



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## TUESDAY, 15 MARCH 2016

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Peter Wellington, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair.

For the sitting week, Mr Speaker acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land upon which this parliament is assembled.

### ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable P.W. Wellington 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: 4 March 2016

"A Bill for An Act to provide for a Multicultural Queensland Charter, a Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council, a multicultural policy and a multicultural action plan and for other particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to apply as a law of this State a national law relating to domestic commercial vessels"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002, the Maritime Safety Queensland Act 2002, the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995, the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, and to amend the Acts mentioned in schedule 1, for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Bail Act 1980, the Fair Trading Act 1989, the Gaming Machine Act 1991, the Liquor Act 1992, the Liquor Regulation 2002, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to provide for the treatment and care of people who have mental illnesses and for other purposes, to repeal the Mental Health Act 2000, to amend this Act, the Criminal Code, the Forensic Disability Act 2011, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998 and the Public Health Act 2005, and to amend the Acts mentioned in schedule 4 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Further Education and Training Act 2014 to establish the office of the training ombudsman and for related purposes, and to amend the Public Service Act 2008 for a particular purpose"

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

4 March 2016

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 4 March 2016, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 4 March 2016 [\[279\]](#).

### PRIVILEGE

#### Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 29 October 2015 the member for Callide wrote to me alleging that the Deputy Premier deliberately misled parliament in her answer to a question without notice on 28 October 2015. The matter essentially relates to only part of the member for Callide's earlier statement to the House being quoted, thus being misleading by omission.

I note that the Deputy Premier in correspondence to me and in a clarifying statement in the House on 25 February 2016 indicated that she was interrupted in her answer by a matter of privilege suddenly arising. The Deputy Premier indicated that if she had been able to complete her statement uninterrupted she would have completed the remainder of the quote from the member for Callide.

I am satisfied with the Deputy Premier's explanation to the House and, therefore, I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in this matter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 29 October 2015, from the member for Callide, Mr Jeff Seeney MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an allegation of deliberately misleading the House by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon. Jackie Trad [\[280\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 18 December 2015, from the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon. Jackie Trad, to the Speaker, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an alleged deliberate misleading of the House made by the member for Callide, Mr Jeff Seeney MP [\[281\]](#).

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Divisions, Audio and Visual Recordings



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that for today's sitting I have authorised Hansard to leave the microphones on during any division called. The purpose of this is to enable chamber education and communication services to update their audio and visual recordings of divisions to be used during educational seminars.

## PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

### Bethania, Station Road and Albert Street, Off-ramp

**Mr Boothman**, from 217 petitioners, requesting the House to move the off-ramp at the intersection of Station Road and Albert Street, Bethania [\[282\]](#).

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

### Firearm Licensing

**Mr Perrett**, from 3,574 petitioners, requesting the House to make no further impositions on licensed firearm owners and leave all categories the same [\[283, 284\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper and e-petition, lodged and sponsored by the Clerk—

### Cattle Tick Management Framework

From 925 petitioners, requesting the House to support the continual expansion of the cattle tick free zone through Queensland and require that the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries regularly obtain and publish data and maps to monitor the new cattle tick management framework [\[285, 286\]](#).

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

### Plastic Border Patrol (Water Margin Rangers)

**Hon. D'Ath**, from 118 petitioners, requesting the House to establish a permanent Plastic Border Patrol (Water Margin Rangers) attached to and managed by local Queensland Coastal Councils [\[287\]](#).

### Nude Sunbathing

**Mr Saunders**, from 946 petitioners, requesting the House to amend legislation to legalise nude sunbathing, swimming and to set aside a beach for this purpose [\[288\]](#).

### Pimpama, Public Transport

**Mr Boothman**, from 182 petitioners, requesting the House to address the need for public transport to service the Pimpama region, specifically the new housing estates [\[289\]](#).

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

### Retirement Village Act 1999

From 129 petitioners, requesting the House to restart the review of the Retirement Village Act 1999 [\[290\]](#).

### Waterford-Tamborine Road, Upgrade

From 132 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the upgrade of the Waterford-Tamborine Road commences at the North Street intersection and moves south [\[291\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS

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

#### 1 March 2016—

- [254](#) Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 2, 55th Parliament—Inquiry into the adequacy of existing financial protections for Queensland's seniors, government response
- [255](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 13, 55th Parliament—Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
- [256](#) Transportation and Utilities Committee: Report No. 13, 55th Parliament—Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
- [257](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 19, 55th Parliament—Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015
- [258](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 17, 55th Parliament—'Lemon' Laws—Inquiry into consumer protections and remedies for buyers of new motor vehicles, government response
- [259](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 21, 55th Parliament—Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill 2015
- [260](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 22, 55th Parliament—Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

#### 2 March 2016—

- [261](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 16, 55th Parliament—Consideration of the Queensland Audit Office Report to Parliament 16 for 2014-15—Local government entities 2013-14, government response and Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 17, 55th Parliament—Consideration of the Queensland Audit Office Report to Parliament 19 for 2014-15: Fraud management in local government, government response

#### 3 March 2016—

- [262](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 22, 55th Parliament—Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015: Erratum

#### 4 March 2016—

- [263](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 15, 55th Parliament—Consideration of the Queensland Audit Office Report to Parliament 8 for 2014-15—Traveltrain renewal: Sunlander 14, government response
- [264](#) Investigation Report: Serious Injury Collision, Draper Street, Cairns, 15 June 2015—Final report, rail incident investigation QT5138

#### 7 March 2016—

- [265](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 23, 55th Parliament—Criminal Law (Domestic Violence) Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2015

#### 8 March 2016—

- [266](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal: Additional Salary of the New Office of Minister and Leader of the House, Determination 11/2016, 8 March 2016

#### 9 March 2016—

- [267](#) Report by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment (Ms Trad), pursuant to section 375 of the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application by FKP Commercial Developments Pty Ltd at 50A Cribb Street and 41-55 Railway Terrace, Milton
- [268](#) Report by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment (Ms Trad), pursuant to section 376 of the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application by Wanda Ridong (Gold Coast) Development Pty Ltd at 36-44 Old Burleigh Road, Surfers Paradise (the Jewel Development)
- [269](#) Report by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment (Ms Trad), pursuant to section 375 of the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application by Urban Planning Services on behalf of Pacific View Farm (Queensland) Pty Ltd at Pacific View Estate, Worongary (Gold Coast)

[270](#) Report by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment (Ms Trad), pursuant to section 375 of the Sustainable Planning Act 2009, in relation to the Ministerial Call In of a development application at 1513, 1515-1521 Mount Cotton Road and 163-177, 195 Gramzow Road, Mount Cotton

[271](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Mr C R Dick) to an e-petition (2500-15) sponsored by the Clerk under Standing Order 119(4), from 490 petitioners, requesting the House to launch an awareness campaign within the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service to encourage nurses, doctors and paramedics to report incidences of assault in the workplace and allow these offences to be prosecuted

10 March 2016—

[272](#) Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 20, 55th Parliament—Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016

11 March 2016—

[273](#) Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 19, 55th Parliament—Inquiry into the Report on the Strategic Review of the functions of the Integrity Commissioner, government response

[274](#) Family Responsibilities Commission—Annual Report 2014-15

14 March 2016—

[275](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef (Mr Miles) to an e-petition (2480-15) sponsored by Hon. D'Ath, from 1,943 petitioners, requesting the House to provide a sustainable barge service between the Redcliffe Peninsula and the landing areas at Bulwer and the Wrecks on Moreton Island

[276](#) Response from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Mr Byrne) to an e-petition (2513-15) sponsored by Mr Langbroek, from 107 petitioners, requesting the House to support an increased police presence in the residential areas of Benowa, Bundall and Ashmore

[277](#) Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 14, 55th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 10 November 2015 and 1 December 2015

[278](#) Response from the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services (Mr Byrne) to a paper petition (2543-16) presented by Mr McEachan, from 544 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that funding and resources be allocated as soon as possible for the installation of a police facility (police station or police beat) at Victoria Point to improve access to police and to improve local security, response times and crime prevention

## STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Liquid Fuel Supply (Ethanol and Other Biofuels Mandate) Amendment Act 2015—

[292](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 10

[293](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 10, explanatory notes

Disaster Management Act 2003—

[294](#) Disaster Management Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 11

[295](#) Disaster Management Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 11, explanatory notes

Marine Parks Act 2004—

[296](#) Marine Parks (Great Barrier Reef Coast) Amendment Zoning Plan (No. 1) 2016, No. 12

[297](#) Marine Parks (Great Barrier Reef Coast) Amendment Zoning Plan (No. 1) 2016, No. 12, explanatory notes

Work Health and Safety Act 2011—

[298](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 2016, No. 9

[299](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice (No. 1) 2016, No. 9, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994—

[300](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 13

[301](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 13, explanatory notes

Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Acts Amendment Act 2015—

[302](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 14

[303](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 14, explanatory notes

Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003, Civil Partnerships Act 2011, Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994, Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003—

[304](#) Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 15

[305](#) Relationships (Civil Partnerships) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, No. 15, explanatory notes



## MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef (Dr Miles)—

[306](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef (Dr Miles) to an e-petition (2510-15) sponsored by Mrs Lauga, from 796 petitioners, requesting the House to support a Container Deposit Scheme

## REPORT BY THE CLERK

The Clerk tabled the following report—

[307](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any Bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by His Excellency the Governor, viz—

**Multicultural Recognition Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

‘Multicultural Recognition Act 2015’

*Insert—*

‘Multicultural Recognition Act 2016’.

**Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

‘Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Act 2015’

*Insert—*

‘Transport Operations (Marine Safety—Domestic Commercial Vessel National Law Application) Act 2016’.

**Transport Operations (Marine Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

‘Transport Operations (Marine Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2015’

*Insert—*

‘Transport Operations (Marine Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2016’.

**Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

‘Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Act 2015’

*Insert—*

‘Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Act 2016’.

**Mental Health Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

‘Mental Health Act 2015’

*Insert—*

‘Mental Health Act 2016’.

**Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Smoke-free Places) Amendment Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—**

*Omit—*

‘Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Smoke-free Places) Amendment Act 2015’

*Insert—*

‘Tobacco and Other Smoking Products (Smoke-free Places) Amendment Act 2016’.

**Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Bill 2015**

Amendments made to Bill

**Short title and consequential references to short title—***Omit—*

'Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Act 2015'

*Insert—*

'Further Education and Training (Training Ombudsman) and Another Act Amendment Act 2016'.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS****State Infrastructure Plan**

**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.35 am): At the weekend, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Transport and I formally released the State Infrastructure Plan. When we were in opposition, we urged the former LNP government to develop a plan. It did not do it. In government, we have developed a plan and we will deliver it for the people of Queensland. The plan that we have developed in less than 15 months in office is a plan for the next 15 years. The plan is for Queensland's future—the future jobs and future opportunities for our state.

The project pipeline in our plan will generate jobs in construction. The \$500 million State Infrastructure Fund allocates about \$300 million for the Priority Economic Works and Productivity Program. More than 1,000 full-time-equivalent jobs will be driven through these projects alone. The project pipeline in our plan will improve not only the opportunities for work but also how Queenslanders get to and from work and how we get the goods we produce to market. This fund builds on my existing capital budget of \$35 billion over four years that includes the \$10.1 billion this financial year and \$2 billion allocated for additional infrastructure spending since the election.

The federal government is a contributor to infrastructure spending. It contributed to the previous government's capital budget and it will contribute to mine. Its contribution through projects like the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing and upgrading the Bruce Highway is welcomed but it needs to do more. Let us remember that the Turnbull government's total commitment to current and future infrastructure investment across the country is \$50 billion. We need the Turnbull government to contribute its share to the projects that we are committed to here in Queensland.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I would urge the members of the opposition if they are going to make interjections to make them relevant and not simply use interjections to try to disrupt the speaker.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We need to get our share. We need that commitment for projects in our State Infrastructure Plan. We need that commitment for major road projects like the Ipswich Motorway upgrade, Rocklea-Darra stage 1, and the Pacific Motorway-Gateway Motorway merge upgrade on the southbound lanes. We need the Turnbull government to contribute to projects like the new stadium in Townsville. The Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2 contribution was a welcome start but nonetheless a start.

I spoke to the Prime Minister late last week. The Prime Minister knows what we want, but he needs to deliver on what we need. I urge all members of parliament to put Queensland first and help fight for our fair share of infrastructure spending from Canberra.

**Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit**

**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.38 am): My government will be hosting the inaugural Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit in Brisbane next month. The summit, from 27 to 29 April, promises to put a global spotlight on Queensland innovation. It will continue the momentum around engaging Queensland business and industry in using innovation to grow and compete. It will be modelled on the successful North Queensland Economic Summit that my government hosted in Cairns late last year.


