the extra prosecutions? How is that funding going to be allocated?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Mermaid Beach, the member for Brisbane Central and the member for Mudgeeraba. We have had enough interjections across the floor. The member for Bundaberg has the call. I call the member for Bundaberg.

Mr DEMPSEY: I turn now to the water initiatives and also the temporary emergency release of coal seam gas waste water. As my colleagues have already outlined, the LNP opposition holds a great number of concerns in relation to this bill. They are not so much to do with the emergency release of water in relation to the gas side of things but in relation to how the Murray-Darling Basin is going to be treated. These concerns have been outlined by my colleagues and the shadow for the environment.

From consultation on this issue with interest groups across the state, I can say that there is a real need for greater understanding of what this new waste tax burden will be. The fact that this other part of the legislation relating to the Murray-Darling Basin has been clipped onto the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill is of concern. We have to wonder how a National Water Initiative can be clipped onto this at the last moment.

I would like to focus on the concerns that have been expressed on behalf of Queensland mining and irrigation farming interests. These concerns are not on the whole directly as a result of the waste tax itself but rather as a result of the changes to water legislation that have been tacked onto this bill. Make no mistake, this bill will potentially affect irrigators in Queensland's part of the Murray-Darling Basin just as it will affect councils and waste management companies.

In Queensland, the Murray-Darling Basin comprises the catchments of the Condamine-Balonne and Warrego and Paroo rivers. In particular, part 9 of the bill proposes amendments to the Water Act 2000 to enable compensation arrangements for the loss of value of water entitlements under the National Water Initiative as they relate to Queensland's part of the Murray-Darling Basin. Members on the other side might start thinking how this relates to a waste reduction and recycling bill.

The National Water Initiative is a Commonwealth government water policy. The amendments in this bill seek to insert into the state Water Act a framework to make possible the payment of compensation to water entitlement holders for reductions in the value of water available to them as a result of implementing the NWI. The proposed amendments seek to make it clear that the Commonwealth government will be financially liable for the compensation to those water entitlement holders for reductions in value of the water available to them resulting from the implementation of the NWI.

To make sure we avoid this liability, Queensland must implement the framework before the commencement of the Commonwealth Murray-Darling Basin Plan in 2012. As the majority committee report points out, failure to adopt the framework through the proposed amendments would make Queensland liable for the compensation which could amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. Indeed, the committee examining the bill was advised by DERM that the Commonwealth had made over \$500 million available through the NWI for purchasing water entitlements in the part of the Murray-Darling Basin inside the state of Queensland.


That is a lot of water when you think of it. That is almost half a billion dollars for Queensland out of the whole national plan which is, I believe, approximately \$16 billion. So there will hopefully be more money to come. But it is the impact that I am more concerned about.

The LNP agrees that the Commonwealth ought to pay for the compensation to those irrigators or water entitlement holders for the reduction in the value of the water available to them as a result of the implementation of the NWI. However, the framework that is proposed to be inserted into the Water Act by this bill does not provide for the Commonwealth to be financially liable for any other costs that result from the withdrawal of those water entitlements under the NWI. The amendments propose to make the Commonwealth financially liable to compensate water entitlement holders for the reduction in value of the water entitlements only. Nothing in the bill indicates the Commonwealth will be liable for the value of lost agricultural production, the loss of jobs, the reductions in land values, or any other associated costs that result from the withdrawal of over \$500 million in water entitlements from that part of the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland.

So while the amendments in this bill will establish a framework for compensation to be paid by the Commonwealth for the reduction in the value of water entitlements in the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland as a result of the National Water Initiative being implemented, the framework will not provide for the Commonwealth to be financially liable for any other costs associated with the federal water reform policy. This is of significant concern for the LNP, and we consider it to be a major shortcoming of this bill.

It is clear that DERM has not even attempted to determine what the subsequent costs of withdrawing more than \$500 million of water entitlements from the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland will be. The committee was advised by DERM that any broader impacts on the community as a result of the loss of water entitlements were outside the basin plan. We think that any impacts on the wider community ought to be taken into account in the basin plan process. The failure of this government to introduce a bill that considered these initiatives or, at the very least, to offer an explanation to the parliament about how it will be overcome in some alternative plan is unacceptable and lacks a great deal of responsibility.

For the relatively modest amount of water Queensland draws from the Murray-Darling Basin, southern inland Queensland is a vibrant and productive region sustaining many vibrant and productive communities.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.52 pm): I rise to speak to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. While I believe in initiatives to support the reduction of waste going into landfill areas, in the current economic climate I have grave reservations about supporting any additional tax burden on small and large businesses. This tax will be passed on to consumers, and every high-rise dweller and every retirement home resident will cop this tax as the end user. It is an absolute disgrace and consistent with a broke Bligh Labor government desperate to find any avenue through which to raise funds at the expense of pensioners, retirees and disadvantaged community title residents who will bear the brunt of this fat new tax.

Labor is synonymous with tax, tax, tax and this is just another stealth tax like its grab for a bulk water tax. A stealth tax cannot be seen or detected until it blows up your business right in your face. Pardon the pun, but the garbage peddled as the excuse for this brand-new tax being a price signal on business waste should itself be put in the garbage bin along with the Bligh Labor government for belting business when it can least afford to be belted. Even rabidly green Tasmania has not got a fat new tax as proposed by this legislation, and to say that it is an avoidable charge denies the reality that the production of waste is an unavoidable by-product of a society growing, living and improving its lifestyle.

I would like to congratulate the shadow minister for environment, the member for Glass House, for leading the debate for the opposition and highlighting the flaws and inefficiencies in this piece of government legislation. The shadow minister is committed to the environment, and it was great to hear such a succinct and focused contribution to such an important policy area.

From my time in local government, waste disposal was always an issue that local government had to grapple with as an important part of local government responsibilities. On the Gold Coast, rubbish disposal sites were at a premium and many investigations into suitable long-term sites were undertaken at great expense to the ratepayers. The great legacy of rubbish dump sites at the end of their utilisation is that they become open space sites or valuable redevelopment sites for community benefit. I well remember as a boy playing footy at Homebush in Sydney on a field that was a rubbish dump site—and I still have a scar on my leg from an infection to prove that it was a rubbish dump site—which became the home for the 2000 Olympic Games.

The current site at Molendinar on the Gold Coast will be a valuable asset for the Gold Coast community to utilise when it ceases its current role as a transfer station. Waste is an ongoing part of community living, and to use a lame environmental feel-good red herring as a feeble excuse to justify a brand-new fat tax is a sad indictment on a stale, long-term Bligh Labor government which has financially mismanaged this state.

Queensland does have a high amount of waste per capita—32 million tonnes every single year. Again, the reality of placing a financial—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! When everyone has ceased their interjections across the floor, the member for Mermaid Beach has the call.

Mr STEVENS: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Brisbane Central has been a consistent interjector from a position in the House other than which she is entitled to be.

Again, the reality of placing a financial burden on waste disposal will lead to a business and community mindset that illegal dumping is the way to go. Management practices that rely on the big stick approach are bound to fail, as the Bligh Labor government really well knows. The only way to achieve sustainable outcomes is to provide incentives that encourage operators in the waste business to minimise their output.

I note that the boffins who came up with this brand-new fat tax regime exempted residential waste from the tax, which tells me that this is just another fat tax on business who do not get to vote out this horrible, bankrupt Labor government. There is no factual evidence of dumping waste in Queensland from interstate and, if there has been some dumping, it would be minimal because of the exorbitant cost of fuel in transporting waste because, again, this corrupt Bligh Labor government put a huge fuel tax on Queenslanders when it told the people before the election that it would not put up taxes. They cannot be trusted. They deceive Queenslanders at every opportunity with their grab for taxes, and they have sent Queensland down to a AA credit rating when every other mainland state has a AAA credit rating. The secret post-election assets sales that were to reduce debt have resulted in nothing of the sort but have gone into the giant abyss that is the Labor Party's financial black hole. Thank you, 'world's greatest Treasurer' Mr Andrew Fraser, member for Mount Coot-tha.

This bill will allow for only \$159 million over four years to help companies reduce waste. This is nothing compared to what business is going to lose with the introduction of this waste tax. It will also allow only for \$100 million for local councils to better manage their waste management. This will not be nearly enough to manage the highly convoluted accounting system required to monitor who is due for the fat tax and who is not, and any extra costs will be a burden that local governments will have to pass on to their ratepayers.

The leviable waste site owners will pay a fee to the state for every tonne of waste that they store. This will obviously be passed on to the consumer. The leviable waste site owners can reduce the amount payable to the state if they carry out recycling operations.

Other acts that will be amended in this bill that relate to waste management are the Forestry Act 1959, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008.

From what I can see, every which way this will be a business-destroying waste tax, not a levy as the government is insisting on calling it. It will cripple businesses and yet again make it difficult for them to keep their heads above water in a very difficult financial time. This is a waste tax that will be on top of the looming carbon tax that the other disastrous Labor Gillard government insists on inflicting on the people of Australia.

When will it end? The Labor Party is tax obsessed, and this is because it let Queensland go broke in a boom before the GFC and it had nothing in reserve when the GFC hit. Now it is scrambling for money to pay back the compounding debt it has plunged the state into. I believe any direction for waste collection—whether through financial punitive matters or legislative direction in this form—will lead to illegal dumping and the distribution of waste into inappropriate areas other than the landfill sites. It is far more conducive to take the carrot approach and offer financial benefit rather than tax businesses on their excessive waste resources.

The shadow minister informs me that this new fat tax will raise \$400 million over four years and then the Labor Party can go forward and buy some national parks and other initiatives that are clearly a sop to the Green votes in those wonderful electorates such as Ashgrove—

Mr Rickuss: Who'll be paying these taxes?

Mr STEVENS: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. The ratepayers and the people of the communities right throughout Queensland will be paying these taxes for this government to go and buy and sop to the Greens so that the votes in Ashgrove and Mount Coot-tha might be of benefit to the Labor Party.

It is only with a can-do Campbell Newman government that this area of waste management will get the expertise to introduce balanced, innovative, business friendly, environmentally advantageous initiatives that will benefit all within the community. I urge the government to join with the LNP in rejecting this legislation so we can put in legislation that is not a big fat new tax on businesses and consumers right throughout Queensland.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Order! Before calling the member for Mudgeeraba, I ask the member for Mermaid Beach to withdraw an unparliamentary comment he made during that particular speech. I can talk to you about it afterwards.

Mr STEVENS: I withdraw, but which part is it?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will speak to you later.



Ms BATES (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (8.02 pm): I rise tonight to make a contribution to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. As the shadow minister for the building industry, I am shocked and concerned that the Bligh Labor government intends to add a further impost on the building and construction industry—an industry which has been brought to its knees by a government which has a history of waste, no idea of business practices and no thought to the added burden this new tax will bring to an already haemorrhaging building sector.

Every time I drive the M1, I am flanked on all sides by tradies driving out of the Gold Coast where work is almost at a standstill. This new industry waste tax is a business-destroying tax; it is not a levy. It is yet another hidden Bligh Labor government tax. It is yet another broken Labor election promise. It is another example of cost shifting to local governments through an increased administrative burden.

The industry waste levy is a charge on a landfill operator for each tonne of commercial and industrial waste or construction and demolition waste that is added to landfill. It will directly affect the building industry. Did this government ever consider what effect this business-destroying waste tax would have on the building industry? This tax adds to the cost of construction of every new home and negates the much lauded but ineffective Building Boost grant. Coupled with the soul-destroying federal government carbon tax—which the Master Builders say will add a further \$7,000 for the construction of a new home—this new tax ensures that the future operating landscape for the waste industry adds even more costs to the construction of a new home.

It is irresponsible for the Queensland government to go ahead with this waste tax in Queensland without understanding the full ramifications of a carbon tax. This industry waste levy will be felt by every homeowner who wishes to construct a new home, but are we on this side of the House surprised? No, because we have a government which cannot run Queensland unless it taxes it to death, coupled with the worst federal government in the history of this country which wants to destroy business with their carbon tax—a carbon tax, I might add, that both the Treasurer and the member for Ashgrove would be happy to inflict on the business and building sectors of this state and drive up the cost of living even further for Queenslanders who are hurting on a daily basis—

Ms JONES: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at the comments that the honourable member has made and I ask her to withdraw them.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): I am sorry, was there a personal comment?

Ms JONES: Yes, there was. She said 'the member for Ashgrove', and I am the member for Ashgrove and I will continue to be.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mermaid Beach, I do not need you to participate in this. Member for Mudgeeraba, you have been asked to withdraw that comment.

Ms BATES: I withdraw. This government and the members in this government, including everybody on the other side of this chamber tonight, would be happy to inflict a carbon tax on the businesses and building sectors of this state and drive up the cost of living further for Queenslanders who are hurting on a daily basis from the mismanagement of the state's finances by the worst state Labor government in the history of Queensland.

The LNP has submitted a dissenting report on this new tax based on the following primary grounds. There are more simple and location specific solutions to achieve waste reduction, to increase the reuse and recycling of resources and to address cross-border dumping—if it even exists—than the imposition of a price signal or a waste levy. The industry waste levy will significantly affect the profitability and viability of many Queensland businesses, particularly in the building industry, that are already doing it tough in the current depressed economic conditions.

This government has failed to conduct even a comprehensive analysis on the full effect of the combined federal government carbon tax and the industry waste levy on Queensland businesses and should reconsider the introduction time frames for commercial waste until the Gillard Labor government has finalised the details on its carbon pricing mechanism. The industry waste levy is complex and it has the potential to be a recycling disincentive and undo investment in alternative waste technology strategies. The exclusion of domestic self-haul will severely disadvantage recycling focused small businesses.

Why has this bill been classified as urgent? Just to make the 1 December start date. Call it what it really is—a mad dash for Green preferences and to fill the coffers of the Labor government's environmental election slush fund.

Ms Jones interjected.

Ms BATES: I take the interjection from the carbon tax denier—'Carbon' Kate over there. We obviously will be very interested to see if she agrees to her Greens preferences at the next election.


The financial implications of this new Queensland state government waste tax will be \$35 per tonne on commercial and industrial waste and construction and demolition waste. Low hazard waste materials will be \$50 per tonne and high-hazard waste materials will be \$150 per tonne. The landfill operator will be responsible for paying the levy. The levy will supposedly be adjusted according to the CPI rates each year.

In addition, the carbon tax is estimated to result in an additional \$28 to \$30 per tonne for municipal solid waste. Councils are supposedly being compensated for the purchase of administrative software and landfill and transfer station upgrades, but councils have themselves identified significant ongoing administrative costs—of up to a million dollars a year for the Moreton Bay Regional Council—and these are not covered and will be passed on to the ratepayer.

The Commonwealth will make available \$500 million for compensation. The cost of compensation for broader community and industry effects has not been quantified or considered in the development of this bill. These costs would be substantial. The LNP does not support the introduction of any further taxes by this arrogant, on the nose, out of touch, out of ideas Labor government. The people of Queensland will be waiting with baseball bats on the porches to finally rid themselves of the worst state government Queensland has ever seen.

This government has done nothing for the building industry. The Building Boost was meant to help the building industry, right? So how did the government come up with the \$600,000 limit? The Master Builders say that a normal house build is \$350,000, so if you can find a block of land for \$250,000 anywhere between the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast I will go 'Teehee'.

Had the government even bothered to check with the HIA and the MBA how many homes have been built with this new boost? I can tell it that there have been only 102 homes approved out of 400-odd applications, and the government has also spent \$660,000 on advertising for a mere 102 approved applications which have not even been built. If we add on top of that \$7,000 per house in the carbon tax, then the \$10,000 boost is a joke! This government is antibusiness, this government is anti the building industry and it is clearly out of ideas. The Premier needs to do the decent thing and call an election now. Will the Premier and all of her ministers' departments also be paying a waste levy on all of the shredded documents that this government will need to try to cover their deceit of 20 years from the taxpayers? One would need dump trucks to remove all of the Labor waste from this deceitful government, which tricked Queenslanders and rorted them after the 2009 election. The LNP does not support another Labor-Green-Bligh-Gillard-Brown tax!

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (8.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. Queensland's existing waste management laws are outdated and do not reflect modern waste management practices and issues—an issue that has been ignored by those opposite. The current waste management legislation mainly deals with managing the impacts of pollution caused by waste, not reducing waste generation in the first place, which is what this bill aims to do. Each year the amount of waste generated in Queensland grows faster than our population, and clearly this is unsustainable. Queensland cannot afford to continue producing waste at such unsustainable levels. We cannot continue to behave in a business-as-usual manner.

The bill introduces an industry waste disposal levy starting from 1 December this year, and I think that that is a step in the right direction. We currently have some of the cheapest waste disposal charges in Australia and the introduction of the levy will help to stop Queensland becoming the dumping ground for waste from other states. Unlike the members for Mudgeeraba, Mermaid Beach and Currumbin who hold Gold Coast seats, we are not going to stand by and allow the continual waste dumping by the southern states into Queensland. This has to stop. Those members may want to come into the House and support the continuation of the southern states bringing their rubbish and dumping it in Queensland, but we will make sure that that does not continue.

The levy is just one of a suite of waste reform initiatives that will bring Queensland into line with other mainland states and drive Queensland into a low-waste future. In fact, despite the Chicken Littles opposite running around saying that it is all doom and gloom with this bill, I was quite shocked to learn that we are the only mainland state that does not have a levy in relation to waste. The introduction of the industry waste levy is designed to send a price signal to business and industry to encourage greater waste reduction and recycling. Those who choose to continue with a business-as-usual attitude will pay more to send their waste to landfill. It is important to remember that the waste levy is an avoidable cost. I repeat that for those opposite: this is an avoidable cost. If waste generators from businesses and the government sector reduce the amount of waste that they send to landfill by improving their waste management practices, they avoid paying the levy. That is a significant issue that is being ignored by those opposite. The levy will apply to the disposal of commercial and industrial waste, construction and demolition waste, contaminated and acid sulfate soils, and regulated or hazardous waste. No-one can come into this House and honestly admit that in those sectors those businesses cannot do a better job of reducing the waste that goes into landfill. This levy will drive them to do that.