The summit is part of my government's determination to create new jobs beyond the mining boom. The State Infrastructure Plan demonstrates my government's commitment to build the infrastructure that we need to grow our economy and generate new jobs. We are determined to provide new jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders. The Advance Queensland agenda essentially prioritises investment in infrastructure, health, education and skills development, and our partnership with the private sector. Most importantly, the program will promote Queensland's innovation potential to an investment community and help investors find their next market-ready deal.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the Premier, I would ask members to take their private conversations outside the chamber.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit will continue the momentum of the Advance Queensland program, accelerating our innovation culture and taking Queensland innovation to the world. Next month's innovation and investment summit will also include a dedicated start-up festival to showcase the talent and potential of Queensland's entrepreneur community. The following keynote speakers are confirmed, with more to be announced in the lead-up to the summit: Sanoop Luke from Singapore, a leading content strategist for Google/YouTube in Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia; Bindi Karia from the United Kingdom, a former vice-president of Silicon Valley Bank and venture capital manager with Microsoft UK; Leanne Kemp, who is originally from Brisbane, will also be travelling from the United Kingdom—Leanne is founder and CEO of Everledger, a global digital ledger recording the origins of diamonds that is assisting to combat fraud in the diamond trade; Dr Nina Tandon from the United States, CEO and co-founder of EpiBone, the world's first company growing living bones for skeletal reconstruction; and Glen Giovannetti, who is Global Life Sciences Sector Leader for Ernst & Young, is also attending from the United States. There will also be a range of innovators and entrepreneurs, including Professor Ian Frazer, Don Meij, Dr Justin Wong, Wayne Denning and, of course, our very own Wayne Gerrard.

The combination of global and local experts will ensure the summit showcases the latest thinking and technologies. Importantly, it will give local innovators and entrepreneurs the opportunity to build new networks and partnerships and identify new business opportunities and new jobs for Queensland.

### State Infrastructure Plan

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.41 am): This week the Palaszczuk government launched Queensland's first State Infrastructure Plan in more than three years. I now table a copy of this—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms TRAD:** I will repeat it. This week the Palaszczuk Labor government launched Queensland's first State Infrastructure Plan in more than three years. I now table a copy of the plan for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning: State Infrastructure Plan, Part A: Strategy, March 2016 [308].

*Tabled paper:* Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning: State Infrastructure Plan, Part B: Program, March 2016 [309].

The State Infrastructure Plan will help deliver jobs and prosperity beyond the mining boom by delivering the infrastructure our economy needs to grow. It means that we will have the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time, focusing our limited resources wisely and working in partnership with the private sector. Importantly, our plan is more than words; it is backed up by the establishment of a new State Infrastructure Fund.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms TRAD:** Again, importantly, our plan is backed up by the establishment of a State Infrastructure Fund with an initial investment of half a billion dollars. To be clear for those opposite, this half a billion dollar fund is new money and is on top of the government's existing capital budget of \$35 billion over the next four years. We are delivering it without asset sales, just like we said we would. This investment means that we will be able to fast-track critical—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr Cripps** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I do not need your assistance, member for Hinchinbrook.

**Ms TRAD:** Nobody does, Mr Speaker. This investment means that we will be able to fast-track critical projects that create jobs and make our economy more productive. Over time, as the government invests more in the fund, it will also be directed at investing in those major priorities identified by Building Queensland in its infrastructure pipeline.

As well as significant new funding for infrastructure, the Infrastructure Plan is also part of our major reform agenda which fundamentally reforms the way Queensland plans, prioritises and invests in infrastructure. Firstly, we have established Building Queensland as a new independent adviser to government.

**Mr Hart** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, if you persist you will be warned under standing order 253A.

**Ms TRAD:** Secondly, we have opened the door to market-led proposals and our new partnership with government to streamline unsolicited bids. With two projects already having been progressed to stage 2 of the MLP process, a new cruise ship terminal at the mouth of the river and the Logan Motorway enhancement project, this shows that the private sector has a very keen interest in this opportunity. The release of the State Infrastructure Plan is our third major plank in this infrastructure reform agenda. These three reforms fundamentally change the way we plan, prioritise and invest in infrastructure so that government invests public dollars wisely in the most productive way.

Our plan will also give industry more confidence to invest by providing a transparent four-year pipeline of projects. This means that industry knows what projects will be in market when, to ensure they can better plan their businesses and organise their workforces for these opportunities. This pipeline is critical for industry confidence so is it any wonder that Engineers Australia said there is a lot to like about this plan?

This program will be updated annually, whilst the strategy will be updated every five years. After more than three years without a plan, I am pleased to have delivered this important blueprint on behalf of the Palaszczuk Labor government for Queensland's future.

### Queensland Economy

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (9.45 am): The Queensland economy is something we can all be proud of. Queenslanders should have confidence that our economic plan is managing the end of the mining boom by building on our strengths in key sectors such as agriculture, tourism and construction. We are diversifying our economy and realising growth opportunities in high-tech industries of the future. We also have, thanks to the foresight of Labor, a \$60 billion LNG industry which is generating valuable export revenue and jobs.


Since forming government in February last year, the Palaszczuk government has hit the ground running to undo the Newman years of doom and gloom about Queensland. We knew we had to implement positive economic policies to restore confidence, drive growth and deliver new jobs and other opportunities for Queenslanders. That is exactly what we have done. Revised ABS data shows that since the election 68,900 jobs have been created in Queensland—that is almost 6,000 a month or almost 200 new jobs a day. With a trend unemployment rate of 6.1 per cent for January, this is far below the 6.6 per cent we inherited from the LNP. It is a far cry from the more than 300 jobs that were being lost on average every week under the LNP. We have created more jobs in 12 months than the LNP did in three years.

Our economic plan is working. The latest National Australia Bank index shows Queensland recorded the highest business confidence in the nation for eight months in a row—something that even the Prime Minister has to recognise. Deloitte Access Economics in its latest Queensland Business Outlook has said that Queensland will be one of Australia's strongest growing economies within five years with expected growth of between four and five per cent annually over the long term. Deloitte have identified that along with the LNG boom, construction, tourism and international education will drive Queensland's new economic strength. The Palaszczuk government commitment to these sectors has given the economy confidence to thrive. A great example is the Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, which has already attracted new overseas flights to Cairns and the Gold Coast.

On Sunday it was great to see the Palaszczuk government launch the State Infrastructure Plan. I congratulate the Deputy Premier for her work. This is the first State Infrastructure Plan in more than three years. Unlike those opposite, who talk and never deliver, we have delivered a State Infrastructure Plan to underpin Queensland's economic growth in years to come. Contrary to the nonsense from those opposite that this plan has nothing new in it, they obviously have not read the plan. The State Infrastructure Fund will be funded in this year's budget, and it will be funded without the need for new borrowings and no asset sales. The \$500 million State Infrastructure Fund will support more than 1,000 jobs and includes \$300 million to invest in seven critical road and rail upgrades to help boost capacity and reliability and \$180 million for regionally significant infrastructure projects to deliver regional jobs and growth. This is in addition to our \$10.1 billion Capital Works Program, which in 2015-16 alone will support 27,500 jobs.

This is planning for the long term. It goes beyond the electoral cycle. This is what a grown-up, mature government does. It builds up Queensland, supports new jobs today and builds the infrastructure that will support the economy of tomorrow. We in the Palaszczuk government are in the business of talking up our great state. We have an economic plan that is working. This is in stark contrast to the LNP and members opposite, who are in their fourth year of talking down our state.

### Princess Alexandra Hospital, Digitisation

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): As honourable members will be aware, I have spoken frequently about the problems facing our health system in the face of reduced Commonwealth funding and an ageing and growing population. That means we will need to work smarter in our health system. I am delighted to inform the House that, in line with this drive to have a smarter health system, the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane has become Australia's first digital public hospital. In practice, this means the end to paperwork at the PA Hospital. Patient details will be entered into an electronic system and the entire patient journey will be monitored electronically. The whole notion of paperwork at the Princess Alexandra Hospital will become a thing of the past with paper records being replaced by digital records.

The full digitisation of the Princess Alexandra Hospital, an information technology project delivered successfully by a Labor government, is based in the electorate of the Deputy Premier and member for South Brisbane, who joined me for the announcement last Friday. It is a significant achievement for Queensland and, in fact, Queensland has led the nation in the implementation of this IT project. It is innovation, it is smart investment and it is smart implementation.


**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the member for Kawana. This is a Labor government that is leading the nation with health information technology systems. While one small private hospital in Australia is digitised, the Princess Alexandra Hospital is the first public hospital in Australia to be fully digitised and to achieve that status. It is one of the largest hospitals in Queensland and it is one of the top five hospitals in Australia and the project has been successfully implemented and executed by a Labor government.

The transformation of the Princess Alexandra Hospital is the first part of a four-year \$200 million investment that will deliver this robust IT project to other hospitals across Queensland, in line with our eHealth Investment Strategy. Ours is the only government to implement an eHealth Investment Strategy. At the Princess Alexandra Hospital, we have been very keen to get this right. More than 100 simulations and dress rehearsals were held before the switch to digital records to ensure staff were well prepared to deal with new work flows, with more than 1,600 new digital devices integrated across the hospital. Going digital makes real-time patient information securely and instantly available to staff wherever they are in the hospital. This means staff can now spend less time shuffling paperwork and more time at the front line. Most importantly, it means an improvement in the quality of care by reducing errors and variations in care processes. The end result is better care for patients and faster treatment to get them home sooner.

The staff at the Princess Alexandra Hospital have led this project. They have enthusiastically risen to the challenge of going digital and I thank them for their commitment to this project. More than 5,500 staff were trained in the new system, representing a total of 32,000 staff hours. This is an excellent investment in Queensland Health and in Queensland Health staff that will be returned many times over in the years to come. The Palaszczuk Labor government will continue to drive innovation in our state's health sector to deliver better health outcomes for Queenslanders.

### State Schools, Maintenance


 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events) (9.52 am): This Easter holiday, tradies will once again hop to work to build better Queensland state schools. They will be improving classrooms and fixing priority maintenance jobs identified by schools. During April, we will see \$9 million in maintenance work get underway at more than 160 schools. This investment will create jobs and, more importantly, it will create work in our regions. It is part of our government's record \$763 million commitment to school maintenance over four years and \$180 million this year.

The program includes \$200,000 to upgrade classrooms at Garbutt State School in the Townsville electorate. In the electorate of my good friend the member for Nanango, there will be \$100,000 to upgrade the junior manual arts block. In the Bundaberg electorate, \$150,000 in works will see upgrades

to the home economics building at Kepnock State High. At Burleigh Heads State School, in the electorate of my good mate the member for Burleigh, we are carrying out a \$25,000 refurbishment of the special education block.

This record maintenance spend is ensuring our schools are safe and fit for purpose. We are also providing valuable training opportunities for apprentices. On top of that, we are rolling out more than \$450 million in capital works in our schools, supporting 1,300 full-time construction and building jobs. I am pleased to inform the House that, as a consequence of this investment by the Palaszczuk government, \$2.6 million in construction is underway on four new classrooms at Park Lake State School in Gaven and we are building a new \$6 million junior learning centre at Cannonvale State School in Whitsunday. The new two-storey classroom complex will be a great addition to that fast-growing school community. We are delivering on our commitment to provide quality classrooms and facilities for all schools across Queensland.

### **Bundaberg Gas Pipeline**

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.54 am): Successful energy supply is a catalyst for economic development and it is great to be able to advise the House that preparatory work has started on the \$19.8 million Bundaberg gas pipeline. This project represents a significant investment in the region, with 45 jobs, including up to 15 local construction jobs, created during construction. Most importantly, the pipeline will also deliver other business opportunities to the broader Wide Bay region.

The state is working with Australian Gas Networks, AGN, to develop the pipeline. Since we were last in this chamber, the high-pressure pipe to the 28.5-kilometre pipeline has been delivered to Bundaberg. Construction is being undertaken by the Zinfra Group and overseen by AGN's long-term operator, APA Group. Zinfra Group has engaged locally and will utilise the pool of resources available in Bundaberg. Agreements with a number of local contractors are currently being negotiated for trades and services. Importantly, the pipeline will support the development of the new \$70 million Knauf Plasterboard facility and will have the capacity to offer commercial opportunities for other companies wanting to use gas. The Knauf project alone is expected to bring 200 construction jobs and 40 operational jobs to Bundaberg.


**Mr Bennett** interjected.

**Dr LYNHAM:** I take the interjection. I asked one of my German colleagues what the correct pronunciation is and he said, 'Nof'. Once the pipeline is completed, tie-ins to the gas station facilities will be made, followed by commissioning and handover for operation. It is expected that the pipeline will be fully commissioned and operational in early 2017.

Late last year, the Premier announced that her government was investigating the potential for a state development area around the Port of Bundaberg to potentially create an economic hub for the Wide Bay-Burnett region. I am pleased to advise the House that this work is on track. Technical investigations are underway into economic development opportunities, physical and environmental constraints, environmental community impacts and infrastructure requirements. These technical investigations will result in a preliminary evaluation into the suitability of a state development area. If that evaluation recommends the state development area, a boundary will be identified and consulted upon in the second quarter of 2016.

The Port of Bundaberg is only one of two east coast trading ports outside the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area. My Department of State Development is working closely with all the regional councils to explore the potential for this port fully. I know from the advocacy of the member for Maryborough and my cabinet colleague the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries just how important these job generators are to the Wide Bay-Burnett region.

### **Borallon Training and Correctional Centre**

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.57 am): In the interests of safety and job security, it has been decided that the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre will be recommissioned in stages. Borallon is over 25 years old, with a number of older designed cells that do not meet current safety standards. After an independent suicide-risk audit, the government has decided to recommission cells at the centre in stages. This is important for young offenders who will spend time at Borallon. For them it will be a tough new earn-and-learn training facility aimed at turning their young lives around.