The levy ranges from \$35 a tonne for commercial and industrial waste up to \$150 a tonne for high-hazard regulated waste. I have been on many job sites and I am sure that the construction industry as one industry could do a lot better in minimising the amount of waste that goes into landfill. The levy will not be charged on municipal solid waste or, as we know it, domestic waste. Householders already pay a flat waste disposal fee in their council rates and do not have the same opportunity as businesses will have under this bill to avoid paying the levy by reducing their waste or recycling. The levy zone covers 34 local government areas, including South-East Queensland and major regional local

governments. Landfill operators will be required to calculate and pay the levy amount and report monthly through a new web based database. The levy will apply to the disposal of waste generated within the levy zone regardless of whether the waste is disposed of inside or outside the levy zone. These measures are designed to prevent people trying to avoid the levy by, for example, transporting waste outside the levy zone. The levy zone also applies to waste generated outside of the levy zone but disposed of inside the levy zone, which will discourage waste from interstate being dumped in Queensland. As I have said, others may be happy to continue to accept the waste from interstate. This side of the parliament is going to put a stop to it.

It is important to note that the bill also allows for certain waste to be exempt from the levy. I think that makes eminent sense. That waste includes things like disaster waste, clean-up waste from illegal dumping or litter and waste dumped on charities, and that is a most beneficial part of the bill. There has been a substantial amount of consultation to ensure that all stakeholders have had ample opportunity to have input into the levy development. The industry waste levy will deliver an estimated \$338 million over four years, with the revenue raised from the levy being used to deliver a wide range of programs to Queensland businesses, local governments and communities—another issue which has been largely ignored by those opposite. This revenue will be used to fund targeted programs that will encourage industry investment, advance research and development, and encourage local solutions to reduce waste generation and increase recycling opportunities for materials that were previously sent to landfill. That is what this bill is trying to generate, and I believe this bill will certainly deliver that outcome.

In an Australian first—I repeat, in an Australian first—the Queensland government has also created a generous infrastructure assistance program to enable local government landfills to become levy ready. Local government will be able to access grants to upgrade their site facilities and install infrastructure such as weighbridges. The Queensland government's waste reform agenda is not just about creating a sustainable and resource-efficient Queensland; it is also about growing green jobs for the future. In fact, commercial operators have already expressed to the government substantial interest in introducing new organics recovery technologies to Queensland, and that has to be a much better future for Queensland than what is available under the current laws.

This bill provides a comprehensive range of innovative measures to cut waste and grow the resource recovery industry in Queensland. It is a step in the right direction. It has safeguards. What I do not understand is why those opposite continue to want to support polluters in this country. They continue to want to support the big polluters. When it comes to the carbon tax, they want to support the biggest polluters in this country. When it comes to waste in landfill, they want to support the biggest polluters of waste in landfills. We are about stopping the polluters, not about compensating them. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (8.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill—a bill I strongly support in its bid to modernise waste management and resource recovery in Queensland. I am privileged to be a member of the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee, which examined this bill before it reached the House, and I congratulate the many stakeholder groups who took the trouble to make comprehensive submissions and/or attend the public hearings on the bill. Their contributions were greatly valued and have assisted the committee to be fully cognisant of any concerns about the bill. I believe that the bill will be all the better because of their input.

Up to this point Queensland has been the only state without contemporary waste management legislation to help us reduce our generation of waste and to improve the recovery of resources from the waste we produce. We have the lowest recycling rates in the country and send more waste to landfill than any other state in Australia. This bill will address that in the best possible way—that is, so that the user, the polluter, pays. It will do so through the introduction of a waste levy which will be a price signal to encourage the right behaviours around waste avoidance and resource recovery and to discourage disposal as the option of first choice. This is an avoidable levy. It does not apply to waste that is diverted from landfill by re-use, recovery and/or recycling. It is only created on leviable waste delivered to a leviable waste disposal site.

The bill establishes the Waste Avoidance and Resource Efficiency Fund into which levy revenue will be paid. This will be used for programs to improve waste management and resource recovery across Queensland and to strengthen enforcement and compliance, particularly in relation to illegal dumping. Over four years this will equate to \$159 million. It will then go to a dedicated local government fund, the Sustainable Futures Fund. It is expected that over four years this fund will provide \$100 million and the remaining revenue will be allocated to other environmental initiatives.

The Queensland government is the only Australian jurisdiction in which 100 per cent of the levy funds are directed to waste and environmental initiatives and not into the Consolidated Fund. It is also the only jurisdiction to provide a dedicated local government fund from the waste levy revenue. Already the government has provided significant assistance to local governments, with \$4.1 million in infrastructure funding assistance provided in the 2010-11 financial year and a further \$11.7 million allocated in the 2011-12 year for infrastructure assistance for those local government areas within the

levy zone which were not initially eligible under the first round and for local governments outside the levy zone. Although the LNP members of our committee are fully aware of this, it was not surprising that they failed to mention in their speeches any of this significant support which the state government is providing to assist in the implementation of these important reforms.

There are several specific points about the bill to which I would like to refer. One, exemptions for some wastes are necessary for a range of reasons, including the need to achieve the best environmental outcomes. The bill exempts disaster management waste, lawfully managed and transported asbestos, contaminated soil in specified instances, dredge spoil, waste collected by or for the state or a local government to clean up litter or illegally dumped waste, and other waste prescribed under a regulation to be exempt waste. Two, exemptions of other wastes can be accepted. Importantly, this includes charitable recycling organisations' waste and waste generated by community clean-up events such as Clean Up Australia Day. Three, the bill strengthens littering and illegal dumping laws by introducing a mechanism that allows the public to report vehicle related littering and illegal dumping. I know that this sort of illegal activity is already a significant public nuisance and there are certainly particular spots in my own local area where this is prevalent and where the community is extremely frustrated about not being able to deter offenders. In addition to this already existing behaviour, experience in other states has shown us that the introduction of a waste disposal levy does result in a short-term increase in illegal dumping. With the introduction of this bill, members of the public will be able to make reports through an online reporting system when they observe a vehicle related littering or illegal dumping offence. This process has certainly been found to be highly effective in Victoria, where in 2009-10 over 18,000 incidents of vehicle related littering were reported by the public. Four, the bill requires the responsible delivery and distribution of unsolicited advertising material. I know that this section of the bill alone will also be pleasing to many residents of my local area. I thank residents for their feedback on this and the previous issue in particular.

The LNP members of the parliamentary committee raised several issues while disingenuously neglecting to mention a number of pertinent facts. One of these relates to the timing for the introduction of the levy. The levy was originally due for introduction from 1 July 2011. However, at the request of local governments—supported by the Local Government Association of Queensland and the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors, of which Campbell Newman was the chair—and due to the devastating natural disasters that occurred early this year, the government announced in February this year that it would defer the introduction until 1 December 2011. The message to take from this is that the government is actually doing what it was requested to do by Campbell Newman when he was Lord Mayor. However, as we know this is his very clear pattern, he is certainly not going to own up to that now when he might lose votes as a result. A number of businesses, including the waste sector, have been working steadily towards the commencement date of 1 December 2011. It is certainly the minister's advice that a further delay can only disadvantage those businesses and those local governments that have already done the work and invested money to adjust their business practices ahead of the levy commencing.

There was comment from stakeholders about the initial starting rate for the levy of \$35 a tonne. Some stakeholders commented that to move from \$0 to \$35 is a big price jump. However, this decision was based on a number of factors, including the levy increases in other states to over \$82 per tonne in New South Wales and up to \$44 per tonne in Victoria, depending on the type of waste and the belief that a low starting rate in Queensland would not provide a deterrent to cross-border transport and disposal. Unfortunately, we know that this cross-border disposal is happening. The LNP members of the committee saw the evidence that this is happening and know that, if we offer advantage here, then people from other states will dump. However, Campbell Newman has told them the LNP is dumping the levy and those on the other side are not making a noise about it. Shame on them! Our landfill prices in Queensland will be among the lowest in Australia. Some stakeholders—and I think particularly of the Australian Council of Recycling—asked for it to be even higher in order to drive greater recycling investment.

One of the issues raised by stakeholders in their submission to the parliamentary committee related to the decision by the government to exclude domestic kerbside collected waste from application of the levy. Some commented that the decision to exclude this waste would create an imbalance and potentially lead to leakage from the commercial and industrial stream. The government undertook extensive consultation on the proposal to exclude household waste. The decision to apply a zero levy on it was based on the government's commitment, when agreeing to the waste reforms in 2010, not to impose a cost to households with the introduction of a levy. This is a decision which recognises the investment of many local governments in providing a recycling bin through their kerbside collection services.


This bill is ultimately about changing behaviour. Householders are generally good at their recycling and it is certainly the government's view that charging a levy on household waste would not improve their waste disposal and recycling behaviours as they would not have a fair opportunity to avoid paying the levy by reducing their waste or recycling more.

This bill has been a long time in the making, from the release in October 2007 of the *Let's not waste our future: Queensland waste strategy: Discussion paper for public comment*. There has been extensive consultation, but it is only now that the LNP is bucking up. It is only now that Campbell Newman is bucking up. A total of 44 public consultation meetings were held throughout the state in the middle of last year. There have been multiple stakeholder advisory committee meetings, technical working group meetings and periods of targeted stakeholder consultation. Stakeholder groups included the Local Government Association of Queensland, the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors, Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association, the Waste Management Association of Australia, the Australian Council of Recycling, Keep Australia Beautiful, the Queensland Conservation Council, and the National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations. The development of the bill has been thoroughly and admirably prepared by the Department of Environment and Resource Management. In addition, the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee received 24 submissions on the bill itself, held two public hearings and received comprehensive and excellent advice from departmental officers to assist us in the preparation of our report to parliament. It was as a result of this extensive work that our committee was able to bring a number of concerns to the minister. I congratulate her for her attention to our recommendations and the fact that she was so willing to make amendments based on the concerns we raised.

The Bligh Labor government is committed to doing the right thing by our environment so it is there for future generations. We are not good enough as recyclers in this state and we are not good enough on waste management. Quite simply, we need to do something about it. While it is all very well for the LNP to rail against the bill because of this, that and the other, and while it is all very well for Campbell Newman to say he would abolish the waste levy, I am yet to hear anything from them or him about what they would actually do to address the significant issues we have in this state. On and on they go and there has not been one solution or one policy in sight. The worrying thing for all of us is that they do not even really seem to care about the environment. So who knows what would happen? I am still getting over the fact that environment was not even mentioned in the LNP budget reply speech such was its rating as a priority policy issue. Campbell Newman has changed his line so often on various environmental issues since then, depending on the stakeholder group he is talking to, that it is impossible to really know what he thinks about any environmental issues. He will certainly say whatever anyone wants him to say, or pays him to say. That much we know.

I believe that this is the first bill which has come to the House under the new parliamentary committee system. I am proud to have been a part of a process which provides such a tremendous opportunity for issues to be thoroughly discussed and for concerns to be raised. I would like to congratulate our chair, the member for Pumicestone, for her excellent shepherding of the committee towards the completion of our task. She has been fair and she has been tireless. I would also like to thank research director, Rob Hansen, and his staff, Robyn Moore, Sarah McCallan and Rhia Campillo, for their outstanding work in getting through a significant workload in a relatively short period of time. I also thank the departmental officers for their professional approach to what I know was a significant workload for them and what must have seemed a little daunting given that this process was the first time for all of us. As members of these committees, we are very fortunate to have available to us this level of support from both within and outside of the parliamentary precinct.

Lastly, I congratulate the minister and her predecessor, the member for Ashgrove, on their fearless work in addressing what is a very difficult issue for Queensland but one which simply cannot be ignored. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (8.29 pm): I want to start by speaking to the provisions of the bill that relate to the National Water Initiative. This is of particular interest to my constituency, because it covers a large part of the Murray-Darling catchment within the state of Queensland. Of course, contained within that area are sections of the Condamine-Balonne and also wholly and solely the Border Rivers catchment within the Murray-Darling Basin in Queensland. There is a great deal of concern about the impact of this National Water Initiative on those communities in my electorate. If one looks back over the last few years, one can see that there has been an enormous amount of concern, social dislocation and a great degree of time, effort, heartache and resources put into the whole water reform process in Queensland and under this National Water Initiative. Indeed, if one goes back to 1994, a cap was put in place by the then Goss Labor government as it prepared the water allocation management planning process which saw a significant reduction in the amount of water which could actually be taken and used within that area in the Condamine-Balonne and also the Border Rivers. Many of those communities, irrigators in particular, were told that their resource allocation was about sustainability; that this would be something that they would invest their time in, it would be worthwhile and it would give them certainty in the future. Indeed, in many cases it took up to 10, 12 and almost as much as 15 years to resolve the whole WAMP and ROP process. And guess what? That was not good for the Commonwealth government. It is coming back and having another bite at the cherry.

The people who have been through this, who have had their assets reduced, who have seen a significant devaluation of their assets, who have put a great degree of the proverbial blood, sweat and tears into this, do not want to go through this process again. What guarantee is there that once this is

resolved, in the next three or four years—or however long it is going to take—there is not another political whim that comes along to overlay this process and they have to go through it all over again? We have to stop this political interference and whim process that goes into water allocation management planning in Queensland. Indeed, if one goes back to that process, which was undertaken in Queensland over such a protracted period of time through a number of different governments of different persuasions, the Granite Belt community was successful in arguing that, because that part of Queensland was significantly underdeveloped with regard to water resources in the state, an additional 5,000 megalitres of water could be allocated to that area to assist with underpinning the urban supply requirements for the community of Stanthorpe and also a small amount could be allocated for additional investment in irrigation on the Granite Belt. Only a couple of years ago this government gifted 500 megalitres of that water to the Commonwealth, which leaves 4,500 litres for the Granite Belt communities.

I want to acknowledge the member for Ashgrove, who in her time and tenure as the minister for natural resources in Queensland, followed by the member for Ipswich, gave me commitments that this government is not intending to hand over that water to the Commonwealth as a part of the National Water Initiative in any sort of ceding, gifting or buyback process. It is not right to say that water has not been specifically allocated. That water has been allocated to the Granite Belt, it just has not been individually allocated to the specific growers who may require it because we are still waiting for solid government commitment and assistance in establishing the water-capturing mechanism by way of dams, off-stream storages, or whatever it may be.

There was a successful argument that this water should be allocated for beneficial use there. I want to see another commitment that that water is going to be left alone for that community. To give members an indication of the significant returns that come from this allocation, the other day I had the opportunity to inspect from the air a major farming enterprise on the Granite Belt that grows strawberry runners. Indeed, the strawberry runners that are used in the bulk of strawberry production in Queensland and also interstate originate from the Granite Belt. The reason they originate from the Granite Belt is that a significant amount of chill factor is needed for those strawberry runners to be able to meet their full potential. If there is not the right amount of chill the vine will not be capable of setting the maximum amount of fruit. Indeed, in the growing season that grower produces one job for each megalitre of water. That grower has over 300 jobs on his property during the growing season. That is what can be done with such a small amount of water. We are talking here about an additional 3,000 megalitres of water, which is just an eye-dropper in an ocean, which has been allocated to that community. It gives an idea of the productive capacity that can actually come from that in those intensive environments.

I will fight tooth and nail to guarantee that that water stays with the Granite Belt where it has been rightfully allocated. I also want to have a guarantee that those communities that are downstream in the major cotton-growing and broadacre farming enterprises will not be forced into ceding their water under this particular arrangement and therefore in some way undermine the food security and productive capacity of those communities in the future at a time when the community at large is becoming more and more concerned about food security.

Another aspect of the bill that I want to touch on relates to carbon-farming initiatives. As members of this House will know, because it has been mentioned in this place before, I am a leaseholder in Queensland. I bought a leasehold property. A lot of people do not understand that when you purchase a leasehold rural property in Queensland in most cases you pay a freehold price for it. I do not think it makes any sense that those people who are custodians of leasehold land in Queensland, which is 70 per cent leasehold, should not have the opportunity to be able to participate in common in carbon-farming initiatives if they so desire. It is not something that I necessarily believe that I will be involved in, but I do not think it makes sense that the bulk of the land mass of Queensland should have been excluded from being able to be a beneficiary of any carbon-farming initiative regardless of which regime seeks to put their carbon reduction plans through the Commonwealth parliament.

Before I sit down I want to touch on this waste levy. It is typical of a Labor government in this place. What it does, first of all, is to build the narrative to justify a great big new fat tax. We have a government in Queensland that does not tax to build; we have a government in Queensland that taxes to spend. As we have seen in recent times it taxes to spend very inefficiently. We have a government in Queensland that does not sell to build; we have a government in Queensland that sells to spend. That is the nature of this government. If it raises revenue it does not do a lot with it; it actually spends in the most profligate way. That is why this state has lost its AAA credit rating. That is why this state is on its knees financially. This government has not made a fair justification for this waste levy. Indeed, we had the honourable member for Brisbane Central stand in this place tonight and say we have to stop the southern states from dumping their waste here in Queensland. What are they doing? Are they bringing it from Victoria now? Are they bringing it from South Australia? Are they even bringing it from Tasmania? Where is the indication it is coming from the southern states plural?

I am most concerned that this government's narrative is a false narrative. If this bill was about genuine waste reduction and making sure that we could really get into recycling, why is it that about \$50 million of this levy—the bulk of it—is going into national park acquisitions by a government which is

singularly incapable of properly managing the national park estate that we have in Queensland at the moment, which is infested with feral animals and noxious weeds, and which does not have the infrastructure necessary to be able to properly deal with that? Indeed, the smaller councils across my electorate, such as the Southern Downs Regional Council, the Goondiwindi Regional Council and the Toowoomba Regional Council, will be struggling under the implementation of this waste levy because in those smaller communities it is very difficult to be able to put the infrastructure in place, particularly with the additional cost which is necessary on the ratepayers. If the government was genuine about a waste levy, which was about putting a proper waste reduction process in place going towards recycling, then all of that money would go into assisting those small councils to deal with that. Clearly, that is not the case. They are going to struggle to deal with this. They are going to have to gouge their ratepayers to do it whilst this government has taken this money as some sort of a slippery preference deal with the Greens.