Next month, Borallon will take 95 prisoners. That means new and permanent jobs for prison staff. More than 100 staff will start work in April, with permanent jobs to come on line thereafter. We will see a gradual commissioning of 153 secure cells of the older design. These cells will be modified to meet the latest safety standards. The first secure unit is expected to be opened in May to take more prisoners and employ more staff. I am advised that cell modernisation work will be completed by July, at which time the centre will accommodate a total of 248 prisoners and 162 staff. The remaining section, which has the oldest prison cells of its kind in Queensland, will be on hold until it is feasible to undertake further capital works. Importantly, jobs will be safe. Those staff who have permanent jobs will keep them. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to jobs and job security.

When it reopens next month, Borallon will be Queensland's first dedicated training prison, with a focus on education, training and employment outcomes. Young prisoners will be either earning or learning. It is about helping young men get the support and skills they need to keep them on the straight and narrow. It is also about keeping Queenslanders safe, and there are few things more important than that.

### State Infrastructure Plan



**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (10.00 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to building this state up, building our economy, building our human capital and building infrastructure. This requires investment in people, ideas and infrastructure. At its heart, the State Infrastructure Plan is about growing Queensland; it is about rebuilding Queensland after three years of paralysis from those opposite—three years of economic vandalism.

I am pleased that transport infrastructure will play a key role in the State Infrastructure Plan. This government is committed to ensuring that maintaining and enhancing our very important north coast rail line remains an infrastructure priority for Queensland. This is why I am pleased to highlight to the House that the State Infrastructure Plan includes \$95 million in new funding for the North Coast Line Capacity Improvement Project. This project will deliver approximately 290 jobs, deliver improved infrastructure and increase the performance of the north coast line. As identified in the SIP, the Queensland government recognises the importance of the 1,680 kilometre north coast rail line in supporting the growth of the Queensland economy.

The north coast line, as you appreciate, Mr Speaker, is a key freight route that generated \$45.73 million in railing minerals, sugar and molasses and containerised freight last year alone. The line moves containerised and industrial freight, minerals, livestock and bulk commodities including sugar and grain. It connects Brisbane to major centres in Central and North Queensland, including Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns.

Sugar traffic is hauled from sugar mills to the ports of Mackay and Townsville. Mineral resources traffic from the Mount Isa line runs on the north coast line from Stuart to the Port of Townsville. Industrial products such as cement and fuel are hauled on the line from the Port of Townsville to Stuart before joining the Mount Isa line to commence the journey to the mining centres of Cloncurry and Mount Isa. Investing in upgrading and boosting the freight capacity on this rail line delivers for our economic performance as a state.

Our investments in regional rail and freight boosts have been widely welcomed by industry, I am pleased to say. The Australasian Railway Association said that they—

... applaud the commitment by the Queensland Government in allocating \$95 million towards a major freight rail project 'the North Coast Line Capacity Improvement,' as announced in today's release of the State Infrastructure Plan.

Commuter group RAIL Back On Track said they—


... welcomed the final State Infrastructure Plan. We note the focus on transport particularly, and welcome the North Coast Line Capacity Improvement Project.

Infrastructure Partnerships Australia said—

The State Infrastructure Plan is a sensible and realistic complement to the Infrastructure Australia Priority List outlining what Queensland needs to move forward.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering for all of Queensland. Only under a Labor government do things start to happen. Labor plans, Labor delivers, Labor builds.

### Ipswich Motorway

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.03 am): I am pleased to advise the House that the Palaszczuk government has boosted its funding commitment to upgrading the Rocklea-Darra stretch of the Ipswich Motorway, unblocking the gridlock and creating 470 jobs. Since being elected we have had our \$111 million or 20 per cent of funding for this infrastructure project on the table and ready to go. That is the same proportion as for the Bruce Highway, the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, the Warrego Highway upgrade and the Gateway North upgrade.

We have now made the decision to boost that commitment to 50 per cent in an effort to get the project up and running. This \$200 million commitment is an enormous step in getting this project going, and means relief is in sight for motorway users, who currently face mass congestion in peak times. The Palaszczuk government has gone further than the do-nothing Newman government ever did on the Ipswich Motorway.

In order for this \$400 million project to become a reality, we need the Turnbull government to come to the table and meet our commitment fifty-fifty. The fact is that last year the Abbott government retracted its funding for the Rocklea-Darra upgrade—

**Opposition members** interjected.


**Mr BAILEY:** They do not want to hear it. They will not stand up for Queensland. The fact is that last year the Abbott government retracted its funding for the Rocklea-Darra upgrade, wiping \$279 million from infrastructure in Queensland. They also took the extraordinary step of downgrading the status of the motorway by removing it from the National Land Transport Network.

The Ipswich Motorway is currently a major source of frustration for more than 85,000 motorists who use this section of the motorway daily. That includes up to 12,000 trucks from the freight industry. This infrastructure upgrade is essential to improve the capacity of the Ipswich Motorway by upgrading lanes between Granard and Oxley roads from four to six. Two additional lanes between Granard and Oxley roads will not only significantly improve the capacity and reliability of the motorway but also ease freight access to the major industrial precinct of Rocklea, to the Acacia Ridge intermodal facility and to the Port of Brisbane and Trade Coast precinct. This project will lift productivity for industry, improve travel time and deliver reliability and a safer, faster journey for people travelling to and from South-East Queensland's expanding western suburbs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the strong local advocates who have stood up for the Ipswich Motorway and are supporting this project: Shayne Neumann, the federal member for Blair; Milton Dick, the federal Labor candidate for Oxley; and our hardworking state MPs—the member for Sunnybank, Peter Russo; the member for Ipswich West, Jim Madden; the member for Ipswich, Jen Howard; and the member for Bundamba, Jo-Ann Miller. I would also like to thank Mayor Paul Pisasale for his support for this project.

There has been strong support from industry bodies too. The Queensland Trucking Association recognises the importance of this upgrade to the freight industry and the productivity improvements it will bring. We want to get this infrastructure project up and running. The business case has been submitted to the federal government. It is now up to the Turnbull government to show it is supporting Queenslanders, supporting infrastructure, supporting jobs for the Queensland economy—something that those opposite never did for three years. They never delivered on the Ipswich Motorway. They did nothing for Ipswich. We are getting on with the job to make sure this is happening.

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.07 am): Last week I released the outcomes of a new study showing that Queensland's greenhouse gas emissions are on track to increase by 35 per cent by 2030 if no new actions are taken. This is the carbon pollution legacy that the LNP left for Queensland. In the eight years from—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, I would urge you to be more considered in your comments.

**Dr MILES:** In the eight years from 2005 to 2013, Queensland's emissions were declining while the economy continued to grow thanks to the forward-thinking policies of successive Labor governments.

**Ms Jones** interjected.



**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister for Education, I do not need your assistance.

**Dr MILES:** Then the LNP came along. Those opposite dismantled Queensland's carbon pollution reduction measures and left us without a strategy for reducing our emissions. Now we can see that their plan was in fact for Queensland's pollution to increase by more than a third over the same period that Australia is looking to decrease its carbon pollution.

The modelling shows that the progress we were making on land use and energy sector emissions have reversed. Land-clearing rates doubled in Queensland in the first two years of the LNP government. We are now releasing more carbon into the atmosphere from land clearing in Queensland than at any time in the last eight years. Some 90 per cent of Australia's emissions from land use now come from Queensland. At a time when the rest of the world is reducing its emissions, Queensland is driving Australia's emissions up—thanks to the LNP's reckless and irresponsible approach. The previous LNP government put so many policies in place that actively harmed our environment. It was in climate change and land clearing that they were most backwards.

It is now clear that political and economic leaders throughout the world no longer contest the reality of climate change. This was made clear at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, which saw a reinvigorated commitment and consensus to transform the world's fossil fuel driven economy and to slow and ultimately halt the pace of global warming. Yet here in Queensland the LNP inherited sound laws on vegetation management and effective policies and programs to reduce our carbon pollution—and they scrapped the lot. Once again, it will be a Labor government that leads the way in this state and takes on climate change to ensure that our kids do not miss out on the clean energy jobs of the future.

### Broadband for the Bush Forum


 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerie—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (10.10 am): Later this year Queensland will host the 2016 Broadband for the Bush Forum. This will be the fifth annual forum and will be held at the State Library of Queensland in June. This year's theme, 'Digital Journeys', will focus on how digital engagement and inclusion can benefit everyone. The forum aims to capture the diversity of experiences, digital tools and practical solutions used across a wide range of industry sectors such as education, tourism, cultural heritage and more. To complement the two-day forum on 8 and 9 June, an Indigenous Focus Day will be held on 7 June 2016.

The Broadband for the Bush Alliance is a not-for-profit organisation that speaks for the digital needs of, and seeks to advance the digital capacity and capability for, those who work and live in remote Australia. Through their work, they champion digital inclusion and opportunities for economic and social development in remote and rural Australia. The alliance is supported by the Indigenous Remote Communications Association.

As we move towards a future knowledge economy, it is vital that all Queenslanders are provided with the tools to participate fully in an increasingly digital world. Last financial year almost 70,000 Queenslanders attended digital literacy sessions in Queensland's public libraries across our state. These figures demonstrate that digital inclusion is an important issue.

The Broadband for the Bush Forum and Indigenous Focus Day are part of a suite of initiatives introduced by the Palaszczuk government that aim to improve Queenslanders' access to online information and services. In addition to the Broadband for the Bush Forum, the Palaszczuk government's other digital literacy programs being run across the state include Tech Savvy Seniors Queensland, coding and robotics activities, and the Everyone Online project. We are also finalising accredited training for up to 30 Indigenous people from remote North Queensland as the final part of the previous Commonwealth funded Remote Indigenous Public Internet Access program. This government is focused on helping Queenslanders obtain the skills needed to participate in the economy both now and in the future.

### ABSENCE OF MINISTER

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am): I wish to advise the House that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills will be absent from the House this week. Together with the member for Mansfield, Minister D'Ath is undertaking a campaign to raise community awareness of the referendum for fixed four-year terms. As you are, Mr Speaker, both the government and the opposition are encouraging Queenslanders to vote 'yes' on Saturday.

## TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE

### Membership



**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.13 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the member for Cairns, Mr Rob Pyne MP, be discharged from the Transportation and Utilities Committee and the member for Murrumba, Mr Chris Whiting MP, be appointed to the Transportation and Utilities Committee.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Carmichael Mine



**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to immediately provide all state government approvals necessary for Adani's Carmichael mine to proceed to help drive the creation of thousands of jobs for Central and Northern Queensland.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



**Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.14 am): As they say, a week is a long time in politics. What a week we have just seen! Instead of a government focusing on delivering jobs and growing the economy, we have seen a government that is completely and utterly divided, a government consumed by internal squabbles, a government frozen at the wheel.

When the Premier was elected just a year ago she declared she had the team to take Queensland forward. She had hand-picked a ministry to deliver for Queenslanders. When we look at what has happened since, it has become more and more obvious that the Premier and her team were elected without an idea, without a plan, and were totally unprepared for government.

There have been serious issues with the member for Cook. We are waiting to hear the outcome from the police investigation into the member for Pumicestone. We have had a police minister who was forced to resign from cabinet in disgrace. We have seen the member for Cairns shamelessly bullied to the point that he had no choice but to resign from the Labor Party. We have had more issues with the member for Keppel and our very own rat-shooting police minister. In fact, the member for Capalaba has today called Rob Pyne one of Labor's greatest rats, so nobody give Bill Byrne a gun.

Nothing illustrated the lack of focus and division evident in this government more than the fallout from the member for Cairns' resignation from the Labor Party just last week. I am absolutely sure that this decision did not come easily for the member for Cairns but, after months of claims of bullying and harassment from the Deputy Premier and her factional colleagues, he had had enough. Sadly, I am sure that nothing could have prepared him for the venom and vitriol directed his way in the last week.

The member for Barron River—that titan from North Queensland—called it an act of treason and labelled the member for Cairns a 'megalomaniac'. The attacks have continued right up to this morning—I table a copy of a Facebook post—with the member for Capalaba calling him 'one of the greatest Labor rats'.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, undated, of Mr Don Brown MP's Facebook page in relation to the member for Cairns, Mr Rob Pyne MP [\[310\]](#).

Remember that these personal attacks came from a government that promised Queenslanders integrity and a consultative approach and something different. Last Tuesday on International Women's Day the Premier fronted the media at Point Danger to field questions on the member for Cairns' resignation. It was all about the Premier being so resolute: she is focused on jobs—'Don't stand in my way. I am focusing on governing.' All it took was four questions before she crumbled and threatened an early election—crumbled under the pressure. Nothing was going to stand in the way of her jobs agenda!

The Premier was later forced to admit that she had no such job-creating bills in the House to trigger an election. That again serves to illustrate the problem with this government. They are panicked. They do not know what they are doing. They are frozen at the wheel. Meanwhile, the economy suffers and infrastructure investment goes backwards. Queenslanders deserve better than this division, disunity and lack of decisiveness we are seeing from this government.

*(Time expired)*

### State Infrastructure Plan



**Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment) (10.17 am): While those opposite are focused on politics and being in the gutter, we are focused on jobs—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I call the Deputy Premier.

**Ms TRAD:** While those opposite are focused on political smear, we are focused on jobs and infrastructure. It took a Labor government to deliver for Queensland a State Infrastructure Plan that had been missing in action under their watch. Our State Infrastructure Plan will make sure that the right infrastructure is built in the right place at the right time, unlike 1 William Street. That was their infrastructure plan.

It took a Labor government to deliver the first South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 10 years ago, and we have built on that since then. It was that plan that identified the Tugun bypass, the Gateway Motorway upgrade and busways throughout our city. It was Labor that planned, Labor that built, Labor that delivered for Queensland, unlike those opposite—not one infrastructure plan in the whole time that they were in government.