Mr ELMES (Noosa—LNP) (8.39 pm): Tonight in this debate I rise to speak on a matter of great concern to me as the representative for my community of Noosa. While the Carbon Farming Initiative, the National Water Initiative and the discharge of coal seam gas and seepage water are of great interest, I will focus my contribution on the industry waste aspects of this bill. The bill before the House will cause an increase in the cost of living to my constituents through a significant increase in the costs for the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and small businesses. This impost will be passed on through the rate system and other charges. By placing the whole burden on the commercial side of the waste business and attempting to protect households and votes from yet another tax or tax increase, this Labor government has ensured that households will be affected. However, as it has done on the water issue, the Bligh Labor government will point a crooked finger at local government as the culprit rather than accept responsibility for its own flawed and ill-considered legislation.

At the outset I must say that I am very disappointed in the first test of the new bipartisan committee system. This system encouraged us all to believe that there was a better way of conducting the business of the parliament. The system boasted of being consultative, so there were scheduled hearings. Twenty-five organisations and individuals made submissions and presented, often passionately, to the public hearing on this, the first bill considered under the new process. I sat through those hearings with interest. I accept that it is early days for the new system, but for this bill to have been the subject of so much informed comment, often by people who run small waste management businesses and who will see no tangible outcome from their effort, is a clear indication that nothing has really changed. The Labor government goes through the motions of consultation, but it is impact-free consultation as it simply turns a deaf and uncaring ear and acts as if the entire process had not occurred. Just look at the amendments. The best measure of listening, not just hearing, is in these amendments and there is very little substance in them.

One aspect of the legislation that is difficult to reconcile with its objective is any reference to the phasing out of single-use plastic bags. The submission from the Queensland Conservation Council informed that this element had been dropped from the legislation during the drafting phase. I ask the minister to inform the House of the rationale for this retrograde step. The phasing out of single-use plastic bags is symbolic. At the same time, it is a very practical measure to reduce waste in landfill of a product with a very long life and the ability to pollute and destroy wildlife on land and in the sea.

I personally witnessed a number of the presentations made to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee. All impressed, but some more than others. Standouts included the passionate presentation and subsequent responses to questions by Rick Ralph, the executive director of the umbrella Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of Queensland. He represents the interests of his 85 members across the spectrum of international, national and state based companies, including small businesses comprising family based operations of fewer than 10 employees. The key aspects that he drew attention to are some of the key flaws of this bill as it affects his members. First is the focus on landfill, ignoring all other forms of disposal. That stance contradicts the work of some other arms of government in generating green power. Second is the importance of the operators in the industry obligated to collect the levy but not appropriately credentialed.

The third and perhaps the key point of the whole debate is that a tax is a price signal designed to change behaviour. In this case, the tax does not apply to households, which are responsible for 30 per cent of the total waste generation. Households will be impacted by increases in their rates, but they will not know why. This Labor government will simply argue that councils have been compensated. Households will be deaf to the response that the compensation is a long way short of what it should be and the blame game around the cost shifting will continue. We already know that asbestos building waste is being dumped in household wheelie bins because people want to avoid the cost of disposing of it appropriately. The major increase in hiring a skip to dump household clean-ups is already showing up with illegal dumping in bushland. Councils and other agencies are now hiring local skip contractors on contract to go and clean up this illegal dumping in bushland. This problem will get much worse and was acknowledged in the committee's hearing through a commitment to ramp up policing.

The fourth point is that the revenue from the tax is to be skimmed off to fund the creation of more national parks. We cannot manage the ones we already have. All the resources generated should be retained within the waste industry to achieve the objectives of the bill and the commercial industry should be better supported by it than is being proposed.

A second presentation in this stand-out category was by Michael Kennedy, founder and CEO of Kennedy's Classic Aged Timbers. He embraced the opportunity to put his case directly to the leaders of this state with passion, conviction and clarity. I was stunned to learn that he had already made 12 submissions to DERM and other agencies in response to this bill. Michael Kennedy drew several matters into sharp focus. Firstly, clearly in his industry forgiveness is not only easier to obtain than permission but, with this bill failing to address the approach to regulating unlicensed operators, is also positively encouraged. The additional intended or unintended consequence of that omission is that the certainty that licensed operators need to make their investment decisions is just not available. This is in addition to the uncertainty created by the possible introduction of the federal Labor government's carbon tax and where this Labor government, the Bligh Labor government, has failed in its responsibilities to represent the best interests of Queenslanders by failing to oppose it. Further uncertainty is created when the regulations that will underpin this legislation are yet to see the light of day.

Given that the bill is to come into effect on 1 December this year, how much time are players in the industry going to have to turn their businesses on their collective heads in time for the start-up date? There are only 36 working days left, including today. This mad rush ignores the certainty essential for investment decisions by businesses in this industry. You may rest assured that the next 12 months at least will be an investment-free zone in this industry as it struggles to make sense of the legislation, the accompanying regulations and the 18 bills that make up the carbon tax suite of legislation. No doubt those 18 bills will be accompanied by truckloads of regulation as well. Here is an enormous compliance cost to business that is totally unproductive and diminishes national productivity in a time of an international financial crisis.

Mr Kennedy then drew attention to the high level of waste—some 60 per cent of the log volume—generated by world-class operations by timber recyclers of round logs. This bill will make the recycling of redundant timber from Energex, Ergon and a number of other government agencies unviable. It will create a new cost for electricity generation companies when disposing of their timber as it passes its use-by date. However, the most perverse outcome is that Mr Kennedy will be forced to source timbers from rainforests, probably in Asia, to continue his business. At a time when the planet needs more and more trees, the Bligh Labor government, dependent for its very existence on Green preferences, insists on persisting with legislation that will inevitably lead to the destruction of rainforests.

I urge this Labor government to pause and reflect and slow this process right down, work with the industry and get this right and take time to understand the impact of the carbon tax. None of this is new. More than 12 months ago, my discussions with these industry groups revealed their fears about what would be included in this legislation and their fears were well founded. At the very first test of the new collaborative, consultative committee process of considering legislation, as a parliament we have failed. If this minister was serious about the new process, we would not have what is called the 'minor in nature' amendments that she has introduced but wholesale changes based on the submissions and presentations made to the committee in good faith. That good faith has not been reciprocated.



Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (8.49 pm): I rise to speak to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 and to raise some concerns from councils in my area. In the minister's second reading speech she says that it is cheaper to dump in Queensland for free than to recycle. In my electorate there is not any free dumping other than illegal dumping. For a very long time the council, and now the amalgamated council, has had either two well-controlled central dumps or transfer stations. Nobody has been able to take anything to the tip, whether it is domestic waste or commercial waste, without paying a fee.

This bill will create a second cost structure for the commercial operators in the area. I wonder what is being done to quantify and draw the difference between council areas where costs are passed on to consumers already, including commercial entities, and those council areas where perhaps because of the logistics of having controlled dump sites the tip is accessed freely. Most of the tip sites that I believe would be freely accessed now would be in smaller council areas where containing a tip site, fencing it and managing it on a time basis would not be cost-effective.

The other issue that has been raised regularly here has been the issue of cross-border dumping. For my electorate that is not an issue. So I was interested to read some of the contributions to the hearings in relation to cross-border dumping. If it were happening en masse in significant quantities I could understand why it would be a problem. I was interested to read the comments of the DERM officers. Ms O'Shea said—

It is somewhat difficult to quantify for materials that are not regulated. We do have information about regulated waste coming across the border. In relation to other more opportunistic decisions that are made, all we have is pretty much anecdotal information in relation to that. We do have data on the tracking of regulated waste though and that is quantified ...

Later on a representative of another border community at Goondiwindi said—

We have never encountered any problem. I can understand that argument and I had that debate with the people down there. I can understand that closer to the seaboard, but in this western area it is not an issue. It really is a non-issue. The initial thought was that New South Wales was going to expand its waste levy, which I believe under the new government is not going to happen now anyway. For our inclusion in this to be based on a cross-border issue is ludicrous.

For the border councils there is not a quantified problem.

I have some concerns—and I have not had any feedback from the industries as they are unlikely to say anything—about what the impact will be on construction places like that for LNG. I know that they have been approached on many levels to contribute to the infrastructure in the electorate of Gladstone. I cannot answer for the upstream communities because I do not have enough to do with them. Certainly in the Gladstone region they have been earmarked to provide infrastructure at the hospital and in the community. Certainly they have provided significantly more than the government has in terms of infrastructure. The government has provided practically nothing. If this cost structure is significant I wonder whether they were alerted to the potential for this additional charge on their construction and what quantum that charge will be in relation to the construction that is proposed in such a great amount. As I said, to take waste to the Gladstone Regional Council tip at Benaraby there already is a cost involved for construction waste as well as controlled waste and domestic waste. This will be an additional and extra charge.

The Central Queensland Local Government Association made a submission to the committee. There are just a couple of matters that I would seek the minister's response to. The CQLGA and the Local Government Association of Queensland asked for an additional extension to the commencement date to 1 July 2012. I wonder why there is such difficulty in accommodating that.

As other speakers have said, it is impossible at this point in time to be sure about the impact of the carbon tax. If it is successful through the federal parliament this will be an additional charge on that. I can only wonder whether perhaps they are being brought in together so it will be difficult to differentiate who is applying what charges. It will be an additional impost for councils to administer this levy. Even Gladstone Regional Council will struggle with personnel and the work that this will require.


In relation to the application for approval of waste as exempt waste, the CQLGA states—

Under this section councils have to apply for the exemption for progressive capping, batter construction, final capping, profiling and site rehabilitation. However, this leaves materials that will be used for operational purposes still liable to attract a levy. This could cause councils additional costs that have not been budgeted for. For example, if this is not amended, day cover soil would attract the levy. In Rockhampton Regional Council at their Lakes Creek Road landfill they bring in between 1,200 and 2,000 tonnes of soil per week for day cover. Incurring a levy for this would add an additional cost of between \$42,000 and \$70,000 per week for this council—an annual cost of \$2.9 million that councils have not budgeted for. That means that there will be a huge cost to ratepayers.

The LGAQ also requested that the commencement date for the industry waste levy be extended.

There are a number of concerns in relation to this legislation. I do note that it will apply to commercial construction and industrial waste, contaminated waste and acid sulfate soils. In my electorate, the acid sulfate soils are dealt with by dumping it out to sea or putting it behind a bund wall. Whilst there is a lack of scientific certainty, there is certainly a belief in the community that acid sulfate soil is contributing to the problems in the harbour currently. Those who are creating the acid sulfate soils potentially will not have to face this levy I presume because theirs is not going to landfill. It is still having an impact but it is not going to landfill.

The other point that has been raised here is the use of the money that is raised from the levy. It has been stated in this debate that part of that will be going to the national parks. What needs to be done with the current national park estate is for proper management to occur. We have had quite a number of properties, including our winery at Gladstone, burnt out because a fire came down from state owned land. That lack of husbandry or care of the national park estate causes problems to any landowner who is unfortunate enough to live contiguously with a national park or forestry property. Before we acquire more, although it would be desirable and welcome, we need to manage the national parks and the forestry estate that we already have. I look forward to the minister's reply.

 **Hon. D BOYLE** (Cairns—ALP) (8.59 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 and do so loudly and proudly. I am absolutely amazed that the opposition should take such a crass position and, even further than that, in taking that crass position think that it will win them votes in the state of Queensland—not many and certainly not many in the area of Cairns. There are those on the opposite side who have said that this is catering to the whims of some green voters in the electorate of Ashgrove. I tell them that it is catering to the whims of a lot of Queenslanders who expect governments at all levels to look after the environment, to do the right thing, to provide the leadership and to set the standards for modern management of our environment, including modern standards for waste management.

I have to say that, in knowing the history of this bill, I would have predicted quite wrongly that the opposition's position would have been, 'It's about time you got this bill in the House,' because if we were to be criticised it should be for the length of time it has taken us to bring this legislation to the House. There is good reason it has taken so long and that is, as some members have mentioned, the impact on

local governments. I know well the history, as a former minister for local government on two separate occasions, whereby local government was very busy indeed with a huge reform agenda set, led by this government, and they asked, as the LGAQ and as individual local governments, that they be given more time to consider this matter. Even then when we came back to the bill, while they said they supported it broadly, while they accepted that Queensland was behind the action—unlike our usual position in matters affecting local government where we lead Australia; on this occasion we were not—what they really wanted was time to consider the impacts and to look at not only their own budgets but their local impacts. So we have proceeded through various ministers—the previous minister and the present minister—slowly and steadily and have brought a well-considered bill to the House at this time.

I have to say, however, that there were, as can often happen with legislation, some impacts that we had not previously considered or realised. One of those impacts happened to be on the unusual circumstances in which Cairns Regional Council finds itself. Cairns Regional Council—some several councils ago in fact—instituted a leading alternative technology system for dealing with waste management. It involves recycling first but after that it involves the mixing of domestic and commercial waste by a commercial operator and the production, increasingly in terms of percentage, of materials for composting. This was the first use of this alternative technology in Queensland. It is the biggest use of it. The story is a fine one in terms of the leadership of Cairns Regional Council, although not without its problems along the way. There have been breakdowns in the technology. There have been difficulties sometimes due to the high humidity and very wet periods and other elements which you would expect with new technology that is being first trialled.

Nonetheless, the particular element that gave concern to the Cairns Regional Council and the CEO in particular was that, because of the commercial operator taking a lot of domestic rubbish as well as commercial rubbish, they may be forced to pay a very high levy that they would need to pass on to ratepayers. In fact, they brought their concerns to me and to other local members, as well as expressing them to the minister—and very quickly so—and I am pleased to say with a lot of figures and information behind their presentation.

There was some pretty loose politics played by some LNP members who sought to purport that nobody was listening to the Cairns Regional Council, and that was an absolute nonsense. In fact, we were listening right from the start, and I can confirm that the minister and her department responded quickly by sending senior and responsible public servants to meet with me and the council and to tour the facilities and to begin the discussion on how a leading council would not be penalised under the bill. I am pleased, therefore, to note on behalf of Cairns Regional Council and Cairns ratepayers that this has been recognised and that the bill will assist Cairns Regional Council, particularly through some transitional provisions, to ensure that recyclers exercise best practice and that those who do are not unduly affected by the levy on residue waste. Firstly, it will assist by enabling a recycler to apply for a discounted levy where the recycler has a proven record of efficient practices. Secondly, it will assist by enabling a recycler to obtain a full exemption from the levy where they can demonstrate that the levy on their recycling residues even at the discounted rate will cause them financial hardship. Thirdly, it will assist through the regulation which may prescribe a waste that is exempt from the levy. So I thank the minister particularly but also people in the department for their consideration of the unique circumstances of Cairns Regional Council.

There has been a lot of twaddle tonight about how business in Queensland is not going to like this, and those on the other side of the chamber are wrong. There are a lot of good businesses, small businesses even, that have been preparing for this day because they know they should, as well as because they know the provisions are coming. In fact, there is one businessman in Cairns who is clearly in support of the government's legislation before us tonight. He wrote, in fact, to the LNP candidate who has been designated a man of extreme views, one Gavin King, and said—

Hello Gavin,

I would just like to express my dismay at the recent announcement by "Can Do" Newman that he will repeal the Waste Levy if the LNP gets into power. I am a life long conservative voter and a former Liberal Party member, but am becoming more and more disillusioned by politicians on both sides of the spectrum who hope to curry favour by opposing to the extent of repealing. This is not an overnight policy of the Labor government but the culmination of a long process of consultation and review. To say that he will completely trash something after this much time and effort shows the lack of the ability to provide stable governance and any degree of certainty to the general population who want stability and continuity.

We were about to commit to a large investment in recycling equipment for our waste disposal business after a couple of years of planning and now we don't know what ... is going to happen. Obviously our plans are out the door and there will be no investment in new equipment.

Please convey my views to the DUNDERHEADS running the LNP and long live the Bligh government.

Kind Regards

Gary Stevenson

Norhire Pty Ltd


I seek leave to table a copy of his email for the information of members of the House. So I say to the members on the other side that they have not chosen well, not at all. We have looked after local government. We have looked after exceptional circumstances. We have been cognisant of the needs of business, and there are many people in business in this state who actually do care about best practice and leading practice with regard to waste management and other matters as well.

I conclude my remarks by saying also that I think this is a great example of the benefits of the committee system. This bill was well managed by the committee. It gave a further option for the Cairns Regional Council, and I dare say any other concerned submitters, to again present their views to members of both sides of the House to make sure they were being understood. However, I really do thank the minister for her particular recognition of Cairns' unique circumstances. I support the bill before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Just before you take your seat, member for Cairns, you sought leave to table a document. You can just table the document, if you wish.

Ms BOYLE: Thank you.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 6 October 2011, from Mr Gary Stevenson to the Cairns electorate office regarding the waste levy [5597].

 **Mr SHINE** (Toowoomba North—ALP) (9.09 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. This bill marks the most significant waste reforms in Queensland in over 10 years and is a critical component of the government's waste reform commitment to cut waste to landfill in half by 2020. It will allow Queensland to develop a modern, sustainable approach to waste management and resource recovery and move away from disposing to landfill at the first instance.

A key component of the bill, the industry waste levy, was originally planned to commence on 1 July 2011. However, in recognition of the impact on Queensland communities of the January flood and cyclone disasters, the government agreed to defer the levy's commencement until 1 December this year. In making this decision, the government took advice from local government, business and industry and waste sector stakeholders regarding a date that provides time for all sectors to become levy ready.

Some local governments, such as the Goondiwindi Regional Council, have expressed concern about having enough time to prepare for the levy. However, the decision to defer the commencement date for the legislation and levy was made and announced in February 2011. This early announcement provided local governments with adequate time to make the necessary adjustments.

Eight councils were amalgamated in 2008 to form the Toowoomba Regional Council. Consequently, this council has a large number of waste sites. On this basis, the Toowoomba Regional Council had lobbied the state government to be excluded from the levy zone for five years to allow them time to rationalise their waste facilities in preparation for the levy. However, the Toowoomba Regional Council knew that there was an urgent need to rationalise their waste facilities with or without the levy, and the council has had three years to implement this process.


My point is that local governments have had ample time to prepare. The levy rates and proposed exemptions, along with the infrastructure requirements for waste disposal sites to measure waste and remit the levy, have been the subject of considerable discussion, particularly over the last 12 months.

Having said that, the government does recognise the issues and cost constraints that may face local governments, such as the Toowoomba and Goondiwindi regional councils. In recognition of this, the government allocated \$4.1 million funding towards local government infrastructure and ancillary equipment grants for 2010-11. The Toowoomba Regional Council was one local government which received assistance for upgrading landfill infrastructure through this funding. On 20 September 2011, the Minister for Environment announced further funding of \$13 million towards infrastructure grants for local government. The weighbridge and ancillary equipment grants will assist local governments with the installation of weighbridges and ancillary equipment to help them improve waste data collection and site operations to meet their levy obligations. Mr Deputy Speaker, it may interest you to know that Queensland is the only state to provide this type of assistance to councils.

The government has also recognised the difficulties associated with small sites in relation to calculating and remitting a monthly levy payment. Such sites are those sites disposing of less than 2,000 tonnes in a year. The bill makes provision for an annual payment and an alternative methodology to be used by small sites. This means that those sites are able to be levy ready without additional infrastructure and staffing requirements and associated costs.

The government will also make \$100 million of levy money available over four years to local governments through the Sustainable Future Fund. These funds will help local government undertake environmental projects, focusing on better waste management facilities and practices. Together with the infrastructure funding I mentioned previously, this is a major funding commitment by the Queensland government that will see almost \$120 million injected into local government waste and environment programs over the next four years.

Funds from the levy will also be used to improve Queensland's waste and resource management practices, with targeted programs to encourage industry investment, advance research and development and, in particular, encourage regional markets and local solutions to improve recycling opportunities for materials that are currently wasted in landfill. These new funding opportunities will provide incentives to both local government and businesses to reduce waste whilst stimulating the development of new technologies and green jobs. These funding opportunities represent the government's significant commitment to genuine waste reform in Queensland, so I have great pleasure in commending the bill to the House.

 **Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.14 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the consideration of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill before the House. I firstly want to commend the shadow minister, the member for Glass House, on the great contribution he made on behalf of the opposition in the consideration of this piece of legislation. I certainly endorse the comments he made.

My primary reason for joining this debate is to respond to some of the quite baseless claims that were made by the member for Everton in relation to some of the documents he tabled. What we saw from the member for Everton is what we are going to see a lot more of between now and the election; it is what I have been warning about for the last couple of weeks. It is the desperate, slanderous type of politics. It is the make an accusation and hope it gets reported type of politics; it is make an accusation whether or not it has any basis. That is what we saw from the member for Everton. He is the trained monkey for Eamonn Fitzpatrick who has been sent in here with a job to do. The trained monkey for Eamonn Fitzpatrick comes in with a style of politics that the people of Queensland will find repugnant.

The documents that the member for Everton tabled in this House certainly do not do what he says they do. That is the Eamonn Fitzpatrick way: come in and table some documents, make an accusation and hope the accusation gets reported. Let us look at the documents the member for Everton tabled which he claimed somehow proved a position that was held by the former lord mayor of the Brisbane City Council.

The first document is a copy of the *Hansard* record of question time from the Brisbane City Council. It has absolutely no relevance to the claims that were made by the member for Everton when he tabled it, but it was probably there just to bulk it out and make it look impressive.

The second document is a letter written to the then minister, Kate Jones, from John Cherry, the executive director of the council of mayors. This letter essentially asked that a minimum of one additional month be given for comments to be provided on the draft legislation and regulatory assessment statement, and it asked that the commencement of the waste levy be at least 1 December 2011. Once again, this has absolutely nothing to do with the claims that the member for Everton made.

The third document is another letter to the Hon. Kate Jones, the then minister, which the member for Everton claimed somehow indicates support for the proposition by Campbell Newman, the then lord mayor. The letter contains three sentences. The words that the member for Everton and his trainer, Eamonn Fitzpatrick, like to cling to to support their case are in the last sentence, where it states—

Council strongly supports a levy implementation date of 1 July 2012 in line with the start of a new financial year.

The council said that they support the levy starting at the end of the financial year. In some sort of new imbecilic low in Queensland politics, that has been translated into support for the levy itself. If that sort of imbecilic logic is to be applied, let us apply it as well to the second paragraph of the letter, which states—

I reiterate Council's strong opposition to the announced waste levy implementation date—

Apply the imbecilic logic, and the letter opposes the levy just as much as it supports it. This is nonsense politics. This is garbage at its worst. This is the sort of thing that the Labor Party and Eamonn Fitzpatrick are going to stoop to. We are going to see this sort of imbecilic accusation every day in this parliament. We are going to see it every day in the media between now and the election because that is all these government members have left. They are bereft of any ability to mount a cogent argument. They are bereft of any ability to run a policy agenda that has anything to do with the issues that are affecting the people of Queensland and anything at all to do with the issues that are affecting every family in Queensland.

Let me table some other documents relating to the waste levy issue that the member for Everton did not bring down here and table. Let me table this ad from the *Courier-Mail* from 14 and 15 March 2009 when the council of mayors was lobbying every political party in the then election campaign asking them, 'Do you intend to introduce a waste levy?' The LNP said, 'No.' The Labor Party said, 'No.' I wonder what the difference is? The LNP has maintained its position. That is the difference. We said no before the election and we said no after the election. The Labor Party in contrast said no before the election and said yes after the election—just like the asset sales, just like the fuel levy, just like so many other things. It was no before the election—'Oh, no, we won't do that'—but immediately after the election it was yes. It was yes and it was yes to the great big new tax that everybody on this side of the House has spoken about tonight, and I table that document.

Tabled paper: Council of Mayors (SEQ) advertisement in *Courier-Mail*, dated 14 and 15 March 2009, titled 'Making South East Queensland a better place to live' [\[5598\]](#).

I also table a series of other documents—a submission that was made about the proposed industry waste levy consultation draft on behalf of the council of mayors which members can read for themselves.

Tabled paper: Extract from the Council of Mayors (SEQ) submission on Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010-2020 Waste Avoidance and Recycling Consultation Draft, pages 5-7 [5599].

I also table another submission made by the council of mayors on Queensland's waste strategy 2010-2020 waste avoidance and recycling consultation draft, which once again members can read for themselves.

Tabled paper: Extract from the Council of Mayors (SEQ) submission on Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010-2020 Waste Avoidance and Recycling Consultation Draft, pages 1-4 [5600].

I table another letter to Kate Jones from the chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee of the Council of Mayors South East Queensland.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 23 September 2010, from Cr Melva Hobson, Chair, Environment and Sustainability Committee, Council of Mayors (SEQ), to Hon. Kate Jones MP, Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability, regarding the proposed waste levy [5601].


I table another letter from John Cherry, the executive director of the Council of Mayors South East Queensland—all of which the member for Everton supposedly forgot to bring down and table in this place when he sought to stoop to this new level of imbecilic politics to make a baseless accusation—a baseless accusation—that was just designed to get a headline, a baseless accusation that was all part of the personal slander, mud-slinging style that Eamonn Fitzpatrick has brought to Queensland politics.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 4 August 2010, from John Cherry, Executive Director, Council of Mayors (SEQ), to the Project Manager, Queensland Waste Strategy Consultation, Department of Environment and Resource Management, regarding the council submission to the waste avoidance and recycling consultation [5602].

I think the debate in this chamber deserves better than trained monkeys with misleading documents. I think the debate in this chamber deserves better than that. It deserves some consideration of the issues. It deserves some real facts. It deserves some honesty from members who bring documents in here and purport to misrepresent them, because this is an issue that will affect every Queensland and every Queensland family. They are the people who will have to put their hands in their pockets to pay the tax that this bill introduces. That is what it is about. It is not about this sort of clever nonsense from members such as the member for Everton, and that member stands condemned for the way he sought to mislead this debate. The government as a whole stands condemned for the way it has sought to implement this great new tax on the people of Queensland, because it has nothing to do with the warm and fuzzy environmental values that member after member over there have stood up and sought to espouse. Just as the member for Everton sought so grossly to mislead this House, so the government and all of the other Labor members who have participated in this debate have sought to mislead the people of Queensland.

This is about a tax. It is about a new tax for a government that is broke. It is about raising money for a government that has wasted more money than any other government in Queensland's history, and that is why this legislation should be opposed. That is why it will be opposed by the members on this side of the House. That is why it has always been opposed by the LNP, because it is simply a tax. To suggest otherwise, as the member for Everton did in the parliament tonight, not only belittles him but also belittles the government, because that is the only sort of debate that it can muster to try to justify the introduction of this new tax on the people of Queensland. The people of Queensland need to know that the LNP will repeal this tax. We will give them back the money that this Labor government seeks to take off them. Campbell Newman has made that clear, and I make it clear tonight: we will give Queenslanders back their money.

(Time expired)

 **Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (9.24 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. I commend the shadow minister for the environment on his forensic analysis of the bill—a bill that presents us with yet another Bligh government tax. This evening I will confine my comments largely to the imposition of the waste levy. The industry waste levy is a charge on a landfill operator for each tonne of commercial and industrial waste or construction and demolition waste that is added to landfill. It will apply in 34 local government areas covering around 99 per cent of Queensland's population. The premise in its essence is not dissimilar to the federal government's proposed carbon tax. The Bligh government is selling this tax under the guise of a levy as a price signal that will drive recycling practices and reduce the amount of waste going into landfill each year. Unfortunately, and as we are seeing with the Gillard-Brown carbon tax, it is just not that simple.

The imposts that the industry waste levy will present will immediately impact on my local community. At the beginning of the year I was approached by the management of Holy Spirit Home, a residential aged-care facility in Carseldine. Although Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020 dictates that municipal solid waste will not incur the levy, Holy Spirit Home has to

use the services of a commercial waste company to remove domestic or municipal solid waste via large container bins. The question then was how this waste would be categorised. By incurring the levy, Holy Spirit predicted its waste charges would increase by around 35 per cent. This is not milk money; we are talking about an increase that will impact on the cost of living to residents in aged-care communities.

In February of this year I wrote to the former minister for the environment and resource management seeking clarification on whether an aged-care home generating domestic waste would incur a levy targeting commercial and industrial waste. The minister responded with confirmation that Holy Spirit would be liable to pay this levy as the premises is designated now as commercial. This was an extremely disappointing response. At this point I commend the shadow minister for actively engaging with aged-care facilities, including those in the Aspley electorate, to discuss the implication of the industry waste levy and to really hear their concerns. Whilst I understand the importance of reducing waste going into landfill, it is important that the strategies put in place to achieve this outcome are not detrimental to the community. There are a number of retirement villages in my electorate that provide an enjoyable living environment for their residents later in life. I, like the management teams at these facilities, am very concerned as to how this tax will impact on the aged-care sector.

However, as the LNP has outlined, this is an ill-conceived levy that will have a number of adverse impacts on many areas of Queensland industry. There are interplaying factors that cause the Bligh government's industry waste levy strategy to be flawed. The waste levy coupled with the federal government carbon tax will present a double whammy for the future operation of the waste industry in Queensland. What is more, the Queensland government has failed to comprehensively analyse and detail the combined effect of the waste levy and the carbon tax. A reasonable person might assume that it would be more appropriate or perhaps more responsible to postpone the introduction of a waste levy until the details of a carbon pricing mechanism are finalised. The combined effects of tax on tax has the potential to be a recycling disincentive by levying residual wastes generated. It has the potential to undo investment in alternative waste technologies. It is not as straightforward as the minister suggests. When we consider that the carbon tax is estimated to slap an additional \$28 to \$30 per tonne on top of the municipal solid waste levy, it would be unsurprising to see opposite results to what the legislation purports to achieve.

If this levy were a genuine price signal that were to catalyse a transition towards alternative waste technologies, then surely the revenue raised would strategically invest in such technologies. What we know, however, is that the government is on record as stating that a significant proportion of this revenue will be directed to the Koala Response Strategy and the purchase of new national parks. It would not be unreasonable to label their levy strategy tokenistic. As the shadow minister noted, the urgency of this bill is questionable. Queensland already has a recycling rate of 43 per cent. Yes, this could be better, but is a better result to be achieved by the strategy we are debating this evening?

The highest rate of recycling in Australia is 68 per cent in South Australia. Contrast this to 58 per cent in New South Wales, where an \$80 per tonne charge is imposed on landfill operators. What we are seeing now in this House is a government on its last legs, desperate to rush through any legislation that may advantage it electorally. In this case, it looks like a sneaky attempt to secure Greens preferences at the upcoming election.

This bill represents what is, quite simply, a business-destroying waste tax. It is yet another tax that will punish Queenslanders in one way or another. While the Bligh government concerns itself with self-preservation by any means, the LNP will continue to focus its attention on the best interests of Queenslanders.



Mr DICKSON (Buderim—LNP) (9.30 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this debate. This bill was introduced on 3 August this year by the member for Sandgate. On that date the member told this parliament—

The Queensland government has a 10-year plan to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020. To achieve this target, last year the government agreed to significant waste reforms that included preparing a new waste strategy and new legislation that will modernise waste management in Queensland.

The member continued—

Today I am introducing the second part of the reforms: the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011.

...

A good strategy is needed to help us firstly reduce our waste and then improve recovery of waste that we too readily dump in landfill. We need to break the shackles that are holding Queensland back. Under Queensland's new waste strategy, we also want to grow green jobs and value re-using and recycling materials. We want re-using and recycling to be the first option over landfill.

But here comes the whack. The minister said—

This is an industry waste levy which will commence on 1 December this year. It is an avoidable charge if companies avoid landfill.

In other words, companies will not pay for doing things they need to do if they do not do the things they need to do.

Within the bill, the achievement of this act must, if practicable, be guided in part by a polluter-pays principle. The polluter-pays principle is the principle that all costs associated with the management of waste should be borne by the person who generates the waste. The cost associated with the management of waste may include the cost of minimising the amount of waste generated and containing, treating and disposing of waste and rectifying environmental harm caused by the waste.

This is not a levy. It is a great big new tax just like Labor's great big new carbon tax. It is a business-destroying waste tax, not a levy. It is another Bligh government tax. Is there no end to these Labor taxes? Queenslanders cannot take any more from this tired, old, tax-and-spend Labor state government. This tax is aimed fairly and squarely at businesses large and small, and there is a double kicker here. This waste tax, coupled with the federal government's carbon tax, makes future operation of landscape for the waste industry in Queensland very challenging.

A few weeks ago I asked the CEO and the chief financial officer of one of the largest councils a question. My question was: what impact will the \$23 per tonne carbon tax on methane emissions on their landfill tips have on household rates? The answer was that they have no idea because they have not been told if they are included in the top 500 polluters. So it is crystal clear that this tired, old, tax-and-spend Labor state government has no idea about the true implications of this waste tax on Queenslanders, particularly when it is coupled with Labor's great big new carbon tax.

Another policy principle for achieving this act is the user-pays principle. It is the principle that all costs associated with the use of resources should be included in the price of the goods and services, including government services that result from the use. 'Including government services' means that those who use government services—that is, the voting public—will be paying more as a result of this great big new tax. The waste levy is a charge on landfill operators for each tonne of commercial, industrial, construction or demolition waste that is added to landfill. The government claims that this big new tax is to create a financial incentive, a price signal, to help make waste reduction and recycling practices more viable. They call it an incentive, but it is clearly a stick—definitely not a carrot.

We must remember that it was the member for Ashgrove who started this process of introducing the waste tax in Queensland. On the question of waste, I hope that this new minister's figures, statistics and data are more reliable than those relied upon by the member for Ashgrove. On 24 March this year I asked the member for Ashgrove a question on notice on this very issue of waste and the Department of Environment and Resource Management website. At the time, her department's website stated that each year in Australia about 100 million litres of waste oil goes unaccounted for. So, as we are here now debating this bill which deals with waste management, better waste recovery, recycling and better resource management, I think it appropriate to recall the minister's answer to my question. The figure of 100 million litres of oil did concern me. So I asked the member for Ashgrove to detail how many of those 100 million litres of oil that were unaccounted for were in Queensland. The member for Ashgrove supplied an answer of a sort to the question. A most intriguing part of the answer provided by the member for Ashgrove was this—

The figures referred to are 10 years old and were compiled by the Commonwealth. As such I cannot provide a further breakdown of any current details.

I found then and I still find today that this answer is astounding. This government, courtesy of the member for Ashgrove, uses 10-year-old data to promote government waste policies on the government's departmental website. Even more astounding is the fact that the member for Ashgrove could not provide a breakdown of the current details. What were the member for Ashgrove and her department doing at that time? For the record, the page has since been removed from the DERM website.

During her first reading speech on the bill, the member for Sandgate outlined the extent of public consultation with stakeholders undertaken on these reforms. The minister talked about releasing a draft waste management strategy, which was accompanied by the waste disposal levy consultation paper outlining the proposed approach of the waste tax. The member for Sandgate stated that the extensive, targeted stakeholder consultation had been undertaken with local governments, the waste and recycling sector, business and industry, and environment and community groups.

Queensland government departments were also consulted on the the bill; the National Association of Charitable Recycling Organisations; the Australian Landfill Owners Association was also apparently involved as well as the Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association. A host of councils and the Council of Mayors South East Queensland were consulted. Even Keep Australia Beautiful and the Queensland Conservation Council were consulted. However, I have a question for the minister. Were ratepayer associations consulted on any of these policies? After all, it will be the ratepayers who will ultimately pay for this great big new tax forced upon them by a tired, old, spend-and-tax Labor state government.

Some of the things that I have heard members opposite talk about tonight concern me. They continue to try to blame Campbell Newman for this Labor government introducing another tax on the people of Queensland.