I have taken note of those opposite and their criticisms of the State Infrastructure Plan, but all it shows is that they have not read it. All it shows is that they continue to be lazy and oppositional. While we build, they bleat. They claim that there is nothing new in this plan. All it does is scream that they are incapable of reading a plan. No wonder the member for Clayfield wants the deputy opposition leader's job. He must be cringing in his seat.

There is \$500 million in a new State Infrastructure Plan to build those projects identified by Infrastructure Australia as high-priority projects in Queensland—projects like the Ipswich Motorway upgrade from Darra to Rocklea stage 1 and the Pacific Motorway-Gateway Motorway merge upgrade for southbound lanes. They are the projects that have been identified by Infrastructure Australia and that we will build. We will make sure that we get money out of the Commonwealth in order to build them, as we did with Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2, and we will do it again because Labor will not give up.

*(Time expired)*

### State Infrastructure Plan



**Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (10.21 am): It was with some sense of irony that I saw the Deputy Premier jump up and talk about the State Infrastructure Plan, because there are 42 members over there who are eagerly awaiting a plan. They were looking for something to dig them out of the doldrums—out of the trials and tribulations they have been led down by a clueless government that does not know what it is doing and has no way of paying for it. On Sunday they could only have shivered in disappointment. There was nothing new in this new plan. There was no new money. I described it as last night's dinner reheated. It is a very tasteless meal that has been served up by the Deputy Premier.

We have had the state's Capital Works Program, budget paper No. 3, turned into a two-part document. They have put a few glossy pictures in there and pulled a few business cases out. One of them which the member for Callide will be happy to see is the SunCentral development. I understand that he made that a priority development area, not this government, but it is one of their case studies. It contained little that was new and there are aspects that are unfunded.

I did read the plan and there are some interesting things in there. At item 12 on page 21—and this is a sign of things to come—we have the Deputy Premier's Infrastructure Innovation Challenge. We do not have the Premier's infrastructure innovation challenge; we have the Deputy Premier's. This has not raised a mention so far. This is going to have innovative infrastructure ideas. Here is an innovative infrastructure idea: how about having a new plan that is its own work and having the money to pay for it, because that has not been delivered so far.

I went to the 'Justice and public safety' part of the document. On page 95 it outlines selective projects for one to four years: the Burleigh Queensland Fire and Emergency Services station, a one- to four-year project. It was built and opened by the LNP. For the assistance of the Deputy Premier, I table the photograph and congratulate the member for Burleigh for his sterling effort in producing that outcome.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph, undated, of the member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, at the opening of the Burleigh Heads Fire and Rescue Station [\[311\]](#).

I then went to the transport section and I found the first five train projects next generation rolling stock—funded and delivered by the LNP. This is old homework being handed in by the Labor government with no plan for the future.

*(Time expired)*

### Queensland Nickel



**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (10.24 am): For nearly six months Clive Palmer, the self-professed richest man in Queensland, has caused enormous uncertainty and upheaval to the lives of several hundred North Queensland families. We made it clear on day one that our priority in relation to Queensland Nickel is its workers and their entitlements. It is important that I outline the series of events that have led us to this point.

In late September, Clive Palmer approached the government and asked for \$25 million. He then denied it in the media, saying: 'As long as I am the owner of Queensland Nickel I will not allow the company to borrow funds from the Queensland government.' In November Clive Palmer came back to the government requesting money. First it was \$25 million, then \$35 million and then \$40 million.

The Palaszczuk government's response has been consistent. Our firm desire was to see the refinery continue to operate, all workers' entitlements guaranteed and Mr Palmer open his books to external scrutiny. When KPMG finally accessed his books, it was clear we had never been provided with full and correct information. We found that the biggest thing holding back Queensland Nickel was Mr Palmer himself: his decision to strip millions of dollars out of the business and lend it to himself; his decision to gift more than \$15 million to the Palmer United Party; and his decision to pay himself a shareholder dividend of \$28 million just months before asking for \$35 million from Queensland taxpayers. The government could not in good conscience have used taxpayers' money to provide a loan or bank guarantee to Queensland Nickel.

In December I reminded Clive Palmer that he had other financial options including selling his other assets, a shareholder capital injection or equity partnerships. Instead, he continued blaming everybody but himself. He moved his own companies to the front of the queue just days before going into voluntary administration, ensuring that he would have first call on credit. He then sacked administrators, phoenixing a new company. Administrators FTI took the remarkable step of saying Mr Palmer's actions were outside of their control. Mr Palmer got people's hopes up with a rescue package when what they needed was to be rescued from Mr Palmer. Yesterday, at the same time Clive Palmer was telling media the government had not granted a major hazard facility licence, Clive Mensink was emailing the government's hazardous industries and chemicals branch, saying: 'We are not searching for a transfer of licence at this time.'

What the people of Townsville want are straight answers. Instead, they have had months of games. We have had the members for Townsville, Thuringowa, Mundingburra and Hinchinbrook showing care and regard for workers and their families. Clive Palmer has been accused of many things, including operating as a shadow director of Queensland Nickel. One thing he has never been accused of is telling the truth. The Palaszczuk government has accelerated more than \$210 million in local projects and announced an upgrade to Riverway Drive in the State Infrastructure Plan. We have asked the federal government to immediately activate the Fair Entitlements Guarantee. Malcolm Turnbull argues that we have to wait until Queensland Nickel is technically in liquidation to access entitlements. Given Mr Palmer's continued games, I am not prepared to accept that argument and neither are the people of Townsville. A letter yesterday from Queensland Nickel to the Queensland government said that financiers must not see attacks on Queensland Nickel management. We are not attacking anyone; we are simply putting the facts on the table.

### Palaszcuk Labor Government, Performance



**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.27 am): Mr Speaker, 13 months ago the member for Inala went to you in your capacity as the member for Nicklin and said that she could provide stable government to the people of Queensland for three years. The member for Inala went to you and said that she could provide jobs and infrastructure and that she would be able to run Queensland for a period of three years. Some 13 months down the track the member for Inala has provided none of those things. She has provided dysfunctionality, instability and a lack of good governance in this state.

This is not what the people of Queensland voted for on 31 January last year. Last week, in a fit of pique, when the Premier was dazzled and caught out by the media, she said that she would have no-one stand in her way. The only one standing in the way of the Premier of Queensland is the Premier of Queensland. She is frightened of her own shadow. She is incapable of governing and she is incapable of good government for the people of this state.

In stark contrast, the LNP is not only election ready; we are government ready, and we have been government ready since day one. We have a plan for the people of Queensland and we have a plan which is capable of delivering for the people of Queensland. When we launched this in June last year, the Treasurer stood up and took at least two of those ideas including market-led proposals and social benefit bonds.

The Premier also said last week that every single piece of legislation in this parliament would be job-creating legislation. The only legislation we have in this parliament is job-destroying legislation, whether it be in the case of the sandminers on North Stradbroke Island, the racing industry, the Nature Conservation Act amendments which reduce people's sovereign investment insurance with regard to land in this state or whether it be in the circumstances of the mining industry or other industries throughout Queensland. The LNP, in stark contrast, stands ready, willing and able. During the course of this week we will be introducing motions which are all about creating jobs, whether it is about protecting the interests of the people on North Stradbroke Island or Great Keppel Island or the interests of the mining industry in this state.

Let us also reflect for one moment on this government's much vaunted Infrastructure Plan, which they launched last week with great fanfare. What an anticlimax that was after 13 months. After 13 months they brought down a plan which is going to do less with less—not, more, but less with less. There is \$4 billion less than what was being promised and planned by the previous government in Queensland.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Member for Cairns



**Mr SPRINGBORG** (10.30 am): My first question is to the Premier. I refer to claims by the member for Cairns of his appalling treatment by the Deputy Premier, and I ask: has the Premier demanded an explanation from the Deputy Premier? Can she explain how she has satisfied herself that the Deputy Premier's conduct did not amount to bullying and intimidation or fall outside the conduct expected of a minister?

**Ms PALASZCZUK**: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. It was not a policy question; it was not about the State Infrastructure Plan that the Deputy Premier was absolutely instrumental in delivering for this state of Queensland. My government is focused on jobs and creating more jobs for the people of Queensland. That is what we were elected to do and that is what we will continue to do. The State Infrastructure Plan is a key plank in terms of delivering the regional infrastructure that is needed across the state. Our government is proud of that Infrastructure Plan.

**Mr SPEAKER**: Premier, I know you are keen to talk about the plan, but I do not know that that connects to the question that was asked.

**Ms PALASZCZUK**: I have every confidence in the Deputy Premier. I have every confidence in my ministers and in my caucus members.

**Mr SPRINGBORG**: I rise to a point of order. My point of order is in relation to relevance under the standing orders. My question was simply: has the Premier spoken to the Deputy Premier about her conduct and could the conduct amount to bullying and intimidation of a member?

**Mr SPEAKER**: I find the Premier's answer relevant.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Every one of my ministers knows that the highest standards are required in the carrying out of their duties of public office. That is the clear expectation of myself as the Premier—for the ministers to act in the appropriate manner. That is what I intend that they should follow. Unlike what we saw in the past on their side, when there were reports of screaming matches outside the former premier's office and allegations were circling among those opposite, this government—

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. I take that interjection. Those opposite do not want to hear about it.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order under 118(a). The Premier has resorted to debating the question. Could she please return to the answer?

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Premier has answered the question.

### **Member for Cairns**

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** My second question without notice is also to the Premier. I refer to comments by the Labor Party member for Barron River that the member for Cairns is a megalomaniac, and I ask: is the behaviour of the member for Barron River towards the member for Cairns consistent with her government's antibullying policy and standards?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that question. In relation to the member for Barron River and the members of the Labor caucus, including me, we were very disappointed with the decision that the member for Cairns took to leave the Australian Labor Party. I am happy to place it on the public record, and I expressed that personally to the member for Cairns when I contacted him about that.

I stand here as a very proud Premier and member of the Australian Labor Party, as do the members of my caucus, because we believe in the values of the Labor Party. Those values have been around longer than any of us. Those are the values of equality, fairness and giving people opportunity and hope. There has been nothing more front and centre than everything that my government is focused on in terms of creating jobs because there is absolute dignity in work. What we have seen with the downturn after the mining boom is hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of people losing their jobs.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. Jobs were not part of the question. Mr Speaker, could you please direct the Premier on relevance?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I find the Premier's answer relevant.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** There is nothing more important than my government's focus on the challenges of the downturn after the mining boom to create new opportunities and new industries across this state. They said very clearly today they wanted to—

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I rise to a point of order. I rise again on the point of relevance. My question specifically was: is the behaviour of the member for Barron River towards the member for Cairns consistent with her government's antibullying policy and standards? That has not even been touched on by—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, thank you. The Premier has answered the question. I now call the member for Ipswich West.

### **Ipswich, Infrastructure Projects**

**Mr MADDEN:** My question is of the Premier. Will the Premier please outline any major infrastructure announcements in the Ipswich area and any support from other levels of government?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** On this side of the House we are more than happy to speak about jobs. We have just seen the Leader of the Opposition stand in this House and say, 'This week my priority is talking about jobs,' and the first two questions have been about muckraking. This is the same opposition we have seen under the LNP for generations in this parliament. It is almost as if Campbell Newman never left. They are haunted by the Campbell Newman legacy.

**A government member:** Bring him back!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Bring him back! He thought about it for a while—24 hours. I thank the member for Ipswich West for raising a very important question, and that is in relation to job creation projects in the Ipswich region and how we can get the federal government on board. As part of the State Infrastructure Plan, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Main Roads and I announced that my

government was prepared to increase the contribution towards that motorway from 20 per cent to 50 per cent. That will create 450 jobs immediately if we can get the federal government on board. I did not hesitate to speak to the Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Turnbull, about putting Queensland first. My government is prepared to put Queensland first; the member for Ipswich West is prepared to put Queensland first. Where are those opposite? There is nothing more important than generating jobs at a time when jobs have been lost as a result of the downturn after the mining boom. We need to get people into work and we need to get people into work quickly.

The Darra to Rocklea project will alleviate a lot of congestion on that Ipswich Motorway. It is essentially the last plank. It is going to serve thousands and thousands of motorists. It is actually recognised as one of the most significant bottlenecks in the south-east part of this state. It is going to have a huge impact on all of those communities up and down the Ipswich Motorway. It is going to mean less travel time. The raising of the motorway will also stop flood impacts we have seen in recent years.

We have heard from those opposite about a business case. The business case is afoot because Infrastructure Australia also recognises very clearly that it is on this list. I table this for those opposite.

*Tabled paper:* Document, dated February 2016, by Infrastructure Australia titled 'Australian Infrastructure Priority List: Project and Initiative Summaries', p. 5 [312].

We have here Infrastructure Australia's *Australian Infrastructure Plan: the infrastructure priority list*, project and initiative summaries, February 2016. One has only to go to the list of the projects to see very clearly listed here the business case development of the Southern Brisbane-Ipswich Road network capacity, the Ipswich Motorway, Rocklea to Darra. Let's get on board. Let's get the federal government on board. Let's get this happening and let's alleviate that last piece of congestion on the Ipswich Motorway. I say thank you very much to all the members involved. It is a great job-generating project.

### Member for Cairns

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question without notice is to the Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland and I ask: as the minister responsible for North Queensland, when did she first alert the Premier about the concerns of the member for Cairns and what concerns were relayed?