This Labor government does nothing but take money out of the pockets of the people of Queensland and waste it. It has a debt today of somewhere around \$52 billion, which will soon be \$85 billion. This is to try to help pay back a miserable government's debt. It has not understood how to run the finances of this state. The problem is it is an epidemic in this country. The federal Labor government is singing to the same tune. It is supporting this state Labor government and vice versa. They both believe in carbon taxes, they both believe in waste taxes and they both continue to take money out of the pockets of the people. When people are doing it tough, with cost-of-living issues forcing them to not turn the lights on at night and to not use heaters in winter, they introduce a tax that will take the last cents out of the pockets of the people of Queensland. I commend the shadow minister for his contribution to the debate this morning. I think he has done an outstanding job. We will be opposing this bill to the last. I hope that Labor gets smart eventually and stops ripping off the people of Queensland.



Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—Ind) (9.40 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. I have enjoyed the debate this evening. I would like to share with the House some of the lessons I have learnt on waste in my electorate. Probably the first big lesson I learnt was at the start of this year when there was flooding in the Burnett. The flood had come down and wiped out a dam and prevented access to a dairy farm. The farmers were not able to extract the milk. I found my way across the dam wall and arrived at the dairy. There was a lady there, she was about in her mid-seventies, and she was crying as if she had lost someone. I thought that someone had died. I asked her what the matter was and she pointed. She said, 'It's just around the corner. You've got to have a look.' I went around the corner expecting to literally find a dead body there. What I found was her elderly husband who had just opened the tap to the tank which stored the milk and the milk was pouring out onto the dairy floor. Both people gathered and looked at it and the lady continued crying. Her husband was really upset. I did not know what to say. I said, 'All that milk going out must be costing you a lot of money.' She said to me very quickly and very firmly, 'It is not about the money. It is about the waste. Look at that beautiful milk. It is going out on the floor. How many people would love to be able to drink that beautiful milk? It is wasted.' Then she went on to tell me about how she and her husband grew up in post World War II England and how that generation never wasted a thing. They saved water; they saved food.

I related that experience to another set of constituents, George and Bianca—I will just use their first names. George and Bianca had a similar mindset to waste. They told me about growing up in post World War II Eastern Europe, in Czechoslovakia and those countries. George said he can remember the first orange that he ever had as a child. An American GI gave him that orange. He remembered eating that orange, peel and all. He did not waste it. The same with a banana—he ate the banana skin as well. They never wasted food. Bianca related that times were so difficult that the first meat that she ever ate was rat.

It was from talking to those constituents from the Burnett that I have realised that we are obviously very lucky but we have not developed the same mentality. Those same people—the people who grew up in post World War II Europe—were not able to watch food fights on TV because it repulsed them. Often in American movies there is a scene where they are throwing birthday cake or food around the place. They cannot watch that. I remember talking to a Dutch couple who lived through the winter of 1944 who told of people from the cities walking out with jewellery, clothing and furniture simply trying to buy potatoes. They did washing up in half an inch of water. It is very much a mentality of not wanting to waste. I understand that what the government is trying to do is to regulate almost and legislate that mentality, but we are never going to be able to do that because we really have not experienced those deprivations that generations before us have.

The minister in her speech says that the strategy sets a new direction for waste management in Queensland by establishing goals and targets for waste avoidance, recycling and resource recovery over a 10-year period. This bill creates more wasteful red tape. It also creates waste police to enforce the red tape. On page 112 of the explanatory notes one sees 'authorised person'. As you read through it a shiver will go up your spine. As you flip through it you will see the provisions for the creation of the waste police with coercive powers, search and seizure powers and powers to enter places. Will these people be properly trained? Will they be able to use force? Will they be like police officers trained in the use of force? Will they be able to use their powers to track down those 'wascally wabbits' who are wasting greenhouse gases? We will only know when this legislation is brought in. Are we going to have the greenhouse waste police waiting outside the men's toilets in this place? The mind boggles as to what can happen.


Mr Lawlor: I'm worried about you.

Mr MESSENGER: It is all greenhouse waste. It is obviously a pollutant. We are being charged for it. The federal government is voting on it right now. We are going to put a tax on that bad carbon, that wasteful carbon. The minister says it is because we are the only mainland state without a price signal on waste. Here is a good price signal: no charge, zero. Would that not be wonderful? Why do we not put the emphasis on the carrot rather than the stick? It is cheaper to dump in Queensland for free than to recycle. Let us have an incentive to recycle. That is the better way. What we are doing is creating a

system where there will be more illegal dumping in bush areas. Already we have seen it. Once you start charging people an inordinate amount of money to dump their waste they are going to dump it illegally, because people cannot afford it. They cannot afford their electricity right now.

Pages 42 and 45 of the explanatory notes state that the levy provisions include exemptions for certain types of waste such as disaster waste, contaminated soils and dredge spoil. Right now in Queensland we have the worst environmental catastrophe that we have ever witnessed in two decades, maybe longer, with the dredging of the harbour in Gladstone. We heard the environment minister and also the minister for fisheries saying it is only really located in the Gladstone Harbour area, but that is incorrect. In the Gladstone Harbour 15 barges are working continuously with dredge spoil that is not even being tested. It is being sucked up with these massive pumps that move around 7,000 cubic metres per hour. The pumps are used to create islands in Middle Eastern countries. They are putting it onto on these barges. These barges are dumping it off the south-east end of Curtis Island in a designated spoil area. Those barges are full of toxic waste. It is not being tested. Sometimes those barges are running aground and they are dumping it illegally.

I believe the sources that I am getting this information from. The government is refusing to test the material and the affects of those dumpings are being felt as far south as Turkey Beach, where I personally saw a dead stingray. Normally sharks can handle anything in the water, but fishermen are now seeing dead sharks, dugongs and turtles. Very soon there will be no marine life left. The government is trying to paint itself as a friend of the environment when it is creating, witnessing and covering up the biggest environmental disaster that we have witnessed in two decades. I cannot think of a bigger one. We have to do something to address this issue. This legislation is not going to help, because it gives an exemption to that sort of environmental behaviour. Meanwhile, if a fisherman cuts down half a mango tree in the Burnett River, he will be slapped with a \$300,000 fine. That is where the hypocrisy of this whole environmental system lies. So many other things are wrong with this legislation. It is a tax. It will kill small businesses. It will kill jobs. I oppose it vehemently.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (9.50 pm): Tonight I rise to talk about the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill. At the outset I say that the Queensland Labor government knows a lot about waste and recycling. We need only look at the front bench where for the past 20 years we have seen recycled minister after recycled minister

Mr Seeney: And a waste of space, too.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the honourable opposition leader. Let us talk about waste. This bill is about waste reduction. The Labor Party is about anything but waste reduction. It is just wasteful. Anything it touches, any bill that comes before this House, has waste in it because they are the chief wasters of the great resources and riches of this state. Let us look at the policy objectives of the bill. The explanatory notes state—

- promote waste avoidance and reduction
- reduce the overall impact of waste generation
- promote resource recovery and efficiency actions...

We should amend that to reflect two key elements. One policy objective is to tax Queenslanders more than they already are. The second objective should state: 'to make sure that Bob Brown and the Greens in Canberra know that we care for their party'. This Labor Party is the greens wrapped in red. After the 2009 election, the first bill we debated was the moratorium on regrowth. We are heading into an election. We are coming to the end of the term of this government and we have a bill in this House that supports the current member for Ashgrove and Green preference deals. This bill is about tax and Greens preferences.

I thank the shadow minister for his thorough examination of the bill. If members opposite have not worked it out, I reiterate that the opposition is opposing this bill, because now is not the time to tax Queenslanders and now is not the time to tax businesses. They call it a levy. The Labor Party does not have taxes anymore. It calls them levies and charges. Let us cut to the chase: it is a great big new tax from the Labor Party. Two weeks ago in this House we debated court taxes, court levies and court fees. Now we are debating a new tax whereby people can dump their rubbish but have to pay \$35 a tonne for doing so.

This legislation has impacts. The Labor Party wants to tax things. If we taxed the drivel that comes from the mouths of every Labor Party member, we would be able to pay off the \$85 billion debt that they have given us. Tonight we have heard a lot of drivel from the member for Everton, and I suspect we will hear more from the member for Morayfield in a couple of speeches time. As the honourable Leader of the Opposition said when he tabled documents, if we are going to come into this parliament and have a debate about waste reduction, let us have a serious debate and have all the documents placed on the table. The member for Everton, channelling Eamonn Fitzpatrick, came in here and tabled a few selected documents. He then turned as bright red as a tomato when the opposition leader tabled other documents. Probably he was thinking, 'I wish Eamonn told me about those documents.'

I will refer in particular to one of the tabled documents. I direct it straight back to the member for Everton, the member for Morayfield and the member for Pumicestone. It is the council of mayors advertisement in the *Courier-Mail*. The advertisement asks a number of questions, one of which is 'Do you intend to introduce a waste levy?' The Labor Party said no and the LNP said no. Has the LNP introduced a waste levy? In the past three years have we presented a private member's bill to introduce a waste levy? No. Has the Labor Party? Of course it has, just as there were to be no asset sales, just as the fuel tax was not going to be introduced and just as a carbon tax was not going to be introduced. Before the election, Julia Gillard said, 'There will be no carbon tax under the government I lead.' No longer can we distinguish between the incompetence of the federal Labor Party and that of the state Labor Party.

The toxic Labor of New South Wales has crept into Queensland. Queenslanders are worried and they should be worried. The member for Everton's constituents should be worried, because in 2009 as a candidate he went to his constituents and said, 'I will not support a waste levy.' The Labor Party signed the dotted line and said no. In 2009 the member for Everton went to the election and told his constituents, 'I will not support a waste levy', just as the member for Morayfield did. What is it going to be? What is the member for Everton going to say to his constituents tomorrow morning when they wake up and find that they have a waste levy? What will the member for Everton say to the retirement villages and the Community Titles Institute? This will impact not just on businesses; this will impact on all Queenslanders. The constituents of the member for Morayfield and the member for Everton will be paying this.

I will give members a practical example, referring to retirement villages or community title villages. In my electorate there is an over-50s retirement village where they are recycling as we speak. They have used proactive measures, without government intervention. Queenslanders are smart enough to work out what can be recycled. Yes, education campaigns would assist them, but they are smart enough. This village in my electorate has cancelled individual waste bins and on a weekly basis they invest in a large skip bin. Now they will be punished by the Queensland Labor Party for cancelling the 200 green wheelie bins that they would use ordinarily. Each week, the members of this over-50s retirement village walk down to the skip bin and put their rubbish bags into them. Now the Labor Party is going to slug them for that. While the legislation has commercial implications for business in Queensland, it also has implications for every Queenslanders who lives in an over-50s retirement village and who wants to recycle and use commonsense to reduce waste in their village by investing to save money, but now they will be slugged \$35 a tonne.


Business in Queensland can least afford this. On the outside of my electorate in the electorate of the honourable member for Caloundra, we have the Caloundra Resource Recycle Recovery Centre. Years ago, the council stopped the open landfill site and implemented a system where you bring rubbish in, it is sorted and most of it is taken out and sold at a trash and trade market on Saturday. The council is well and truly ahead of the game in terms of recycling and these initiatives. The Labor Party and the state government do not need to impose this on the councils, the businesses and the people in my electorate.

Not only do people have to pay to drop off rubbish, the Sunshine Coast Regional Council will also charge you for dropping off green waste. It used to be free to drop off green waste. Now you drop off green waste at the Caloundra Resource Recycle Recovery Centre and they will sell it back to you after they have mulched it and composted it. No longer is it cheap to have waste in Queensland. This extra burden is an incentive for people to illegally dump. If people have to pay to drop off green waste and other additional costs, they will find it far easier to illegally dump their rubbish.

During this debate the member for Everton has been very loud. In fact, the member for Cairns stood in this place and said she loudly and proudly supports the waste levy. On 14 March 2009, a few days before the election, what was the member for Cairns saying to her constituents? In answer to the question, 'Do you intend to introduce the waste levy?', the Labor Party said no.

How can that member stand in this place tonight and say that she loudly and proudly supports a waste levy when 2½ years ago those opposite said they would not do it? They said they would not sell our assets. They have form in this regard. Queenslanders have stopped believing anything that comes out of their mouths. They know that when the member for Ashgrove opens her mouth it is going to lead to higher rates and charges and taxes hitting the hip pockets of Ashgrove residents. They know that when every member opposite votes for this type of legislation in this House it is going to hit their hip pocket and cost them more. It is all disguised by climate change. The honourable member for Mudgeeraba rightly says that they are carbon tax deniers on the other side. That is exactly what they are.

Across Queensland people are paying so much now in fuel, registration, court and water costs. The asset sales have meant more debt. Everything has gone up. Now people will be slugged with this Labor Party waste tax. The government should be condemned for it.

 **Mr HORAN** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (10.00 pm): Tonight I want to address the issue of this new tax that the state government is introducing at a time when the very last thing that anyone in Queensland needs is another tax and another cost. I want to also address the issue of the National Water Initiative.

The National Water Initiative provisions in this bill basically allow the Commonwealth to come into this state and offer a certain amount of compensation for water, particularly from the Condamine and Murray-Darling Basin systems. The problem with this is that it comes at a time when we desperately need increased production in Queensland, particularly agricultural production, so that we can generate some income for the state to deal with the massive overwhelming debt that the state is facing. Up to \$500 million of Commonwealth money will be spent on buying up water allocations. All this is going to do is reduce the amount of grain and other agricultural products we have for export. It is going to reduce the amount of work for machinery dealers and their workers and apprentices. It will reduce the amount of work for haulers of grain, cattle and other produce.

So we see once again another one of these harebrained schemes which is symptomatic of this poisonous symbiosis between the Labor Party and the Greens in Australia. Some of the green socialist ideas are spreading like a nasty blue-green algae over this great nation of Australia and destroying in its path the Labor Party and all it once stood for.

The Condamine and the Murray-Darling river systems are the second longest rivers in the world. Unlike other rivers that have a source of heavy rainfall in a rainforest or snow covered mountains, the Condamine system is basically a drain going through an area with an average of 24 inches in rainfall. History has shown that many times in the past—and before white man even came—it was often just a string of waterholes that stopped running.

Now we have this ludicrous system of buying up water which actually, when one analyses it, means that they are buying fresh air because very often the water that they are buying up is not there. What it will mean is that in times when there is water for irrigation and productivity it will deny water to our area. What that will do in Toowoomba and on the Darling Downs is absolutely reduce productivity. One needs to think of the flow-on effect of \$500 million of water entitlements gone. It is going to have a multiplier effect in terms of reductions in productivity, exports, products, service industries, workers, jobs and investments. Everything we can think of is going to be reduced for no real benefit. If this water was not there for irrigation no-one would live there. Half the time the river does not even run and there is no water there anyway.

The whole thing is based on a problem in our nation—that is, this scramble for Greens preferences. The government is not governing for good, sensible and honest reasons of government. This aspect of the bill is of serious concern where we live. No doubt there will be families that will for personal reasons, for family reasons or for reasons of hardship probably want to sell out and take the money and go. That always happens, but then for ever and ever that productivity that has been built up will be gone—that productivity that was built up on the voluntary reduction in water allocations in the early 1990s. Farmers voluntarily reduced their allocations and have spent a decade and half since trying to find more efficient ways to use the water they have left.

Members only need to look at the thriving towns of Pittsworth, Millmerran, Toowoomba and Dalby and even the little village of Cecil Plains to understand this. These places have thrived because of the expertise and the world-best farming methods that have been used. They have used this water on the heavy black soil flat plains—some of the best farming land in the world. We are going to throw away a large section of it when this bill goes through.

The other area I want to address is the waste levy or, as many of my colleagues have called it, the waste tax. The Labor Party has a great way of putting new terminology in place. They did it when they called treated sewerage recycled purified water. It was as though it was something that emanated from bubbling springs in the side of a mountain.

This is nothing more than a tax. This is going to be a tax on the construction industry. If one is building a new house or renovating a house it is a tax. If one has a business collecting garden waste or mowing and pruning gardens and so forth it is a tax. It will be tax on those businesses. It will be a tax on aged care. It will be a tax on many small businesses like restaurants. It will be a tax on hospitals. You name it and this will be a tax on them. Once it is in, it will get worse and worse. We have seen it before.

It is coupled up with the crazy carbon tax that the federal government is bringing in. We are the only nation in the world that is bringing in something like this federal government is bringing in. It will make absolutely no difference to the climate or to the principles of what it is supposed to do. But what it will do is slug people. It is being brought in in a deceitful way. Things like the diesel rebate are being phased out in 2014. All the government wants to do is say, 'We have brought this in.' Then they will give rebates to people, pay people money as compensation and then try to face another election. They will find after that election that all the really nasty parts, the worst things, will come in. Every single thing in our community that comes into our supermarkets or into our homes comes on trucks. Everything is going to cost more.

The carbon tax is going to add costs to every single thing in this nation. We are a nation that is drowning in debt. Nowhere in this nation is drowning in debt more than Queensland, which has \$85 billion of debt. That is \$85 billion in debt by the end of next year. That is after we have sold off \$15 billion of income-earning assets that were earning more income than the interest they are supposed to save.

This crazy system in this state of debt accumulation, of waste, of bad decisions and of incompetence in management is leading to a situation where at the end of next year every single hour of every single day this government will have to find \$600,000 just to pay the interest on that debt. That is not making any capital repayments. What sort of legacy are we leaving our children and future generations of this state? A legacy of \$85 billion and \$600,000 an hour in interest. Much of this comes from simple bad management, incompetence and deals.

That will deny so much to the people of Queensland. Future governments are going to have to find that \$600,000 an hour. On top of that we are going to introduce another tax. To handle this \$600,000 an hour and this \$85 billion in debt this government, contrary to the promises it made before the election, has slugged everybody with a petrol tax, has slugged everybody with increased driver's licence and registration costs, has slugged everybody with water, power and rate increases that flow on from all the extra costs to councils. The government has taken away the subsidy they used to provide to councils for headworks charges and so forth. It is the people's debt. It is debt that has been heaped on their heads by this incompetent government. On top of that we are going to heap a bit more on with what is called the waste levy or the waste tax.

The people of Queensland some time ago stopped listening to this Labor government. They could not put up anymore with the blatant deceit of the broken promises before the last election. They stopped listening to this mob. All the good decent people now know that the incompetence and mismanagement of Labor is hitting them in their pocket. All of us—and I bet those on the other side too—have had pensioners and people on fixed incomes come into our electorate offices crying because they have to pay the petrol, they have to pay the power bill, they have to pay the water rates, they have to pay many of these charges. They just have to pay them, so they have no money, or little money left, for food or clothing or shampoo or outings and all the rest of it. Now there is going to be this theoretical waste levy which will increase all of their costs again. Everything will go up accordingly. Charges get heaped on when a new tax is brought in. It is the people who will pay. The ones who will really hurt are the working-class people and the people who are trying to run businesses, who have mortgages to pay and who are trying to employ people. This tax should be condemned for what it is: it is nothing more than a tax. It is nothing more than the poisonous symbiosis that has happened between Labor and the Greens.



Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (10.10 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011. This bill is an important part of the government's plan to reform waste management in Queensland and cut the amount of waste going into landfill in half by 2020. This bill is about stopping Queensland from becoming the dumping ground for Australia.

Among other important reforms, this bill introduces a levy on the disposal of waste to landfill. This reform will pull Queensland into line with other mainland states which have been discouraging landfill disposal and funding popular waste minimisation programs for many years through just such a levy.

The levy is scheduled to commence on 1 December 2011 and will apply to commercial, industrial and construction waste within a levy zone covering most of the state's populous areas. I want to make it very clear that no levy applies to household waste, kerbside collections, municipal solid waste and self-haul residential waste—no levy. So to some extent I am quite shocked and appalled by the obsessional opposition to this bill by the opposition.

I am particularly concerned by some comments that I read in an article on the *Brisbane Times* website that was published today. The article is titled 'Newman subject of political trash talk'. It is by the journalist Daniel Hurst. In that article the journalist refers to some statements that the parliamentary leader of the LNP has made. The article states—

But LNP parliamentary leader Jeff Seeney said tonight the claims were 'just the normal baseless garbage that Labor backbenchers always claim in parliament'.

Mr Seeney told brisbanetimes.com.au the state LNP had opposed the waste levy from the beginning and no one in the party room had ever voiced support for the measure.

The trash talk of the parliamentary opposition leader continues, the tactical untruths continue, the misleading and the hypocrisy of the opposition leader continue when he pontificates about his high standards in representing the integrity of arguments. That shocks me to a large extent, because I note that during the member for Noosa's budget reply speech he said—

Let us look at the \$35 per tonne landfill levy on industry wastes.

...

Queensland is the last state in Australia to introduce such a levy.

And he continues—

... we now have a levy on which to expand an industry. This certainly is a win for the recycling industry, with a promised 7,000 jobs and an expanded industry, and it is a win for the environment if it reduces landfill by a third as projected. But it is also a win, if the government can be believed, for environmental funding particularly at the local and regional council levels.

That is very far from the statement of the member for Callide that 'no-one in the party room had ever voiced support for the measure'. But during the 2010 estimates hearing the member for Noosa also said—

How will this levy stop other states dumping waste in Queensland if it will still be cheaper to dump in Queensland, unless the government also intends to keep increasing this revenue-raising scheme to match?

By implication, the member for Noosa is saying that the levy is too low. Again, that is very far from the statement of the member for Callide in the *Brisbane Times* that 'no-one in the party room had ever voiced support for the measure'—very far indeed.

Right through the waste reform process the government has been consulting with local government and the business community. To a great extent, this bill has been shaped by the suggestions and issues that have been raised by stakeholders from local government and business. Because of this, I note with some surprise that the Moreton Bay Regional Council has taken to campaigning against this levy. The council has been encouraging businesses to write in and phone in protesting about the levy. There is nothing wrong with this. Councils have a very important role to play in informing businesses of the upcoming levy, as do businesses and industry associations.

I understand that the government has been working very closely with all these groups—for example, by funding industry associations to hold forums for businesses to get the word out about the levy and how to avoid the impact of the levy by minimising waste generation and disposal. So there is nothing wrong with informing businesses about the levy—quite the opposite. But it is important to get the facts right. Let us be clear: this is not a levy on all waste; it is only a levy on waste that is disposed to landfill.

I understand that the minister's office recently had a telephone call from a landscape business concerned about information from the Moreton Bay Regional Council. That business was worried that the levy would apply to green waste such as lawn clippings from his business. The levy will not apply to segregated green waste at council tips because this is waste that is put aside for recycling. Landfill operators will also receive a levy rebate for other types of waste they separate and recycle. So the levy is not a levy on all waste; it is only a levy on landfill disposal. In this sense the levy is an avoidable tax as it does not apply to waste that is diverted from landfill to recycling or to waste that is not generated in the first place.


Make no mistake about it: the bill establishes a levy as a price signal to drive down landfill disposal and encourage waste reduction and recycling practices. Businesses that continue to generate landfill waste in the same way can expect to pay more to do so post 1 December 2011. But certainly those businesses that are lean and minimise their waste disposal will have a competitive advantage under the levy scheme. Having said that, the government is aware of the many pressures facing businesses. Business associations have represented the difficulty that many businesses face in even assessing the cost of waste to their business and in beginning to cut waste. The government has received loud and clear the messages that in order to cut waste business needs information and support, needs assistance to identify and act on waste generation and needs real alternatives to disposal for the waste they do generate. In recognition of this, the government will reinvest a considerable amount of the funds raised from the levy into assisting businesses to cut their waste.

The bill establishes a Waste and Environment Fund to channel funds raised by the levy into waste management and environmental initiatives. In the first four years of the levy's implementation, an estimated \$338 million will be raised. From this money, \$159 million over four years will be distributed to assist businesses, industry and local governments to cut waste.

I am also aware that the Moreton Bay Regional Council is concerned about the cost implications to council as a result of the introduction of the levy. Internal Department of Environment and Resource Management estimates are that \$36,000 per year will be required by the Moreton Bay Regional Council for additional administration tasks for the levy. This includes submitting monthly reports from the three landfill sites in an online summary return, adjusting any mistakes in weighbridge data, ensuring the monthly levy payment is processed and conducting an annual volumetric survey of each site. Like most councils in the levy zone, the Moreton Bay Regional Council has received grant funding from the government under stage 2 of the local government weighbridge and ancillary equipment program.

This has been a very interesting debate. To some extent, the grouchiness displayed by members of the opposition is epitomised in a very famous character from *Sesame Street*, Oscar the Grouch. The description of Oscar the Grouch is very similar to some of the behaviour we have seen recently from Mr Newman. I have read that Oscar the Grouch is a Muppet character from the television show *Sesame Street* who has a green body but in the first season was orange. To a large extent, he changes positions like the Leader of the Opposition. This bill is a good bill.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. MM KEECH** (Albert—ALP) (10.21 pm): I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill. As a member with 30 kilometres of the very busy Pacific Motorway bordering my electorate of Albert—

Mr Johnson: It's a good road.

Mrs KEECH: It is a great road. I particularly welcome the provisions of the bill that are aimed at reducing littering on our roads and in our public spaces. It is this provision that I wish to focus the majority of my comments on. Litter is a blight on our community. It pollutes our waterways, it kills fish, dolphins and turtles, it seriously injures children who step on broken bottles and it sends a dreadful message to our tourists. This bill is timely, given that the latest National Litter Index indicates that Queensland has the highest rates of littering in mainland Australia. So great is this problem that the Department of Transport and Main Roads estimates that Queensland road users throw out an estimated 20,000 cubic metres of rubbish along our roadsides each year.

At the national level, the total amount of litter, when it is counted by item and volume, recorded a drop overall, but here in Queensland the news is not good with both volume and number of items of litter up on last year. Queensland is the only state where this has happened. The biggest increases in Queensland litter were recorded at shopping centres and car parks, on highways and in recreation parks. Cigarette butts were the most frequently identified item across all sites.

In introducing this bill, the Labor government recognises what the people in my electorate constantly tell me—that the level of littering and waste production is not sustainable and needs to be urgently addressed. At the same time, local governments and forestry administrators across Queensland are also reporting high levels of illegal dumping that costs tens of thousands of dollars to clean up each year.

In acknowledging that the introduction of the levy may, in the short term, mean some people may attempt to avoid it by illegal dumping, the bill includes measures to strengthen the littering and illegal dumping laws. The bill does this in several ways. First, the bill introduces a provision about which I have spoken to the minister on many occasions—that is, a mechanism that allows the public, for the first time, to report vehicle related littering. Second, the bill recognises the significant issue that illegal dumping poses for local governments across the state by creating a new offence for illegal dumping. An illegal dumping squad will be established to work with local governments to limit the incidence and impact of illegal dumping.

The provisions relating to vehicle related littering are most welcome. Whenever I am at P&C meetings, Neighbourhood Watch meetings or other functions, my constituents regularly complain about the litter vandals who clean out the junk from their cars whilst driving down the M1 or sitting in a shopping centre car park. Currently, a penalty infringement notice fine for littering from a vehicle, which is \$300, can be issued only if an authorised officer personally observes the offence occurring. For many years, my constituents have reported to me their absolute frustration in watching irresponsible drivers littering our public spaces and not being able to do something themselves to report the offence. That is why I support this new Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill and I thank Minister Darling and former minister Jones for listening to the concerns of my constituents.

Queensland's public reporting system will be modelled on the successful Victorian system, where in 2009-10 over 18,000 incidents of vehicle related littering were reported by the public. The Victorian system has been so successful at reducing littering that roadside littering surveys show a 60 per cent reduction in waste littered on roadsides since the system was introduced. That is the sort of thing I want to see on the M1.

When reporting the littering offence, members of the public will need to give DERM compliance officers and other authorised officers as much information as possible about the offender—such as the correct registration number, the make and model of the car, the date and time of the offence, whether the litter was thrown by the driver or passengers and other details. Before a report is accepted for follow-up action, the person making the report must declare that the information contained in the report is true and correct to the best of their knowledge and that they are willing to attend court. If there is any doubt as to the veracity of the report, DERM will not issue the infringement notice.


The new legislation also aims to reduce littering caused by the improper and indiscriminate delivery of unsolicited advertising material. Reports from my community indicate that the quantity of unsolicited material that ends up as litter is a real issue to them. Under the current littering laws, it is very difficult to treat this sort of activity as a littering offence. Unsolicited material is not litter when it is delivered properly. However, if it is not delivered securely, this material has the potential to become ugly litter on our streets and in our waterways. The bill addresses this issue by mandating the responsible delivery and distribution of unsolicited advertising material.

The measures in this bill will go a long way towards reducing littering and illegal dumping and minimising the environmental and financial costs of these behaviours. By significantly increasing the state's recycling effort and helping business to be more sustainable, we can create new industry investment opportunities and green jobs for Queensland while also protecting our environment.

One of the objectives of the strategy is the creation of green jobs in resource recovery. It is estimated that around nine jobs are created for every 10,000 tonnes of waste which is recycled—instead of the 2.8 jobs if the same 10,000 tonnes are sent to landfill. Each year, the amount of waste

generated in Queensland grows faster than our population. In 2008-09, our population grew by 10 per cent and our retail turnover grew by 20 per cent, but our waste generation grew by a significant 40 per cent. Tonight we will see the LNP vote against this bill. When it comes to cleaning up Queensland not only do they not support the government's sensible bill but as usual they have provided no practical alternatives.

I note that no levy will be put on household waste. I strongly support the bill and congratulate Minister Darling and the former minister, Kate Jones. The Bligh Labor government knows we cannot afford to continue producing waste at such unsustainable levels. We cannot continue to behave in a business-as-usual manner. By improving the way Queenslanders manage waste, we will not only be creating a more sustainable Queensland; we will also be creating green jobs for the future. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. VE DARLING** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (10.28 pm), in reply: I would like to thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate. I particularly thank those members who represented their local businesses and their local councils. I need to reiterate how important this legislation is not only for how Queensland handles and treats its waste but also for how we manage and protect our environment for future generations.

Without these laws, Queensland will continue to be Australia's dumping ground. Queensland will be sending a signal that it is okay for other states to bring their waste into Queensland because it is cheaper. Without these laws, Queensland will continue to be Australia's largest generator of waste. More than 32 million tonnes of waste is generated annually. That is 16 Suncorp Stadiums filled to the roof, and that is how much we generate. Without these laws, Queensland will continue to have one of Australia's lowest recycling rates. Why? Because dumping will continue to be the cheap and easy way of dealing with waste. It will continue to be the default option over re-using and recycling.

We will also have missed out on an opportunity to provide Queensland businesses with policy certainty to make investment decisions. In fact, some businesses have already changed their business models to take advantage of the new resource recovery opportunities that a levy on waste to landfill will afford. Without this bill we risk missing out on valuable opportunities to develop new markets, encourage industry investment and the potential to create over 2,000 green jobs for the future. Victoria is a good example of how these opportunities have come to fruition with a price signal. Victoria does have a waste levy. In fact, a conservative government increased it on 1 July and it is now \$44 a tonne in Melbourne. Victoria's recycling industry currently generates about \$3.6 billion in economic activity. In Queensland without a price signal it is less than a billion, and that translates to job opportunities being missed in Queensland. About nine jobs are created for every 10,000 tonnes of waste that is recycled while only three jobs are created if the same amount is sent to landfill. Three times as many jobs are created from recycling than dumping.

As everyone would be aware, we have a plan to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020, but without this bill we will not go anywhere near reaching this target. This bill is the most decisive step ever taken in Queensland to improve and modernise waste management and will bring us into line with other states. Much of this debate has centred on the introduction of an industry waste levy. There has been a lot of huff and puff and a lot of diabolical situations described and a lot of world-ending circumstances. What has been missed amongst this talk are some very pertinent facts, and these are indisputable facts. Queensland is the only mainland state without a levy on waste dumped at landfill. Businesses can avoid the levy by avoiding landfill. Queensland's levy will be one of the lowest in the country at \$35 a tonne. In New South Wales it is as high as \$82 a tonne and in the ACT it is a whopping \$117 a tonne. Unlike other states, the levy will not hit household waste such as kerbside bins or domestic trips to the tip. Queensland is the only state to use the revenue for an exclusive local government fund—\$100 million in the first four years—for environmental purposes.

Queensland is the only state that is not sending its levy to Treasury. We are directing it to better waste practices and other environmental priorities. About \$159 million over four years is going into business assistance and getting Queensland ready for a price signal on landfill. Councils have known that a levy would be introduced since June 2010 when we first made the announcement and they are receiving more than \$17 million from the government to get their facilities ready. No other state helped their councils install equipment and upgrade their sites when they introduced their waste levy. The government agreed to delay the levy by five months in light of the natural disasters at the request of the LGAQ and the Council of Mayors SEQ. They are the facts which should not be lost on anyone as we consider this particular aspect of the bill.

I now want to take this opportunity to pick up on several points raised by the member for Glass House. Firstly, the member noted that a cafe could expect increased costs of over \$3,000, and this was repeated again by the member for Currumbin. The government undertook a cost-benefit analysis of the impact of the levy required for the regulatory assessment statement. This analysis was done by an independent party and using information provided by several peak bodies, including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, CCIQ. Based on the type of waste generated by a small to medium-sized cafe, the levy will increase business costs of between \$315 to \$385 in a year—and that is if they do nothing whatsoever to improve their recycling—not the \$3,000-plus that was mentioned. CCIQ's own research shows that more than 85 per cent of small to medium-sized enterprises do not

even know how much their waste costs them. I want to take this opportunity to invite the waste contractors of Queensland to proactively work with businesses across the state to provide more opportunities for improved waste source separation and increased recovery of waste resource.

The government will work with all sectors such as those commercial enterprises that produce residential type wastes, emerging new businesses and those that are restructuring to take advantage of Queensland's new waste reforms and with recyclers that are working hard to recover wonderful resources that were previously lost forever. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the great initiative being shown by an increasing number of new enterprises to take advantage of the reforms afoot. One such enterprise is the Rubbish Removers, referred to by the member for Woodridge, which I visited last month. It is one giant garage sale for unwanted items, making a truism out of the adage that one man's trash is another man's treasure. These are the businesses the reforms are encouraging and they must be nurtured and congratulated. How much impact the levy has will depend on the amount and the type of waste that is disposed of. Doing more to reduce waste in the first place or recycling more will become a much better option for businesses rather than sending all waste to landfill. If a business can change its existing practices and reduce waste sent to landfill, its levy exposure should also reduce.

The government is also investing funds from the levy to stimulate significant investment in new and upgraded infrastructure through projects within this program area. This will enable sufficient resource recovery and waste management infrastructure to receive and process the waste destined to be diverted from landfill disposal once the levy is introduced. I would encourage both small businesses and major infrastructure developers to keep an eye out for our grants programs as they come on line. The levy is about changing our business-as-usual approach. It is about finding innovative ways to change our waste into a resource. In fact, I want to quote from CCIQ's very own Troy Harrison, who seems to agree with the government's approach when he told the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* in July that the levy was largely an avoidable charge. He said this—

Businesses will need to put more time and resources in to managing waste efficiently. The more recycling, the lesser the levy liability. Businesses have been burying their heads in the sand about sustainability, and the waste levy will alter the economic picture significantly. Most of the time it's the people at the coal-face who will be able to tell you how you can reduce or reuse waste. New policies and procedures will need to be put in place but a lot of them can be achieved quite simply.

That was quoted in the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* on 16 July this year.