**Mrs O'ROURKE:** I thank the member for the question. This whole side of the House was alerted to the decision by the member for Cairns in the same way that the media was. As we have been saying, our main priority over here is jobs. We will continue to focus on jobs, and I am very pleased and proud to be part of a government that is focusing on jobs. The Infrastructure Plan that has been outlined has a specific focus on jobs and—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I know that you are keen to talk about jobs but I do not think that was the question. I call the member for Lytton.

### National Disability Insurance Scheme

**Ms PEASE:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Arts. Will the Premier please update the House on negotiations with the federal government on the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the jobs it will provide in Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Lytton for the question about jobs and job creation for the people of Queensland. I am very pleased to advise that once the National Disability Insurance Scheme comes into effect we have the opportunity for over 13,000 jobs to be created.

**Ms Davis:** When are you going to sign the bilateral?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will take that interjection, because I am very pleased to announce that just this morning the Minister for Disability Services and myself have signed the bilateral to the Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Turnbull. Let me make it very clear to those opposite, because I am happy to give them a little history lesson today. This is the third bilateral I have signed because the federal government always decides to change the goalposts. I did not miss the opportunity on Friday to speak to Malcolm Turnbull about the NDIS bilateral as well, because I know how important that is to people who have a disability right across this state. As a former minister for disabilities and as the new member for disabilities, Minister Coralee O'Rourke, we know how important this scheme is. There is nothing more important to families who have children or an adult with a disability than to get this scheme up and running.

We know that in the first year we will see 15,250 people come into the scheme; in the second year we will see 16,200 people come into the scheme; and in the third year we will see 59,800 people come into the scheme. What my government had been arguing with the federal government about was



to increase our share of the Medicare levy. At the moment we are all paying that Medicare levy, and the federal government has decided that they will keep it and they will allocate it according to their formula.

**A government member:** They were rationing it.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They are rationing it as opposed to proportional—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, it is not. This is something that we in this House should all be proud of. Those opposite are trying to make disability a political issue—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is the side of the House which refused to have a National Disability Insurance Scheme launch site. Under my government the launch sites in Townsville, Charters Towers and Palm Island will be up and running very shortly. We are committed to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and we are committed to the 13,000 jobs that it will bring for Queenslanders right across the state.

### **Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, remove the prop.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** In this Adopt Rescued Guinea Pigs Month I refer to the Minister for Police's statement regarding his rat-shooting rampage and claims that he would lodge an RTI application with the Australian Defence Force for all records during his time in the military, and I ask: has the minister lodged this RTI, on what date and what information did he request?

### **Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order**

**Mr SPEAKER:** I rule the question out of order. I call the member for Thuringowa.

### **Thuringowa Electorate, State Infrastructure Plan**

**Mr HARPER:** My question is of the Deputy Premier. Could the Deputy Premier please outline how the State Infrastructure Plan will create jobs and how it will benefit the great residents of Thuringowa?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the honourable member for the question, and can I say do not get between the member for Thuringowa and a good infrastructure project. While we are focused on infrastructure and creating jobs, those opposite have shown that they have learned nothing and they have forgotten nothing. They come into this place with props acting like silly children, while what we want to do is build Queensland and deliver jobs. Those opposite reckon they are ready for government; I reckon they are ready for nothing but kindergarten.

The State Infrastructure Plan will deliver seven new projects with over 1,000 jobs on the ground. I am very pleased that one of the new projects that has been identified is the Riverway Drive enhancement project in Townsville. Thirty million dollars has been allocated to get this project underway, and this project is important in terms of the Port of Townsville expansion—another job-generating infrastructure project by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Riverway Drive is a very busy urban arterial road with almost 19,000 vehicle movements each and every day. The Upper Ross is currently experiencing exponential growth, with several residential expansions planned. The construction of the Port of Townsville quarry will also increase heavy vehicle movements.

In all transparency I can advise the House that those opposite did have a plan in terms of Riverway Drive, but they do not appear to have one any longer because their plan depended on the sale of assets and it also depended on Thuringowa re-electing the LNP member. We have taken asset sales off the table and it is back on the table, but there is no LNP member for Thuringowa. I table for the benefit of the House some media reports from that time.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Townsville Bulletin* online, dated 22 January 2015, titled 'LNP to duplicate Riverway Drive' [\[313\]](#).

It is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that has a plan for infrastructure in this state. It is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that has accelerated \$440 million worth of capital works in regions that are experiencing a downturn from the end of the mining boom. It is the Palaszczuk Labor government that is delivering seven new projects, including Riverway Drive in Townsville, through our \$500 million new State Infrastructure Plan. Labor plans, Labor builds and Labor delivers.



### Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to the police minister's statement regarding his rat-shooting rampage, and I ask: will he release a copy of the statement he gave to police which allegedly satisfied them that there were no charges to be laid or offence committed?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. I have already made a public statement about certain matters that have been ventilated by some and I have provided a full statement to the Queensland Police Service in response to an investigation requested by those in the opposition. That is the length and breadth of this matter. It has been fully investigated by the Police Service. I am very comfortable, of course, in the result—as I should be, because I had no case to answer, as those opposite would know if they had read the regulations in the first place. I have nothing further to offer.

### Queensland Economy

**Ms BOYD:** My question is of the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer please advise how the government has boosted Queensland's economy without resorting to asset sales?

**Mr PITT:** I thank the member for Pine Rivers for her question.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Coomera, you are warned under standing order 253A. That interjection was unnecessary. Yes, you.

**Mr PITT:** Confidence has made a comeback in Queensland. Queensland has around 70,000 new jobs, has the fastest growth of any state in Australia and has led the NAB business survey for eight months in a row. We are working with business through our market-led proposals initiative. We have already seen some great results from that and there is so much to come. The engagement with people on MLPs is exciting. In addition to that, Building Our Regions is doing wonderful things in regional Queensland. There is also our hospitals and schools maintenance program, our Business Development Fund and the Accelerated Works Program, which is now worth more than \$400 million of fast-tracked works across Queensland supporting more than 900 jobs.

We have delivered the biggest budget surplus in a decade, with more to come. There is \$35 billion over four years in our Capital Works Program. Of course, with the release of the State Infrastructure Plan we have a new state infrastructure fund of an additional \$500 million for key projects. All of this comes without asset sales.

We then have to look at what happens in terms of confidence. Queensland has been leading the nation for eight months when it comes to business confidence. In comparison, federal uncertainty is one of the things hurting confidence. We have had a GST hike thought bubble. We have seen the treasurers meeting postponed twice. The federal government floated changes to what is and is not tax deductible. They have even put doubt around the date of the budget—3 May or 10 May. There are no clear tax reform plans. They are making it up as they go along. Tax certainty and fairness are what is needed right now. What the Turnbull government is doing is damaging business confidence. Thankfully, at least they recognise that we in Queensland are leading in terms of business confidence.

Those opposite are now in their fourth year of talking down the Queensland economy, talking down fiscal management in this state. They should hang their heads in shame. That is what they have been doing, and they continue in opposition. They have not learned; they continue. They are out to destroy confidence in this state. We know that they have only a one-point plan. Guess what it is. It is asset sales—the same as it was for the past three years. They do not learn.

Uncertainty is not restricted to what is happening with tax reform; there is also uncertainty around Northern Australia. We know that the Premier has asked for legislation setting up the concessional loan scheme, which was announced in Joe Hockey's first budget. The Turnbull government promised it. The response from Minister Frydenberg's office is that it will be soon, but there is no actual time frame.

The 2015 consultation paper clearly promised legislation in the first quarter of 2016. We want to see things happen under the Northern Australia infrastructure fund. This week is the last federal sitting for the quarter. Time is running out. If Mr Morrison does not get his act together, Northern Australia will move on without him.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am informed that in our gallery observing our proceedings we have students from the Star of the Sea School, Torquay, in the electorate of Hervey Bay.

### Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

**Mr EMERSON:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the statement by the Minister for Police regarding his rat-shooting rampage, and I ask: once the police minister has obtained his military records, will the Premier commit to personally viewing those records and releasing them?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member very much for the question. I think this is the fifth or sixth question today not referring to jobs. Those opposite said that jobs would be on their agenda this week, but instead they want to muckrake and talk about rats and everything else under the sun.

The police minister has been very up-front about this issue. He has been more than open. There has been a police investigation and he has been cleared. He has been cleared. Let me repeat one more time: he has been cleared.

### Regional Queensland, Health Services

**Mr BUTCHER:** My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister advise the House how the Palaszczuk government is improving health services in regional communities including in Central Queensland?

**Mr DICK:** I am delighted to respond to a question relevant to my portfolio. Seeing that thing on the member for Kawana's shoulder reminded me of Monty Python's famous dead parrot sketch. It is like the member for Southern Downs' leadership: it is not dead; it is just sleeping. What an embarrassment. After traducing and belittling himself and the LNP opposition, he says that they are government ready. They are no more ready for government than a dead parrot.

Let us talk about what is happening in regional Queensland. The other day I was at Moura with the member for Mirani opening Queensland's first modular hospital. After the LNP said in 2013 that it was going to downgrade services, 700 people from Moura—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members. You have had a pretty good go.

**Mr DICK:** Some 700 members of that community turned out, along with the member for Mirani, to say, 'No, we do not accept this cut to services by Campbell Newman and the LNP. We want to see our hospital stay in this community.' Of course, that hospital was delivered. That is what this government will do for regional Queensland. We will deliver—

**Mr Springborg:** Not by you.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the member for Southern Downs. He was the health minister who agreed to downgrade it. A third of that community went to a public meeting—those opposite in government could not even listen to their heartland—and said, 'We do not want this government and its commitments.' The modular hospital was built and delivered. We will do the same thing in Alpha, Aramac and Aurukun.

**Mr Springborg** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** The dead parrot can squawk as much as he wants. If we ask the member for Everton what he thinks about the leadership of the member for Southern Downs he will tell is that it is just waiting for the last rites to be read before being taken out to the undertaker.

We will put \$180 million into regional hospitals as well. The Roma hospital represents the biggest public works project in Roma for 50 years. It took the Labor government to build the Roma hospital—twice, seventy years ago and today—because we deliver for all of Queensland. Wherever people live, they will get good outcomes. There will be 250 jobs for Roma. Under the \$180 million Enhancing Regional Hospitals Program, 940 jobs will be delivered across the length and breadth of Queensland. That is the sort of infrastructure the Premier and Deputy Premier will deliver. All ministers will be delivering infrastructure, jobs and better outcomes for Queensland.

### Police Service Investigation, Member for Pumicestone

**Ms DAVIS:** My question is to the Minister for Police. I refer to reports that the Queensland Police Service investigation into the member for Pumicestone has been completed and referred to an independent barrister, and I ask: what mechanisms exist to inform the public if an independent barrister's findings are different to the findings of the Queensland Police Service?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. The process that is being undertaken here is one that is completely in the domain of the Queensland Police Service. It is not my role or position to be receiving any information about those matters. It is in the domain of the Queensland Police Service,

as it rightly should be. My role as the minister, just for the member's education, is to ensure that the policy and the resources are in place for the Queensland Police Service to deliver its outcomes. I would not and have not received any advice on those matters and nor is it appropriate for me to be doing so. I find it rather unusual that the member would even ask that question given the fact that this is the domain of the Queensland Police Service, as it appropriately should be.

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. The question that was asked was clearly this: what mechanisms exist to inform the public if an independent barrister's findings are different? It is not to do with the minister providing that. What mechanisms are involved?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I find the minister's answer relevant.

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Education Council**

**Ms FARMER:** My question is directed to the Minister for Education. Will the minister update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is advocating for Queensland at the ministerial Education Council?

**Ms JONES:** Mr Speaker, as you know, the Palaszczuk Labor government is 100 per cent committed to building education in Queensland. We see it as fundamental to the future and our future growth. That is why I was deeply shocked and disturbed when the ministerial Education Council meeting due on Friday was abruptly cancelled. Why was Friday's meeting cancelled? Because the federal government does not want to talk about education. The reason it does not want to talk about education is because its plan is \$6 billion worth of cuts, and all we have had from the LNP in Queensland is deathly silence. I call on the LNP in Queensland to stand up and say whether it supports Malcolm Turnbull and \$6 billion worth of cuts to our schools—our Catholic, independent and state schools—or will it stand with us and fight for Queensland and fight for a better deal for our schools? This morning we have seen an LNP bereft of ideas. In actual fact I am starting to feel like maybe I have underestimated the member for Everton, because we had the Leader of the Opposition stand up and say in one breath that it is going to be all about jobs and then in the next breath went straight down into the gutter where we know he prefers to be. Maybe the member for Everton has delivered all of these questions for him to ask that deliberately undermine the leader. The LNP is divided and stands for nothing, and that has been demonstrated here this morning.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I would ask the minister to make sure her answer is relevant to the question.

**Ms JONES:** While we will continue to fight for Queensland and while we will continue to stand against the \$6 billion cuts, I call on the LNP to put schools first, to put students first, to put our education sector first and start lobbying your federal colleagues—some of which you will be if you have the form, Jeff. You are arguing to be federal members. You are leaving the ship trying to get on the federal ticket. I call on you: please start fighting for schools in Queensland. Instead of rifling through your toy box, get on the soapbox and start fighting for Queensland. We are sick to death of the antics that you come into this parliament with when we have serious issues afoot. We have a federal government that will not even meet with states ahead of the federal budget. We have \$6 billion worth of cuts to state schools, to Catholic schools and to independent schools in Queensland and we hear nothing from the shadow minister, nothing from the Leader of the Opposition, nothing from the shadow Treasurer. They are deathly silent when it comes to the things that matter. When it comes to jobs, when it comes to education, when it comes to health, when it comes to Queensland's future, you hear nothing but personal attacks—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Glass House, Minister, I would remind you and urge you not to use the word 'you'. In relation to the recent interjections by the members for Albert and Toowoomba North, you are both warned under standing order 253A. Many of the interjections you made were simply disorderly and in my view designed to try to disrupt the speaker. You are now warned under standing order 253A. If you persist, you know the consequences.

### **Police Service Investigation, Member for Pumicestone**

**Mr POWELL:** My question is directed to the Premier. I refer to completed Queensland Police Service investigations into the member for Pumicestone, and I ask: can the Premier inform this House whether she, any cabinet colleagues or any ministerial staff in any ministerial office have been privy to the preliminary findings of this investigation?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I can speak for myself and the answer is no, no, no.

**Ms Trad:** We are not the Bjelke-Petersen government.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take that interjection: this is not the Bjelke-Petersen government. Some members on the other side may think that it is okay to ask questions and interfere, but I do not. Everybody is aware that there is a police investigation underway at the moment and the Police Commissioner—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Then it is up to the Police Commissioner to announce that.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Maryborough, I am informed that we have students from the Woodcrest State College in the electorate of Bundamba in our gallery observing our proceedings.

### Industry Action Plan

**Mr SAUNDERS:** My question is directed to the Minister for State Development. Will the minister outline to the House how the government is advancing Queensland with a 10-year industry action plan?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for Maryborough for his question. The member is keenly aware how the Palaszczuk government is focusing on developing the industries of Queensland. Critical regional areas just like Maryborough stand to benefit from our vision. This government wants to advance Queensland and create a globally focused, diverse economy generating the high-skilled jobs for the future. We will drive this process with our action plans for emerging sectors—all of them out over the next couple of months. Later this month the biofutures road map and action plan will be considered at the biofutures cabinet subcommittee in Gladstone. As the Premier flagged last month, an industry development fund is also being considered. It will look to give financial help to first investors in the biofuels industry. An Advanced Manufacturing discussion paper has been released and is open for consultation until the end of next week on 24 March. This discussion paper identifies opportunities and challenges for Queensland manufacturers, including outbidding cheaper imported products. I would say this to manufacturers out there: have your say and be part of your industry's future. We are open to your ideas. A workshop was held in the member for Maryborough's electorate earlier this month with local businesses, and I heard it was very successful as well. There have also been workshops in Springfield, Cairns, Townsville, Caboolture, Mackay, Gladstone and the Gold Coast.

The mining equipment, technology and services sector has our attention as well. Australia's METS sector is worth an estimated \$90 billion and we have more than 400 METS companies here in Queensland. The sector generates more than \$21 billion in gross revenue and we want Queensland to be an even bigger player. We committed \$6 million over four years to attract the national METS Industry Growth Centre, METS Ignited, to Queensland to further develop and commercialise innovative ideas. Consultation with METS companies about the road map and action plan begins next month. We will also be developing two separate but related Defence and aerospace road maps. The Defence white paper is helping to guide the development of a Defence industries action plan. This will maximise opportunities here in Queensland. During the last financial year, Queensland companies secured \$3.6 billion in Defence contracts. We have first-rate aerospace companies and our unmanned vehicles are amongst the best in the world. These action plans will drive how industry and government work together over the next decade to make Queensland the home of high-value, high-skilled jobs.

### Queensland Nickel

**Mr LAST:** My question without notice is to the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. Given that today marks two months since the Palaszczuk government mobilised its so-called rapid response team to assist redundant workers at Queensland Nickel's Yabulu refinery, what is the government doing to assist the now hundreds of retrenched workers and others in North Queensland seeking jobs?

**Mrs O'ROURKE:** I thank the member for the question. I am very proud that the Premier took rapid action in response to what was happening in Townsville. The rapid response team has been working very closely with those on the ground. We have a 13QGOV number in place that people can contact to be linked with direct support services. At the time, the Premier brought quite a few cabinet ministers to Townsville to meet with local mayors and business leaders to identify particular projects in that area. At that time the Premier announced the Accelerated Works Program, which was part of the five-point plan that was also announced on that day.

In conjunction with the Accelerated Works Program, the five-point plan focuses on expanding retraining, skills initiatives, attracting increased Commonwealth funding, increasing tourism attraction and facilitating key private sector projects. We know that Townsville is doing it tough at the moment, but we have the announcement of the \$210 million worth of accelerated works, which will be commencing and supporting about 480 jobs. We also have \$100 million towards the stadium on the table. All we are waiting for is Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to make a commitment to North Queensland. We also have in the new State Infrastructure Plan projects like berth 4, which will contribute 100 jobs. We have had the announcement of the Riverway Drive project, which will contribute 308 jobs.

This government is focused on jobs. We have delivered and talked about projects that will be creating jobs with millions of dollars worth of funding behind them. I am very proud that this government is focused on what is happening in Townsville at the moment. Unfortunately, we have Clive Palmer, who, as the Treasurer indicated before, is far from telling the truth with regard to his operations. We have called on him to do the right thing by his workers and make the commitment that he said that he would.

### **National Disability Insurance Scheme, Bilateral Agreement**

**Mr CRAWFORD:** My question is the Minister for Disability Services. Will the minister advise the House how important the bilateral agreement is for the rollout of the NDIS and particularly in regional Queensland?

**Mrs O'ROURKE:** I thank the member for the question. I had the pleasure of visiting his electorate recently and I had the opportunity to chat with some of the organisations. I understand that they are very concerned about having the bilateral agreement signed and the rollout for the NDIS.

As the Premier mentioned earlier, this morning I had the pleasure of joining her to sign Queensland's NDIS bilateral agreement. This will spell out the how, the when and the where we will transition to the NDIS. That means that we are one step closer to giving certainty to people with disability and their families. We now need Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to sign that bilateral agreement. Earlier this month, I attended the Disability Reform Council meeting and I had the opportunity to meet with the new Queensland based federal assistant disability minister, Jane Prentice, who assured me that there would be a commitment to signing the agreement within a week. However, we are still waiting for that signing to be done.

Many people who I have spoken to are counting down to 1 July, because they know what the NDIS will mean for them. They know that, for the first time, they will have choice and control over their lives. We also know that the NDIS will more than double the number of people receiving disability services—to more than 90,000 people by the end of the rollout. As the Premier said, we will also see that create more than 13,000 jobs in the disability sector alone, which will inject more than \$4 billion each year into the Queensland economy. Many of these jobs will be in regional and remote areas, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

As a member representing a regional area and a minister for the north, I know how important these jobs are for the regions. For example, in my region—the broader part of Townsville to Mount Isa and north to the gulf—we will be looking at 660 jobs in the disability sector alone. In the region of the member for Barron River—Far North Queensland, including Cairns, the Tablelands, Cape York and Torres Strait—we are looking at creating up to 700 jobs. In Mackay and Whitsunday, we will be looking at about 408 jobs. These jobs will have a huge impact on our regions right across the state.

The federal government's inaction is impacting on jobs, economic growth and opportunities for people with disability, their families and carers. That is why we need Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to put pen to paper and sign the bilateral agreement.

### **Varsity Lakes Railway Station, Land**

**Mr HART:** My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Infrastructure. I refer to 8.4 hectares of land that surrounds the Varsity Lakes train station, which has been released for sale by the state government. I table a picture of the advertisement in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* and a picture of the sign on the land. I ask: as this 8.4 hectares of land is an asset of the people of Queensland and is for sale, how does that fit with the Labor government's much-stated mantra that state assets will not be sold?

*Tabled paper:* Photograph, undated, of a sign advertising a land release adjacent to Varsity Lakes train station [314].

*Tabled paper:* Extract, undated, from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* app, showing an advertisement for a land release adjacent to the Varsity Lakes train station [315].

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the member for the question. I will look into the specifics of this particular project, but I can inform the House that, when the Department of Transport and Main Roads—and I advise that the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Main Roads can attest to this as well—looks at planning and delivering infrastructure, it buys significant amounts of land. In fact, the Department of Transport and Main Roads is a significant landholder in Queensland because, in order to plan the major infrastructure projects that we need, we need the land to do that, which is what we did with Cross River Rail until those opposite sold all the land that we had purchased to deliver Cross River Rail. When a station upgrade occurs, when a road is delivered, finalised and operational, there is surplus land to requirements. Land that is no longer—

**Mr HART:** I rise to a point of order. The question was clearly how does this fit in with the Labor government's mantra that they will not sell state assets.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Burleigh. You are aware of the standing orders. There is no point of order.

**Ms TRAD:** As I was explaining, after major infrastructure projects are delivered by Labor, what tends to happen is land that is no longer required for that infrastructure project—

**Ms Grace:** 'Hect-acres' of it.

**Ms TRAD:** 'Hect-acres' of it. I will take that interjection from the Minister for Employment, not the Minister for Education. When that land is surplus to requirement, rather than sitting there dormant—doing nothing, returning nothing to the Queensland taxpayers—we release it to the business community so that they can do important things, like develop transport orientated development so they can build the housing and the accommodation that Queenslanders need, that a growing state needs and people can travel to their place of employment because—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I call the Deputy Premier.

**Ms TRAD:** What we do is release land strategically for development because that returns capital to the state and it grows our region, it grows our state. Can I say that I completely stand by what the Department of Transport and Main Roads does in terms of building the infrastructure that Labor plans and also making sure that we have the housing that Queenslanders need for the future. We stand by it. Labor builds. Labor delivers.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Redlands, I believe you have been making numerous interjections. Most of those comments were, it appeared to me, designed to disrupt or not relevant so I now put you on warning. You are now warned under standing order 253A.

### **Innovation and Start-up Ecosystem**

**Mr BROWN:** My question is to the Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business. Can the minister please tell the House how the Palaszczuk government is attracting new investment to Queensland to kickstart the state's start-up ecosystem?

**Ms ENOCH:** I thank the member for the question. As the member is a former pathology scientist, I know how aware he is of the importance of preparing Queenslanders for the state's shift towards the knowledge economy into the future. The Palaszczuk government is committed to strengthening our state's global position as an investment destination, creating opportunities for Queensland businesses and delivering more jobs for Queenslanders. As mentioned by the Premier earlier, next month our government will host high-profile global industry leaders in innovation and technology in Brisbane as part of our drive for new investment and new jobs. The first Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit will be held between 27 and 29 April. As well as putting Queensland on the world stage as an investment-ready destination, it is an opportunity to showcase the best and brightest ideas from every region in our state.

Part of the three-day program includes a start-up festival where Queensland start-ups will have an opportunity to showcase their talents and promote their potential to local and international investors. To ensure all Queenslanders have the opportunity to participate, 50 regional start-ups from around the state will be part funded by the Palaszczuk government to attend both the summit and the festival. We know that regional Queensland is a rich source of innovative ideas and start-ups. The regional Queensland start-up ecosystem report, which I now table, found that 83 start-ups employing 450 people are located in our regions.

*Tabled paper:* Document, dated January 2016, titled 'Regional Queensland 2015 Startup Ecosystem Report: A report on the People, Groups and Companies involved in Regional Queensland's startup sector' [\[316\]](#).

Regional Queensland has a promising level of engagement in some of the most innovative new technologies coming to market. These include autonomous vehicles, drones, advanced internet connected sensors and advanced robotics for use in industrial and agricultural markets. Connecting global investors, customers and local start-ups underlines our government's commitment to creating a vibrant, statewide innovation and start-up ecosystem. There has never been a better time to get involved in the innovation movement in Queensland.

This summit is the opportunity for Queensland companies with innovative ideas to put themselves on the global map. With the world coming to Queensland, I urge anyone who wants to get involved to register their interest on the Advance Queensland website. This is a government that understands what is required for the future. We understand what is happening with the economy. We have a plan in place that is called Advance Queensland. We are bringing the world to Queensland to execute and implement that plan and the summit is just the beginning of it.

### **Gold Coast, Dental Services**

**Miss BARTON:** My question is to the Minister for Health. Can the minister advise what measures are being put in place to ensure that dental patients on the Gold Coast waiting list are not facing extended delays due to the retirement and pending retirement of orthodontic specialists on the Gold Coast.

**Mr DICK:** As the member for Broadwater knows, the delivery of health services is the responsibility of the board and the executive of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service.

**Mr Rickuss:** Sit down then.

**Mr DICK:** I am asked to sit down by one of the members opposite. I am asked to sit down after they have asked me a question on this issue.

**Mr Rickuss:** But you're not going to answer it.

**Mr DICK:** That was the member for Lockyer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, with respect, I do not want a debate across the chamber.

**Mr DICK:** I will take the interjection from the member for Lockyer and I will not sit down because the opposition, as part of their tactics, whatever those tactics may have been today, because it is not clear to anyone in Queensland what they believe in or what they stand for—

**Miss BARTON:** I rise to a point of order. I asked the minister what he would be doing as the Minister for Health to address this very serious issue on the Gold Coast and I ask that he address the question.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I would urge you to make your answer relevant to the question.

**Mr DICK:** I am happy to answer the question. As the member for Broadwater knows, it is the responsibility of hospital and health services to deliver health services.