The member for Glass House talked about the impost to local government. He tabled a document from Moreton Bay Regional Council which allegedly detailed what that council believes will result in an increase in complexity in the way it manages its landfills. I want to address a number of inaccurate assumptions made in developing this document. Council provided the department with the same two flowcharts tabled by the member that represent the waste movement flows through its site before and after levy commencement. Council is concerned that the new legislation will require it to use the weighbridge many more times than what it does currently. Departmental officers met with the council on 6 October to clarify aspects of the legislation that have been misunderstood by the council. In fact, the legislation will require minimal change to the current practices and waste movements at the council's landfills. For example, Moreton Bay council believes that recyclable material such as mulch taken by residents will need to go back through the weighbridge before being sold to residents. This is a misunderstanding, as the legislation allows mulch or other waste leaving the site to be measured by using conversion factors rather than the weighbridge where residents take the product in smaller vehicles such as cars and trailers. Only products taken off site in heavy vehicles need to go back through the weighbridge. These products are recyclables such as concrete and timber, which are sold to contractors. Moreton Council already uses the weighbridge to reweigh such products as this is industry practice.

Another concern of the council relates to the need to employ additional weighbridge staff and costs associated with that. This, again, is another misunderstanding resulting from the misconception that all waste leaving the site will need to be reweighed multiple times, and I seriously question the council's cost estimations. In public documents the council has advised that it will be collecting \$3 million per annum from businesses for the levy. In council's own data reported to the Department of Environment and Resource Management, it itself has advised that it disposes to landfill only 11,000 tonnes of commercial and industrial and construction and demolition wastes. At \$35 a tonne, this equates to only \$385,000, not \$3 million. The council is either planning to make an impressive profit of over \$2.5 million at the cost of their local businesses or it cannot do basic maths. The department estimates additional administration costs at around about \$36,000 per year and this would cover all administrative tasks, including submitting monthly returns for all of the three sites managed by the council, using the weighbridge and undertaking annual volumetric surveys.

But let us not forget that councils are going to receive an absolute windfall from this levy—a fund of \$100 million over four years. They will also see great potential for revenue raising from the increasing amounts of recoverable and re-usable waste that should be stockpiled in their resource recovery areas. At the same time, provided that we see our waste strategy have the desired effect, the amount of required landfill areas will reduce, further relieving ratepayer funded council budgets required for waste

management. I invite councils who are concerned about the impost of the levy to talk to my department and clarify how the levy will work and not make assumptions that result in outrageous cost calculations that cannot withstand even basic scrutiny.

I would also suggest that there are many councils who are leading by example, and I would encourage them to share their experiences and mentor others. Gladstone Regional Council has demonstrated a willingness to rationalise its waste management systems since amalgamation. A number of sites were closed and all landfill sites and waste transfer stations are now staffed during opening hours. Householders and businesses are not charged for entire loads of recyclable materials. Their main landfill at Benaraby is well engineered and they are now planning to investigate landfill gas capture.

Logan City Council is an excellent example of modern waste management practice. The Browns Plains SmartTiP at Browns Plains is an integrated waste management facility with two weighbridges, a large tip shop, metal recovery and a landfill gas-to-energy plant with a two-megawatt capacity. The SmartTiP is well placed to seamlessly integrate its existing management practice with the requirements for levy collection. These councils are to be congratulated.

Bundaberg is another council which has reported to DERM that it is well placed to hit the ground running come 1 December. I must also acknowledge the Western Downs Regional Council, which has also applied forward thinking to its local waste plan. The mayor, Ray Brown, took advantage of the reforms that are underway and announced his own local reforms, including phasing out the old style rubbish dumps in his patch and phasing in new modern waste and recycling facilities. He told the *Dalby Herald* last week—

Western Downs Regional Council undertook a community survey earlier this year to get a clearer picture of the community's expectations when it comes to waste disposal. This has helped in framing a direction for the future. We are also facing major changes in state legislation that demand we manage and report the disposal and recycling of waste better.

That article appeared in the *Dalby Herald* on 7 October. The member for Glass House also noted that many stakeholders have complained about not having sufficient opportunity to review the regulations supporting this bill. I would dispute this. A number of elements of the regulation have been in the public domain since June 2010, including the levy zones and the levy rates for each type of waste.

Targeted stakeholder consultation on specific provisions relating to the regulation has been underway since December 2010. These provisions include definitions for the waste streams and the test parameters for determining low- and high-hazard regulated waste. As per standard drafting procedure, the drafting of regulation in support of a bill does not ordinarily commence until after the bill has received royal assent. However, due to the agreement to introduce the legislation and levy on 1 December, the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel agreed to provide a draft of the levy provisions of the regulation to allow stakeholders to consider the levy calculation requirements. The waste reform stakeholder advisory committee was provided with a consultation draft of the regulation on 1 September.

Several speakers today have raised concerns about the practical application of the levy and its supposed complexity. The bill provides for a review of the efficacy of the levy within two years of its introduction. The review will look at all aspects of the levy, including the levy rates and the impact of a differential levy on various waste streams; the levy zone; the transitional discounts and exemptions currently provided for in the bill, such as the discount on recycling residues; any consequences, including the leakage of leviable wastes to the municipal solid waste stream to avoid paying the levy; any consequences on the skip bin sector or other sectors; any compliance issues, such as illegal dumping, and where compliance may need to be strengthened; and programs funded by the levy revenue to ensure they focus on priority areas. Data reported to DERM on waste disposal and recycling rates over the next two years will help monitor the effectiveness of the levy and whether the targets of the waste strategy are being met.

The levy on residue waste from recycling has also been a concern. The bill, however, allows for best practice recyclers to obtain a levy discount or a full exemption in the case of financial hardship. I would like to acknowledge Kennedy's Classic Aged Timbers in this regard. I visited Michael Kennedy at Kennedy's last month to get a firsthand account of the concerns that he has raised. I was also lobbied by the member for Murrumba, who accompanied me on the tour of Kennedy's. The discounted levy on residue waste was welcomed by most stakeholders, particularly ACOR, as an innovative strategy that puts Queensland ahead of the other states where a full levy applies to all recycling residues. These initiatives will ensure best practice recyclers are rewarded while poor performers are not.

The member for Glass House also raised a concern about how we are not proposing to ban plastic shopping bags in this bill. This is an outrageous claim from someone who laments the so-called impost that this will have on householders. While the industry waste levy will not directly hit householders, such a ban on plastic bags certainly will. Our government has maintained our position that we will support a ban only when there is a viable alternative to the plastic bag, and at the moment there is none. A ban would impose additional costs on shoppers. Is that what the member for Glass House is actually proposing?

The potential impost to the aged-care sector was also raised. Let me assure the House that I have taken this issue very seriously in the development of this legislation and associated regulations. At the heart of this issue is the common practice of local government to classify waste generated in these

aged-care centres as commercial waste. That is because they are often businesses. They earn a profit and they also have other businesses operating out of their premises. As such, their waste is collected by a private collector.

A levy rate of \$35 a tonne would equate to an average cost of around \$7 per person per year, based on the average profile of domestic waste per person. However, I did meet with Aged Care Queensland just last week to talk further about their concerns. We are working on programs to assist these facilities. DERM already offers free programs to assist business sectors to reduce their waste and cut their costs. But DERM officers have undertaken to work more closely with Aged Care Queensland about possibly undertaking a more detailed study of the waste profile of aged-care centres and how they could better manage their waste.

We have heard much from those opposite about these reforms being designed to secure Greens preferences. I thought I would read a quote from a very well known greenie group, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland! It wrote to the former minister on 30 August 2010. That letter states—

Notwithstanding our previously conveyed objections to the introduction of the commercial waste levy on the basis that households are exempt from this charge, CCIQ remains strongly supportive of the development of a Waste Management Strategy. A correctly implemented Strategy will not only provide greater certainty to the business community on their rights and responsibilities for waste generation, but may also provide an opportunity for businesses to reduce their waste management costs and lead to new market opportunities.

Again in February this year the chamber wrote to the former minister thanking her very much for acknowledging its request to defer the levy commencement date to 1 December. It states—

CCIQ is highly supportive of the draft suite of business focused programs ...

I, too, very much look forward to seeing the revenue raised from the levy being invested in Queensland businesses and reducing our waste that goes to landfill.

Finally, we have heard the flip-flopping nature of Campbell Newman's position on this reform.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms DARLING: I just said Campbell Newman. Finally, we have heard the flip-flopping nature of Campbell Newman's position on this reform. The member for Ashgrove also alluded to the support of this reform from the former shadow minister, the member for Noosa. Indeed, last year he called it a 'win for the recycling industry'—

Mr ELMES: I rise to a point of order. This is the third time today I have been misrepresented in this parliament with quotes taken from a speech made in 2010. I have never endorsed the waste tax/levy. I find those comments offensive and I ask them to be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Wendt): Member for Noosa, you find the comments offensive and you ask them to be withdrawn; is that correct?

Mr ELMES: Absolutely.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, you have been asked to withdraw those comments.

Ms DARLING: I withdraw. The member for Glass House referred to this bill as a dog's breakfast. The only dog's breakfast in this House has been the LNP's inability to maintain a consistent position on waste policy in Queensland. There has also been a flurry of tabling of documents about what people did and did not say.

Mr Bleijie: The Labor Party said, 'No.' 'No', you said in 2009.

Ms DARLING: I'm talking.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Stop the clock. Order, members. I know it is late. The minister has the call.

Ms DARLING: There have been many claims tonight and many documents waved around and tabled regarding the position of the Council of Mayors South East Queensland. For the benefit of the House I will table the very latest piece of correspondence I have received from Graham Quirk, the current chair of the Council of Mayors South East Queensland, on their position on our waste strategy. While there has been a lot of focus on the levy aspect of this strategy, I remind honourable members that in fact this is a very comprehensive waste reform agenda and the bill has a lot of aspects to it apart from the levy. I will also table a copy of my response to COMSEQ, where I welcome their sound policy which aligns very well with the Queensland government's direction on waste management and resource recovery. I will let people have a look through it to see the way that they are supporting our waste hierarchy, encouraging management of waste as close as possible to where it is generated, encouraging the diversion of organic waste from landfill, utilising the polluter-pays principle and so on. I table that for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 25 August 2011, from Cr Graham Quirk, Chairman, Council of Mayors (SEQ), to the Hon. Vicky Darling MP, Minister for Environment, regarding the waste management strategy [5603].

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 23 September 2011, from the Hon. Vicky Darling MP, Minister for Environment, to Cr Graham Quirk, Chairman, Council of Mayors (SEQ), regarding waste management strategies [5604].

There are other amendments not related to waste in this bill which the member for Hinchinbrook spoke about. I welcome his broad support for those aspects related to water management. He did raise concerns that the bill does not contain provisions that require the Commonwealth to compensate for the social and economic impacts of the Murray-Darling Basin plan. Queensland does not have the power under its constitution to create legislation to pass on costs to the Commonwealth or to any other jurisdiction. It is solely a matter for the Commonwealth to determine if and when compensation may be available as a result of implementing Commonwealth legislation.

The member for Southern Downs commented on the carbon farming amendment in the bill. He said something completely inaccurate. He said that leaseholders will not be able to benefit from the emerging carbon markets under the bill. This is the exact opposite of the intent of the bill. We have introduced this bill for the exact purpose of enabling leaseholders to generate carbon credits under the Commonwealth legislation.

Mr SPRINGBORG: I rise to a point of order. I find that offensive and untrue. That is completely contrary to the intention of what I said. I was actually welcoming the fact that it was extended. I find it untrue and I ask that it be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Southern Downs, you find the comments offensive and you ask them to be withdrawn?

Mr SPRINGBORG: Yes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, the member finds those comments offensive. Would you please withdraw?

Ms DARLING: Yes, I withdraw. We have introduced this bill for leaseholders to generate carbon credits under Commonwealth legislation. There were a number of amendments that arose during the committee phase which I will move. A couple of these directly arise out of the committee's report. I thank them for the time they took in preparing this report. I now table my response to the committee report which was provided to the committee earlier today.

Tabled paper: Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee: Report No. 2—Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill—Government response [\[5605\]](#).

Some of the amendments were the result of further consultation with key stakeholders outside the committee process. Other amendments were identified by the department. All are minor in nature but are required to provide clarity for certain provisions. In all cases the proposed amendments provide a benefit to stakeholders and do not create an imposition or additional obligations. I also table the explanatory notes to the amendments that will be moved during the consideration in detail stage.

Tabled paper: Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011: Explanatory notes for Hon. Vicky Darling's amendments to be moved in consideration in detail [\[5606\]](#).

I acknowledge the hard work of all involved in the development of this much needed legislation. My departmental staff have worked tirelessly over many, many years to put this fantastic set of initiatives together. It is a very comprehensive bill. I also thank the committee and the parliamentary support staff for working to a tight deadline in giving this bill perhaps the unprecedented scrutiny of any bill before being debated. In particular I would like to thank the waste industry and local government for their input through the consultation process on the bill. It has certainly very much shaped this final product. I commend the bill to the House.

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

AYES, 45—Attwood, Boyle, Choi, Darling, Dick, Farmer, Finn, Fraser, Hinchliffe, Hoolihan, Jarratt, Johnstone, Jones, Kiernan, Kilburn, Lawlor, Male, Miller, Moorhead, Mulherin, Nelson-Carr, Nolan, O'Brien, O'Neill, Palaszcuk, Pitt, Reeves, Roberts, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Shine, Smith, Spence, Struthers, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson. Tellers: Keech, Grace

NOES, 35—Bates, Bleijie, Crandon, Cripps, Cunningham, Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, Foley, Hobbs, Horan, Johnson, Knuth, Langbroek, McArdle, McLindon, Malone, Menkens, Messenger, Powell, Pratt, Robinson, Seeneey, Simpson, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Wellington. Tellers: Rickuss, Sorensen

Resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

Debate, on motion of Ms Spence, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. JC SPENCE (Sunnybank—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.02 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Gold Coast, Crime



Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.03 pm): Tonight I rise to remind the people of the Gold Coast and the electorate of Mermaid Beach of the inept Bligh Labor government's futile criminal organisation legislation that has failed to stem the tide of perpetrators of crime who hide behind

organised bikie gangs on the Gold Coast. Yesterday and today, the *Courier-Mail* published an in-depth report that highlights the connection of particular criminal activity with organised bikie gangs. There has been a legislative failure—

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Stop the clock. I will wait for the House to come to order.

Mr STEVENS: There has been a legislative failure by this government to introduce legislation that would effectively lead to indict individuals involved in bikie gang related crime. The failed spin of the past two years by the Bligh Labor government over its flawed and unsuccessful criminal organisation legislation is beginning to become very nauseating and very frustrating. Time and time again, Labor sells us bogus statistics, good-news propaganda and blatant untruths about the state of criminality on the Gold Coast. None of those promises has transformed into prosecutions to curb the problem.

Members should make no mistake about it: illegal drugs and the financial bonanzas that are reaped from dealing in those drugs are the root of nearly all the crime related activity on the Gold Coast. When Labor had the 'media month' of extra police on the coast, speeding fine revenue and drink-driving arrests went up. Fifty coppers for one month is a media spin solution and a total embarrassment for genuine hardworking police on the front line who are trying to address the bikie gangs on the Gold Coast. It just meant the bikies took their annual holidays.

The criminal organisation legislation has not worked and yet again the Bligh Labor government has to own up to failed policy and legislative changes that have had no effect on real reform in this area. With the increase in crime looming over the upcoming holiday season, the Bligh Labor government continues to ignore the Gold Coast's problem with gangs that are becoming more brazen, more horrific and more aggressive on each occasion. That is why we need strong and enforceable legislative changes that empower our police to shut down completely the undesirable elements of our society.

The protection of the community is of paramount importance for both residents and the Gold Coast's iconic and worldwide tourism image. That should be the focus of any legislative reform aimed at preventing crime in society. The Labor government has failed the Gold Coast and the rise and rise of drug related crime on the Gold Coast is a direct result of the Bligh Labor government's inaction on this horrific problem. The police are at their wits' end in trying to apprehend and eventually prosecute the perpetrators, because they do not have the powers. I beg the government to go back to the drawing board and look hard at changes in reform that will be effective and will eradicate the incidents of bikie gang related criminal activity on the fabulous Gold Coast.

Sexual Violence Awareness Month



Hon. D BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (11.06 pm): This is Sexual Violence Awareness Month. The minister has made an important change to the very name of this event. In years past Sexual Violence Awareness Month was known as domestic violence prevention month. The name has been changed in recognition of the fact that, while violence against women domestically is not acceptable, violence against women anywhere and at any time is not acceptable. Some members of the House and some members of the public might ask, 'Why do we need this? We all know that and we do not need reminding that sexual violence is not acceptable.' I am sorry to say that the now endorsed LNP candidate for Cairns has different views.

As a journalist with and editor of the *Cairns Post*, he wrote columns in which he freely lambasted all and sundry, most particularly those of a Labor persuasion, those who were poor and in need and those who were victims. He is well known for making extreme statements. One of his statements is absolutely shocking and currently is receiving some attention. The newspaper states—

King posed the question: If a woman drinks to excess and is raped or assaulted, is she partly to blame?


King wrote: "As uncomfortable and difficult as this question is, the answer surely is yes."

Government members: Oh!

Ms BOYLE: It is absolutely unbelievable. Since he has been endorsed and taken on the role of LNP candidate, he has not retracted those comments. His leader has said that he must have been misinterpreted. I call on all LNP members and Campbell Newman as their leader to say whether this is policy for the LNP. Do we excuse men who violate or rape women and say they are less to blame if it is in some sense the women's fault? Particularly I call on the female members of the LNP to make it plain whether they stand behind their man. Do they support Gavin King's comments? Is this LNP policy? Is it excusable for men to rape and violate women in certain circumstances?

It is an absolutely shameful statement from somebody who has been chosen to possibly represent the people of Cairns, 50 per cent of whom are women. I can tell the House that they will not be choosing Gavin King. It is Sexual Violence Awareness Month. Seriously, all members of this House and prospective members should be doing the right thing and sending the serious message.

Sands, Mr G

 **Mrs MENKENS** (Burdekin—LNP) (11.09 pm): On 8 March in this chamber I spoke about a vulnerable gentleman, Mr Graham Sands, who has been seriously financially disadvantaged. As the result of a motorbike accident, Graham has an acquired brain injury with physical and intellectual disability, as well as severe epilepsy. His doctor has stated that in his opinion Mr Sands is mentally unstable to make any financial decision or any major lifestyle decision. The doctor has expressed grave concerns about this gentleman's capacity to understand and carry out financial dealings or major life changes.