**Miss Barton:** You are the health minister and you are doing nothing.

**Mr DICK:** I am answering your question, member for Broadwater. Please desist and I will answer it. Please hold on. As all members know, this is a system that was implemented by the Labor government in 2012. The board appointments were finalised and implemented by those members opposite and the reality is—

**Miss Barton** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Broadwater, you have asked your question. It is very clear. There is no necessity for the continual interjections.

**Mr DICK:** The system is that I am a health system manager along with the department and the services are delivered by hospital and health services. That has been the system in Queensland for around four years now. What the member for Broadwater can do is ensure that the resources that we need in Queensland come to our state from the federal government because it is going to cut \$11.8 billion out of hospital and health services in Queensland, including reviewing dental health plans.

**Miss Barton:** You are doing nothing.

**Mr DICK:** They ask questions, but they do not want to hear the answer. They are not interested.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I would urge you not to debate the question. Member for Broadwater, I have been able to hear a lot of your interjections. Most of those appear to be designed to try to disrupt. I would urge you to consider your interjections.

**Mr DICK:** If the member for Broadwater is concerned and she has specific concerns, please write to me. As I have done with other members of the opposition, including the member for Mudgeeraba, I will write personally to the chair, Mr Ian Langdon, and pass that on. One thing that the Liberal National Party can do is ensure that \$11.8 million is not ripped out of Queensland health systems. She needs to write to Stuart Robert, that leading member of the Liberal National Party in her federal division, and get him to stand up for Queensland, as all members opposite should because we simply will not be able to deliver services. All of our performance targets, national emergency access targets, national elective surgery targets, will go out the window.

In fact, she does not even have to write to her local federal member, she can write to the member for Callide and the member for Toowoomba South and ask them to stand up for Queensland because without those funds we simply will not be able to deliver effective health services in Queensland.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I remind members that question time finishes in two minutes.

### **Police Service, Women's Week**

**Ms LINARD:** My question is to the Minister for Police. Given the celebrations across the state for Queensland's inaugural Women's Week, can the minister please advise the House of any Queensland Police Service activities that support women in the workforce?

**Mr BYRNE:** I thank the member for the question. I know the member has a long standing and positive relationship with local police and emergency services and a firm commitment to seeing women succeed in the workplace. I am pleased to advise that the Queensland Police Service is pursuing a new human resources and recruitment strategy with the aspiration of increasing female recruitment to 50 per cent.

The government strongly supports this strategy. This strategy recognises that an effective police service must reflect the community it serves and improving the service's gender balance is critical to that goal. Accordingly, the theme of this year's campaign is 'That could be me'. Recruiting staff have been delivering seminars, attending events, talking to potential recruits and handing out 'That could be me' material across the state to promote their recruiting strategy.

The evidence shows that there are a comparatively low number of women in positions within the service. As of 30 June last year, the Queensland Police Service has 11,875 officers and recruits; 3,099 of those are female. That equates to approximately 30 per cent of the workforce. I note that when Queensland Fire and Emergency Service Commissioner Katarina Carroll began her career as a police recruit, the number of women in the Queensland Police Service was approximately four per cent. Our ambassadors for this program are drawn from across the service, constable to assistant commissioner, and from units as diverse as the forensic science section to the squad stock, child protection and Road Policing Command. I commend those officers for taking part in this campaign. I assure the women and men of the Queensland Police Service that the Palaszczuk government will do its part to ensure that officers and staff receive the support they need to get on with the job of keeping Queenslanders safe. Finally, I commend the service for this initiative, which has been very much born from within the service itself.

## **MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance**



**Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.30 am): From listening to the government this morning it is pretty obvious that its dysfunction is leading to lost jobs and lost opportunities in the state of Queensland. Just two weeks ago, on the last sitting day of this parliament the unemployment rate in this state grew by half a per cent from 5.9 per cent to 6.4 per cent. The hapless old Treasurer and the hapless Minister for Transport are completely and absolutely clueless on how to address this issue. Indeed, their contribution to economic growth and prosperity is to do less with less.

Some 13 months ago, they promised us an infrastructure plan that was worth waiting for. Fast-forward 13 months and what did we get? A \$36 billion Infrastructure Plan that is \$4 billion less than what was being promised. It is an Infrastructure Plan worth \$4 billion less than what was delivered by the LNP government in Queensland. The other day, the Deputy Premier went out with some sort of exclusive expose, but within a couple of hours it went up in smoke and she was forced to admit that the Infrastructure Plan was actually worth less than what had been promoted previously. The Deputy



Premier also indicated that they had no way of paying for it. However, the most extraordinary indignity came when the Premier finally arose from her slumber last Friday and, after 13 months of procrastination, 13 months of talking in circles and 13 months of absolute and complete cluelessness, decided to speed dial Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. She said to the Prime Minister, 'I want you to match my contribution to the Queensland Infrastructure Plan'.

I certainly hope that the Prime Minister does not match the Premier's contribution to the Infrastructure Plan, because it is \$4 billion short. The only way that the Prime Minister could match the plea from the Premier would be to spend less in Queensland than he was actually planning to spend, because they have cut the Infrastructure Plan down significantly. I have faith and confidence that the Prime Minister will treat the people of Queensland and the infrastructure planning that this state needs with due deference and respect, and with the appropriate level of resources, which we have not seen from this government.

Our question is very simple: what is this Premier going to do to ensure that she makes good on her promise to introduce into this parliament real job-creating legislation, not job-destroying legislation? At the moment, in this parliament the only legislation that we have is job-destroying legislation. Whilst we cannot talk about the details, it impacts the mining industry, it impacts the racing industry and it impacts the sovereign property right entitlements of landholders who produce food and fibre for our communities. That is the legislation that is before this parliament. That is why an hour or so ago I rose in this place and said that our focus will be on introducing into the House major motions on issues that provide opportunities to create jobs in the state of Queensland. Whilst I cannot talk on two of the things that I have referred to, I can talk on one.

Only a week or so ago, I had the privilege of going to the Capricorn Coast and meeting with some 80 members of the community to talk about a proposal for a limited offshore casino licence for Great Keppel Island. It was great to see the enthusiasm of the people for that proposal, which they believe will create 1,500 jobs either in the construction stage or ongoing for the people of Central Queensland. They certainly need that. That is the focus of one of the motions that we will move in the parliament this week. The government will have an opportunity to stand up and match us. This government and the local member can stand up and finally say where they stand on this issue. We cannot ignore the aspirations of and the opportunities for the people of the Capricorn Coast and broader Central Queensland, who are very interested in the opportunities around tourism and tourism expansion offered by this particular proposal.

This morning during question time, the Premier gave no explanations. Indeed, she displayed her signature cluelessness. When we asked her about the Queensland Police Service investigation into the honourable member for Pumicestone, the Premier said, 'Maybe the Police Commissioner will make that available at a time of his choosing'. I have news for the Premier: he did that last week when he said that this matter was going to be referred on for some form of quality assurance review, whatever that means. Today, again the government was not prepared to stand up and answer justifiable questions from the opposition about the process to now be followed with regards to the release of that information if there is a conflict. That does not mean all aspects of the police investigation, but only what will happen with regards to the member for Pumicestone, particularly if there is a conflict between the so-called quality assurance review and what the Queensland Police Service has found as part of its investigations.

We heard nothing to justify the appalling treatment by government members of the member for Cairns. It was not the fault of the member for Cairns that he was driven out of the Labor Party due to scandalous and intimidatory behaviour by members of the government. When someone has been bullied, intimidated and treated in such a disrespectful way, probably he has little option. However, today we heard nothing from the Premier. Has the Premier called in the Deputy Premier and hauled her over the coals? Today the Premier was not even able to tell the parliament succinctly and truthfully whether she has spoken to the Deputy Premier about this matter, to tell her that her behaviour towards the member for Cairns and potentially other members was not what one would expect of someone of the Deputy Premier's standing in the Queensland parliament. Today the Premier was not able to stand up and say whether the quite outrageous comments of the member for Barron River about the member for Cairns impinged upon the state government's anti-bullying policies and programs. She was not able to talk about that. She was not prepared to touch on that particular question.

In the past 12 months, the only thing that this Premier really had to do was to keep her government and her party together. Fast forward 13 months and they have lost two members of the party; two members of this government. That says a lot about the leadership incapability of the member

for Inala. It says a lot about the dysfunction within the Labor Party in Queensland. The Labor Party was never ready for government. This is an accidental government that came to power with a significant amount of goodwill from the people of Queensland, but it has let those people down.

They said that jobs, infrastructure and prosperity would be their focus. All we have seen is escalating levels of unemployment and de-escalating levels of employment growth in Queensland. We have seen no hope or opportunity with regard to major mining projects in this state. We have only seen sovereign risk for those people who are wanting to invest significantly in the amazing land mass and opportunity of Queensland to grow our agricultural opportunities.


We have not seen the necessary grunt go into or focus on our wonderful tourism industry in Queensland. Going back some four months ago we had the embarrassment of the Minister for Tourism who tried four iterations to get the tourism investment plan right. Today, we are waiting for iteration five or six. We have seen complete procrastination and cluelessness from this government in terms of the way they have operated in this state.

I was intrigued this morning to hear the member for Woodridge, the Minister for Health, stand up in this place and claim credit for what is happening with the Moura Hospital, the Aramac health facility and the Alpha health facility. All of those facilities were planned, designed and funded by the LNP in government to ensure an expansion of services in those areas in a very innovative way. That was overseen by the Ministerial Health Infrastructure Advisory Council, headed up by the well-respected Gunter DeGraeve. It put in place a process of module hospital development which allowed us to be able to quickly respond to community needs.

This government is completely clueless. It has no plan now, no plan ever, no plan for the future. The only thing that is keeping this state going now are legacy programs from the LNP that was in government for three years.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Gladstone, I am informed that we have in the gallery students from the Mudgeeraba State School in the electorate of Mudgeeraba observing our proceedings. Welcome to the parliament.

### **Gladstone Electorate, State Infrastructure Plan**

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (11.41 am): I rise today to speak about the Palaszczuk government's State Infrastructure Plan and what it will deliver for my electorate of Gladstone. This plan, the first in more than three years, will drive the Gladstone economy and deliver the infrastructure the region desperately needs to grow and generate jobs. It delivers on another Palaszczuk government election commitment to ensure Queensland, once again, has a statewide infrastructure plan.

The establishment of the new State Infrastructure Plan, with an initial investment of \$500 million, will see \$40 million invested in my electorate and others, including the electorates of Callide and Mirani, to fast-track the delivery of the Dawson Highway timber bridge replacement program. This is something that the people of my electorate have been crying out for. Once again, we see that the Palaszczuk Labor government is listening to and delivering for Gladstone.

This \$40 million commitment will see five timber bridges at Catfish Creek, Nine Mile Creek, Sheep Station Creek, Maxwellton Creek and Doubtful Creek replaced with more durable and reliable concrete structures. These new structures will widen the Dawson Highway at these five locations, significantly increasing safety for all road users, including heavy haulage vehicles.

This project will significantly improve the region's freight operations and open up new opportunities by lifting the existing weight limitation in place on these old timber bridges, which currently see some vehicles travelling hundreds of additional kilometres via Rockhampton. This will also be of great benefit to the people of the Mirani electorate. I know that the member for Mirani, Jim Pearce, also welcomed this announced by the Palaszczuk government on Sunday.

The agricultural industry across our communities will benefit from better access to the Gladstone port. It is the lifeblood of our region and the Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting our local farmers. This investment in the Dawson Highway will make it easier for local producers to access the port and maximise their export opportunities safely and efficiently.

I know this announcement will be welcomed by the primary producers in my area, in particular Will Wilson from Calliope Station and Leo Neill-Ballantine from Galloway Plains, who have met with me on numerous occasions to discuss how we can ensure better access to the Gladstone port for our farmers. For cattle farmer Will Wilson, having road train access into the port is essential for growing his


business. With about 14½ thousand cattle on his property at Calliope Station, Mr Wilson is one of the biggest producers in Central Queensland. He and his fellow cattle producer Leo Neill-Ballantine are among a group trying to establish a new industry for the port—box chilled beef. I know at the recent community cabinet meeting held in Gladstone both Leo and Will were very passionate about their plight when talking to the Premier. Obviously, given this announcement, the Premier is listening. These businesses will get on with it. Without a secure supply route and direct access to the port, attracting investors has been very hard. Now there will be higher profit margins for these business models because less money will be spent on fuel and less time wasted driving back and forth from Gracemere.

The State Infrastructure Plan is what investors have been wanting to see and hear. As the member for Gladstone, I welcome this investment in local infrastructure. The Palaszczuk government has demonstrated its commitment to the people of my electorate who are feeling the impact of the downturn in the resource sector. Not only will this bridge replacement program generate many jobs in the short term, but the future potential for my electorate with the upgrade of this road network is huge.

Since the beginning of 2015 the Queensland government has approved almost \$2 billion in infrastructure spending commitments for Queensland, including a new high school at Calliope in my electorate and an accident and emergency department upgrade. The Queensland government is investing \$10.1 billion in infrastructure this financial year, supporting 27½ thousand jobs. Over the forward estimates, government capital investment will be more than \$35 billion.

The Queensland government is committed to delivering the economic and social infrastructure projects that are needed in the Fitzroy region. Through the State Infrastructure Plan the Fitzroy region now has an infrastructure blueprint and a clear four-year pipeline of work that will meet the future needs and demands of our area, where the population is increasing every year, and deliver economic growth and jobs year after year. I thank the Palaszczuk government for investing in the Gladstone region to continue the great work that we do at the Gladstone port and for getting on with the job.