However, the Queensland Country Credit Union in 2008 loaned him \$65,000 to buy a boat. Graham earns \$658 a fortnight on a disability pension and there is no possible way that anyone could service that size loan on that income. Graham owns a house, but it is very shabby, full of asbestos, unrentable and virtually unsaleable. The boat leaks, is unseaworthy, is not insured and is also virtually unsaleable. When Graham tried to spend time on the boat he had a violent epileptic seizure, fell overboard and luckily was rescued.

A wonderful man Brian Hildebrandt has been acting on behalf of Graham for many months—battling with the bank, the Ombudsman and the bank's solicitors to no avail. The credit union now states that Graham owes over \$76,000. He has been ordered to vacate his home at the end of this month. He will be left with nothing. I understand no bank is a compassionate society, but it is obvious that Mr Sands has a severe disability. He had a seizure in the bank while negotiating this loan and had to be taken by ambulance to the hospital. Did the bank query this? No. Neither was his house inspected. It was assumed by staff that his house could be rented at \$250 a week while he lived on his boat. Both are impossible situations and based on supposition only.

Banks must prove security and capacity to repay before approving a loan. Mr Sands at no stage had any capacity to repay this loan and the credit union must take the blame. The bank's ultimatum that he must now lose his home, his only security, is cruel and draconian. The credit union has an ethical responsibility in this issue. Graham Sands had a dream of owning a boat but had no capacity to pay for it, or the capacity to understand that. It seems that this financial institution has taken advantage of a very vulnerable person and is set to benefit from that.

I have met and spoken with Mr Sands and he fully understands what he now faces—and he is terrified. He is faced with a very threatening solicitor's letter and no future. This is an appalling situation. I sincerely call on and implore the Queensland Country Credit Union to take responsibility and allow this genuinely decent and quiet-living man some security for the rest of his very challenging life.

Darling Downs, Exploration Permits

 **Mr SHINE** (Toowoomba North—ALP) (11.12 pm): The government's approach to the approval of mining in and around the Darling Downs is well known. The recently announced restriction on exploratory mineral permits, the proposed legislation dealing with strategic cropping land and the current imposition of strenuous conditions on mining make for a clear and balanced approach between the interests involved—environmental and farming on the one hand and the resources industry on the other.

However, the situation at Felton, half an hour's drive from Toowoomba on the Darling Downs, is one of great concern. Pursuant to this government's existing and proposed legislation, what will happen at Felton will be determined by the law as it ought. That is the government's position—that is, to allow the law to take its course.

What is the view of the LNP? I thought it was clear. For example, in the *Queensland Country Life* on 7 April 2011 the Leader of the Opposition is quoted as saying—

... proposed coal mines at Gowrie Junction on the outskirts of Toowoomba and in the Felton Valley should never be allowed to be developed.


Likewise in the same journal on 5 May 2011 appears this statement—

The LNP, should it be reelected, already has signalled it will not renewing existing coal permits at the contentious Ambre energy site at Felton.

In light of this background, I am puzzled and concerned to learn of a rumour doing the rounds of Toowoomba that Campbell Newman was a guest at a boardroom lunch hosted by Ambre Energy in Brisbane last week. I am told that the LNP received a substantial donation as the price for Mr Newman's attendance. This is a matter of considerable concern not just for the residents of Felton but for all Queenslanders as it puts in question the sincerity and reliability of Mr Newman.

Questions need to be answered by Mr Newman and the LNP. Did Mr Newman attend such a lunch or meeting with Ambre Energy? Who was there? Was money paid? If so, how much, by whom and to whom? What was discussed about Felton? What was agreed to be done, if anything? Has it affected the LNP's position on Felton? What now is the LNP's position on Felton? Does the member for Condamine know about this? If not, why not? The people of Felton, Toowoomba and the Darling Downs deserve answers.

Smith, Mr C

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (11.15 pm): Charlie Smith was born on the evening of the 29 February 1924, but his birth was registered on 1 March because his mum wanted him named after St David on St David's Day. By the time his grandmother had visited all the pubs to celebrate his birth on the way to the registry office she had forgotten what his name was meant to be. She decided to name him after his dad, Charlie Smith.

So started the life of an incredible human being. Charlie's early life was full of adventure as he travelled the world before settling in New Zealand. His eldest son, Charlie, spoke at his funeral on behalf of his siblings, Warren and Valerie, and their respective families in New Zealand. His wife, Christine, paid tribute to a man who was quite literally a legend. Charlie and Christine's son Matthew, husband to Jodie and father to grandchildren Charlie boy and Claire, spoke of wearing his dad's shoes but never being able to fill them.


We heard from Councillor Donna Gates, who spoke of Charlie's determination in establishing the Wasp Creek Rural Fire Brigade at his then age of 70 in 1994. She spoke of the larrikin he was, and joked about being high on the list of Charlie's 800 or so girlfriends. Charlie and Christine's home became Wasp Creek Station in November 1994. Charlie dedicated 100 per cent of his effort to the brigade from that moment on.

We heard from some of the volunteers from Wasp Creek. The most telling aspect of their stories was that Charlie was someone who expected 100 per cent effort from everyone but that he was also a father figure, an inspiration and someone they all looked up to. I knew Charlie for less than three years, but on reflection I feel honoured to have known him and to have been regarded as a friend. Earlier this year I had the honour of presenting Charlie with a dedicated commitment award, which came as a result of the men and women of the brigade voting unanimously that Charlie should be the recipient.

I was one of hundreds who came to pay our respects out in the front paddock at Charlie's place just two Saturdays ago. On arrival I was amazed at the number of fire appliances and crews that were lined up to honour him. After all the eulogies, a huge bonfire was lit—with appropriate approvals from the fire warden, of course—and then Charlie departed. It was without doubt the noisiest funeral I have ever attended. Thirty or more fire appliances turned their sirens on in a final farewell to Wasp Creek Rural Fire Brigade's first officer—a very moving tribute.

In true Charlie style, though, there is a postscript. Charlie managed to extend his days to make up for the one he lost at the start of his life. You see, Charlie passed away on 26 September but the date is registered as 27 September because the doctor arrived after midnight. So officially Charlie got his extra day anyway. To paraphrase Ralph Waldo Emerson, he certainly lived a most successful life and, yes, he definitely succeeded. Charlie Smith, a legend, may he rest in peace.

Mental Health Week

 **Mrs SMITH** (Burleigh—ALP) (11.18 pm): This week is Mental Health Week. I have spoken at length in this House about mental health and I would hope my passion for this subject is well known. Mental Health Week aims to raise awareness of the importance of mental health and wellbeing in the wider community. Mental health is a state of wellbeing. It is not just the absence of illness but also the ability to maintain relationships, cope with stress, contribute to the community and enjoy life. Attitudes have undergone great changes in recent times and I am pleased to see more and more people talking openly about mental health.

Mental illness affects one in five Australians. The length and severity of an illness changes from person to person. Some can experience their illness only once and fully recover. For others, it recurs throughout their lives. Most mental illnesses can be effectively treated. Almost half of the Australian adult population will experience a form of mental illness at some stage during their life, yet two-thirds of those experiencing a mental illness do not seek treatment largely due to the stigma attached to it.

Mental illness does not attract the same empathy as other conditions, but people with a mental illness need the same understanding and support given to people with a physical illness. A mental illness is no different—it is not an illness for which anyone should be blamed. Today I urge all Queenslanders to get involved in reducing the stigma associated with mental illness in our community. The stigma is one of the greatest barriers to people seeking treatment and support.


Anne-Louise Brown, a journalist with the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, has been nominated for a Queensland mental health award for her balanced, yet positive, article outlining the journey of a young man living with mental illness. He ultimately lost his battle but his family continues to raise issues about the importance of mental health. The winner of the award will be announced on Friday, and I wish Anne-Louise all the best.

The Burleigh Heads based Early Psychosis centre was also recognised earlier this month by Queensland Health. This service, provided to young people from 15 to 25 years of age who suffer a psychotic illness, has been identified as an important addition to the Gold Coast's mental health services.

The establishment of an independent Mental Health Commission, announced by the Premier today, will focus on the individual needs of clients and their families. Families are often the ones who take on the responsibility of caring for a loved one with mental illness. The commission will act as a strong advocate for those in need of support. The 'Change our Minds' campaign is another way to show support and it adds to the already impressive shift in the way we look at mental illness in this state.

This year's theme for Mental Health Week is: 'Be Active. Get Connected. Stay Involved'. It applies equally to those with mental illness and those who want to support and encourage consumers to face their challenges and again become part of the wider community.

Everton Electorate, Traffic Congestion


 **Mr WATT** (Everton—ALP) (11.21 pm): As a father, I know that every minute spent in traffic is a minute not spent with our families. That is why since I was elected nearly three years ago improving traffic and public transport in Everton has been my No. 1 priority. With the strong support of the local community, the members for Ashgrove, Ferny Grove and I have secured funding for a total upgrade of the Samford Road and Wardell Street intersection at Enoggera. Stage 1 of this upgrade starts in October and will be finished by Christmas. Getting the Bligh government to fix that intersection is the first step in opening the traffic bottleneck in the north-west suburbs of Brisbane.

The intersection at Stafford and South Pine roads in Everton Park is my next target. As Brisbane and outlying suburbs have grown, so has the traffic on both of these roads. I began working to fix this intersection soon after my election in 2009 and have not stopped since. I have campaigned to get Woolworths to contribute towards fixing this intersection as a condition of them redeveloping a massive site adjoining the intersection. As a result, Woolworths have indicated that they are willing to contribute, and this is good. I have met repeatedly with the minister and departmental officials to push for this intersection to be fixed as recently as this week.

Last year I organised a deputation of concerned residents and businesses to meet with the Premier and Minister for Main Roads about this issue at the community cabinet meeting in Albany Creek. In response, the Premier brought forward planning work to determine the best fix for this intersection. Since then, departmental engineers have worked on preliminary designs, and a number of options are under serious consideration. That is great, but we need to do more.

Tonight I am calling on the tens of thousands of local residents who drive through this intersection each week to help me keep pushing this project forward. Tomorrow I will be establishing an e-petition to the main roads minister asking him to keep up the work to fix this intersection once and for all. A strong community campaign led the Bligh government, of which I am a proud member, to fix one of the intersection bottlenecks in Brisbane's north-west. With the support of Everton locals, I will fight to make sure we succeed this time as well. I am very grateful for the hearing the Minister for Main Roads has given me on this important matter to date, and I look forward to continue working with him, albeit pressuring him, to keep moving forward on this project in the near future.

Schmierer, Mrs M

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (11.24 pm): I would like to pay tribute to the life of Mrs Miriam Schmierer, who passed away on Thursday, 29 September aged 112 in Hervey Bay at her aged-care home Masters Lodge, Hervey Bay. I would like to start by sending my sincere sympathy to her family and friends. I also must acknowledge and thank Jenny and her extended staff at Masters Lodge, Hervey Bay for the wonderful care of Mrs Schmierer over the years. Mrs Schmierer and the staff of Masters Lodge were very close. They loved each other like family and they are going to miss Mrs Schmierer very much.

As members would know, Mrs Schmierer was the oldest lady in Australia. Today I would like to share some insights into the remarkable lady as she proudly walked her life with God by her side. Mrs Schmierer was a very holy and Christian lady. Her nephew told me what she said when she knew she was living a very long life. He talked of Mrs Schmierer thinking of all her very close Christian friends who had predeceased her by many years and she said, 'My friends will all think I've gone to hell because I'm not in heaven with them.' That was the wit of Mrs Schmierer.


Mrs Schmierer always made you feel comfortable in her presence. Her age did not weary her wonderful mind. For those who knew Mrs Schmierer, her kind spirit has shined through all her life. On her 112th birthday she told her granddaughter that she felt as though she was 'in God's waiting room'. Her granddaughter Pam must have inherited some of her wit because she replied, 'Grandma, have you thought of going to the desk and letting them know you are here?'

As her nephew also writes, when Mrs Schmierer went into Masters Lodge at the age of 92 she started a little garden outside her room where she grew vegetables. She then used them in the communal kitchen. She also used to cook her own porridge, but that was before 'quality control' and 'compliance audits' became rampant. Her porridge became popular with others in her little area and before long she was cooking porridge for seven or eight residents. Her comments about this were: 'Now I know why God put me here, so I can look after all the old people.' Of course they were probably a lot younger than her 92 years of age.

God bless and rest in peace, Mrs Schmierer, and God bless all your immediate family and your adopted family at Masters Lodge. I table some of the tributes to her.

Tabled paper: Newspaper articles from the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* and *The Hervey Bay Independent* regarding the passing of Mrs Miriam Schmierer [\[5607\]](#).

Fleming, Mr J

 **Mr HOOLIHAN** (Keppel—ALP) (11.27 pm): On Sunday, 18 September 2011 I attended the celebration of the life of Jack Quincy Fleming at St Christopher's Chapel outside Rockhampton. Jack Quincy Fleming was a unique person. He had settled in Rockhampton, but he was born in America on 1 June 1916 at Harrison, Nebraska. He came to Australia after leading a fairly hard life. He came here with the 41st Division National Guards and trained outside Rockhampton. It is very poignant that he was commemorated at St Christopher's Chapel, and I will outline more about the chapel later.


Jack was a very well-respected man in the community and he became something of a little bit of a celebrity because, whilst we had many war brides who went back to the United States, Jack actually married a Rockhampton girl and stayed in Australia. He married Joyce Woodward and they had four children—John, Keith, Elaine and Gary—and they were at the funeral.

Jack in actual fact was a carpenter, and after the war he settled in Rockhampton and ran his business. He became very deeply involved with his community and he accepted Australia as his homeland, although he never forgot his contact with America.

Jack was very highly regarded by the Rotary Club because he was involved with the Rotaract youth program. He was on the Hillcrest Hospital management board and the Benevolent home committee for many years, but it was the St Christopher's Chapel maintenance committee which was his real love. St Christopher's Chapel is probably the only bush chapel remaining anywhere in Australia and possibly the world that was actually built by American forces for their troops during training in the Second World War. It has been lovingly restored and very carefully maintained. Jack organised with the 41st Division equivalent of our RSL to provide funds for St Christopher's Chapel and it has been maintained in a very good condition. It is a very lovely setting and it carries the names of all of the American troops who participated in sporting events during the time they were in Rockhampton.

Jack died on 14 September. He was survived by four children, eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He lived his 95 years with great commitment to his community. He will be sadly missed by the Rockhampton community, but his memory will live on every time the people of Rockhampton and the district go to St Christopher's Chapel. Well done, Jack. You deserve your rest.

CSG Industry; Jull, Mr D; Beaudesert Electorate, Services

 **Mr McLINDON** (Beaudesert—KAP) (11.30 pm): This Sunday, 16 October, is a national day of action against coal seam gas. I would like to specifically mention the Protesters on Peaks event that will be taking place in the Scenic Rim. I want to thank Innes and Tracey Larkin, Heidi Ross and many of the community members who have been promoting this campaign over the last couple of months. I will be joining them in climbing one of the mountains out at Boonah way to ensure that the Scenic Rim does remain scenic.

I am proud to say that Australian Party policy is that we will enact a 12-month moratorium on all new CSG projects, the Great Artesian Basin will be a no-go zone and there is a right for landholders to say no. I am also proud to say that the Scenic Rim under the Australian Party will be protected from the coal seam gas industry. It is a beautiful part of the region and the Gold Coast hinterland that should be there for a tree change, for lifestyle and for tourism. It is a part of the world that we will never get again. I am proud to say that our federal leader, Bob Katter, came out to Boonah and some 120 people listened to him launch that policy. I am very proud to say that this is one of the key election issues not only for the Scenic Rim but also for Queensland.

I would also like to table a letter from Neil Stanley from the Barunggam tribe.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 7 April 2011, from Neil Stanley to the Beaudesert electorate office regarding kia ora [\[5608\]](#).

He has had a lot of concerns out in the Chinchilla and Tara way. I promised him that I would table the letter which he is still waiting for a response from the government on. When I went to the golden triangle some months ago and met with the farmers out there, they were very concerned that some of their prime agricultural land was under threat. I think the Australian Party has a major point of difference between the ALP and the LNP on this issue and it will no doubt be front and foremost in the upcoming state election.

I would also like to acknowledge David Jull. Many of us had the privilege to attend his funeral. David Jull, affectionately known as 'Jully', was one of my early mentors as the development officer for the Liberal Party. I was a 17-year-old when I joined the Liberal Party in the Springwood branch. Jully certainly taught me a few tricks of the trade. He was one of those honourable gentlemen. It was a very moving funeral and it was great to see you there, Mr Speaker, along with half of the government and many other members, including the member for Woodridge and the member for Springwood.

I welcome the addition of more than \$4.8 million towards the redevelopment of the Jimboomba Ambulance Station, which has been officially opened. I thank the government and in particular the Minister for Police, Corrective Services and Emergency Services for coming out to Jimboomba towards the end of last month. It is a very welcome addition for the 18 ambulance officers there and also to the surrounding and adjoining electorates of Albert and Logan. As the second-fastest growing region, these are essential services. I look forward to the new maternity services in the Beaudesert Hospital. The costings will be coming out on 17 October and then we will be moving into the implementation of the maternity services. I thank the Minister for Health for keeping his finger on the pulse in that regard. I also thank Hazel Brittain and the Scenic Rim task force, Mayor John Brent and the Scenic Rim Regional Council.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11.33 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Attwood, Bates, Bleijie, Bligh, Boyle, Choi, Crandon, Cripps, Croft, Cunningham, Darling, Davis, Dempsey, Dick, Dickson, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Farmer, Finn, Flegg, Foley, Fraser, 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, Palaszcuk, Pitt, Powell, Pratt, Reeves, Rickuss, Roberts, Robertson, Robinson, Ryan, Schwarten, Scott, Seeney, Shine, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Spence, Springborg, Stevens, Struthers, Stuckey, Sullivan, van Litsenburg, Wallace, Watt, Wellington, Wells, Wendt, Wettenhall, Wilson