### Member for Cairns

 **Mr PYNE** (Cairns—Ind) (11.46 am): I rise to speak of my decision to resign from the Australian Labor Party and become the Independent member for Cairns—a decision that has caused much feedback to my office, bouquets and brickbats, though thankfully more of the former than the later. I table an example.

*Tabled paper:* Statutory declaration, dated 23 February 2016, by Mr Jason Ward regarding contempt of parliament and bullying [\[317\]](#).

In relation to criticism that I have betrayed those who voted for me on the basis of my ALP membership, I point out that I have a lifetime of commitment to and remain a part of the wider labour movement. In fact, it is my belief, the way I will continue to vote in this place will be, if anything, more consistent with the commonly held beliefs of rank and file ALP members and working Queenslanders. The most difficulty the parliamentary Labor Party will find securing my vote will be when they stray from these very values.

Many party members who are motivated by progressive values will continue to support me. However, in making my decision, I certainly was well braced for the response from some of the less enlightened true believers. Those most outraged by my decision have been those for whom party politics is little more than a partisan game, based on Neanderthal tribalism, and those for whom the Labor Party is not a matter of conviction but a vehicle for career advancement. The irony in some of the criticism from those folk has been their lack of knowledge of Labor history. I doubt they would know Tom Aitkens, Fred Paterson or other icons of the movement. In fact, I doubt some of them would know TJ Ryan from OJ Simpson.

Worst still, they cannot even get their pejoratives right. I have been referred to as a traitor, a megalomaniac and an LNP dog. Whereas, anyone with an ounce of knowledge of Labor history would know the correct term is rat. Get it right, pass the cheese and make sure it is FNQ's own Mungalli Creek ricotta!

On a serious note, most of the poor language and rude comments were directed at my staff. Tanya and Mary are not paid to put up with this sort of rubbish. Anyone who really respected the treatment of workers would not have engaged in that sort of behaviour.

I am unapologetic and demand my right to vote according to my conscience. This is the one state parliament that surely needs bold and active members of the Legislative Assembly, as we have no upper house acting as a check on executive power. In saying no to business as usual, I am fully aware




I am proud to be delivering the Queensland government funded \$168 million Lawnton to Petrie quad track North Pine River rail bridge, readying our community for the Moreton Bay Rail Link, which I am also proud to be delivering. I am proud to be delivering \$20 million to replace the ageing rail bridges which span the South Pine River and Tributary Creek will also include a realignment of the track which means that trains will now have the capability to increase speed from 60 kilometres an hour to 100 kilometres an hour over the two bridges. I am proud to be delivering a \$15 million upgrade to the Strathpine station, increasing capacity and delivering equity of access. These Labor initiatives will have significant positive effects on the people of my community.

The State Infrastructure Plan completely transformed how Queensland prioritises infrastructure. This was made very clear when we established Building Queensland to provide our government with independent, expert advice and ensure infrastructure projects government-wide are prioritised based on rigorous business cases including cost-benefit analyses and community benefits.

The \$500 million State Infrastructure Fund is funded in this year's budget without the need for new borrowings. Labor builds our communities up. Unlike those on the other side of the House, we do not tear our communities down. The State Infrastructure Plan is a roadmap as we take our communities forward to a better place than what we inherited from those opposite.

We have a vision. We have the leadership. We have the plan. We are working every day to make our communities better places to live, and it is a stark contrast to the LNP in government.

### Vegetation Management Framework

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (11.55 am): Just over 12 months ago when we came back to this parliament we were told that the Palaszczuk government would be a listening government. Just over 12 months ago when we came back to this parliament we were told that the Palaszczuk government would be accountable and it would consult with the people of Queensland on its issues. Recently there have been several reports in the media that this week will see the Palaszczuk government introduce into this parliament a bill to amend the vegetation management framework in Queensland in order to keep its commitments to the extreme Greens in Queensland that were made in return for the preferences that the Labor Party received at the 2015 state election.

I rise today to advise the House that the LNP will move to protect the rights of Queensland landholders to responsibly manage vegetation on their properties following the dismal failure of the Palaszczuk government to consult with key landowners. Today I advise the House that the LNP will vote against the introduction of any bill by the Palaszczuk Labor government to change vegetation management laws on its first reading.

The Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has repeatedly told this parliament that no change to the vegetation management framework will be made without extensive consultation with farmers and landholders. This consultation has not occurred. The Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines last year announced the formation of a community round table to consult stakeholders. That round table we know has only met once and it has failed to reach any consensus about what changes should come into this parliament in terms of the existing vegetation management framework.

What happened to those promises that we heard just over 12 months ago from the Palaszczuk government that it would be a listening government, that it would be an accountable government and that it would be a government that would consult its stakeholders? They have gone out the door. The consultation process failed after just one meeting, and they have absolutely no consent from those important stakeholders to go down this track.

I table four examples from the *Record of Proceedings* of this parliament. The first is from the estimates hearing of the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee from 19 August 2015 when the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines outlined his commitment for that consultation process to occur before any changes would come into this House.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from *Record of Proceedings*, dated 19 August 2015, Estimates hearing, Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines [318].

I table the *Hansard* record from 15 September 2015 when this House debated the estimates committee report from that committee when he said very clearly on the record—

Once I receive the report from the round table, the government will carefully consider the recommended actions in the context of our election commitments.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from *Record of Proceedings*, dated 15 September 2015, speech by the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Dr Lynham) on Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee: Report No. 7—2015-16 Budget Estimates [319].

Again, I table the *Hansard* record from 27 October last year when the minister repeated his commitment to that roundtable process.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from *Record of Proceedings*, dated 27 October 2015, speech by the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Dr Lynham) on a motion by the member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Andrew Cripps MP, regarding changes to the agriculture industry [320].

Again, I table the *Hansard* record from 24 February this year when in a motion the minister reiterated that his government and he in particular as the minister responsible would focus on the consultation process involved in that roundtable process before any changes would be made.

*Tabled paper:* Extract from *Record of Proceedings*, dated 24 February 2016, speech by the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines (Dr Lynham) on a motion moved by the member for Dalrymple, Mr Shane Knuth MP, regarding changes to the Vegetation Management Framework [321].

We know who is behind this. I have a letter here dated 8 September 2015 to the Premier from the Wilderness Society demanding that the preference deal that was agreed between the Labor Party and the Greens be honoured. I table that letter from the Wilderness Society. That is what is behind this.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 8 September 2015, from the Queensland Campaigns Manager, The Wilderness Society, Dr Tim Seelig, to the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, regarding restoring Queensland's nation-leading land clearing laws [322].

We know that the stakeholders feel very strongly that the consultation process has been a joke. A press release from AgForce Queensland dated 28 November last year stated—

Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk today turned her back on farmers battling Queensland's worst-ever drought and turned her back on her government's own consultation process.

I table that press release from AgForce Queensland.


*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Premier turns her back on Qld farmers' [323].

Standing order 130 in relation to the first reading of bills introduced into this parliament very clearly states that, after the minister moves that the bill be now read a first time, the question shall be put without amendment or debate. I rise today to give notice that the LNP will oppose the first reading of any bill that comes from the Palaszczuk Labor government to amend the vegetation management framework, because they have not delivered on the undertakings that they gave to those stakeholders. They are not transparent, they are not accountable, they do not consult and they do not listen.

The Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines should carefully consider his integrity and his reputation, because he gave undertakings to the stakeholder groups that will be affected by that legislation, and if he goes back on his word he should be ashamed of himself.

(Time expired)

### Queensland Nickel

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (12.00 pm): I rise today to discuss the ongoing debacle relating to Clive Palmer's Queensland nickel refinery in Townsville. We now have another 550 people being cast upon the shores of unemployment in Townsville. These are not the only jobs lost, as 237 workers were sacked a couple of months ago. That is nearly 890 direct jobs gone. There is probably over a thousand indirect jobs—contractors and others—that will be affected and people will be left hurting in the Townsville community.

I wonder whether Mr Palmer really has an idea of the hurt he is causing to these workers, their families and our entire community. It is another kick in the guts for Townsville. It is another kick in the guts for North Queensland. Thank you, Mr Palmer; thanks for nothing. This bloke has some hide. The self-proclaimed billionaire and federal member of parliament is a mug in every sense of the word. He is on a hiding to nothing if he turns up to Townsville now because there are some extremely frustrated and justifiably angry people who want answers, as we saw last night on TV, and I am one of them.

There is not a rock big enough for Mr Palmer to hide under. What hypocrisy in blaming the Queensland government for the QNI demise! The man is truly removed from reality. The *Townsville Bulletin* got it right on Friday with its front page article 'Black Friday' which detailed the workers who that afternoon were told they were gone and that their jobs did not matter. I want to articulate the government's response to that. We saw that with the first 237 workers: the rapid response teams and the accelerated Capital Works Program that was made to create jobs in North Queensland. I do not want to attend another sacked workers forum in Townsville. I spoke with workers after the recent forum on Friday and once again they expressed anger, frustration and anxiety. We have seen this just two



months after the first forums at Riverway. I know that every person on this side of the House wants to ensure that we have jobs for Queensland, and I know the Palaszczuk government is doing what it can to ensure jobs are created.


The situation cannot go on. The ebbs and flows, the constant yo-yoing, are affecting people's lives. At the last creditors meeting the offer with conditions of assistance from the Queensland government of \$10 million was being considered. Then, surprisingly, a reportedly broke Mr Palmer came up with \$23 million to buy the rights to operate the refinery. I created a new hashtag that day: #whattheClive. We just cannot figure it out. I created another one today in the House: #backfire for the member for Kawana, who treats this place as a joke when we are talking about jobs and job creation in this parliament.

After seeing the previous government sacking workers in their thousands, we know this has a very real effect on people's lives. It creates undue stress and anxiety and places pressure on marriages. I can inform the House that on the day of this news we had people leaving workplaces to go home to be with their family members who had just been told that their jobs at QNI no longer matter.

I am proud to be part of a Palaszczuk government that on the weekend announced the State Infrastructure Plan. The announcement of the Riverway Drive duplication in Thuringowa is fantastic. It is warranted and needed, and it is a job creator. I thank the Palaszczuk government, the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the main roads minister and the Treasurer for listening to the people of Thuringowa and creating a major infrastructure project that will create jobs in our region.

This is fantastic news for the people of Thuringowa. I know that we are getting on with the job of serious job creation in Queensland. I think the State Infrastructure Plan articulates very clearly that the Queensland government is serious about job creation throughout the regions. I thank all those relevant ministers for their dedication to the cause and for looking after the people of Thuringowa. It is a job that is needed. I am getting on with delivering it. That is what I was elected for, unlike the previous member who made promises but failed to deliver.

### State Infrastructure Plan

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.05 pm): I note that the former speaker spoke about the Infrastructure Plan. We on this side of the House know there is little hope of the Palaszczuk Labor government's so-called Infrastructure Plan ending Queensland's year-long infrastructure freeze. With much fanfare on Sunday we saw the Deputy Premier, the Premier and the transport minister standing as far as away from each other as they could at a press conference in the photo that I am able to table. They were going on about the importance of the plan, but after all that time all they could produce on Sunday was a glossy document reannouncing projects.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I cannot quite hear the interjections of the member for Yeerongpilly. Speak up a bit and I will take the interjections if I choose to, but I cannot if I cannot hear them.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! I ask both members to direct their conversation through the chair.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** In launching the document on the weekend, the Deputy Premier was forced to admit that funding for the projects being delivered over the next four years was already identified in the budget. The honourable member for Clayfield and I were preparing to respond when we saw a tweet from Patrick Condren that Jackie Trad admits \$35 billion infrastructure funding was contained in last year's budget. I table a copy of that tweet.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, screenshot of Mr Patrick Condren's Twitter profile, showing a photograph of a press conference attended by the Premier and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment, Hon. Jackie Trad, and the Minister for Transport, and the Commonwealth Games, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe [\[324\]](#).

It is obvious that that had already been funded, was already in the forward estimates and was just another reannouncement as the Premier and Deputy Premier were desperately trying to make out they were doing something after 13 months in government.

The Deputy Premier failed to acknowledge on Sunday that infrastructure spending has been slashed by this government. As the Chamber of Commerce & Industry Queensland in its press release today stated, 'There's no point having a Rolls Royce infrastructure wish list without the means to fund it.' We have even heard that from the Deputy Premier and the Premier who have said, 'We have a modest plan and have made desperate calls to the Prime Minister asking for support from the federal

government.' Whether it is for an Ipswich Motorway that has already been announced and funded with changes to the amounts, it really begs the question do they know what they are doing. I table a copy of that CCIQ release.

*Tabled paper:* Document, dated 15 March 2016, titled 'No-one willing to call out the State Infrastructure Plan for what it is' [325].

Countless times in this place we have heard the Premier and her ministers talk about the \$10.1 billion Capital Works Program in the 2015-16 state budget. We do not hear them say that this is down on the more than \$11.4 billion identified in the LNP's 2014-15 budget. Essentially those opposite are bragging about cutting infrastructure spending by more than \$1.3 billion this year. The opposition leader referred to this in his contribution this morning.

How does Labor's commitment of \$10.1 billion compare to previous years? In the 2012-13 budget \$15.5 billion was invested in infrastructure, in the 2013-14 budget \$14.1 billion was invested in infrastructure and in the 2014-15 budget \$11.4 billion was invested in infrastructure. In total, in three LNP budgets more than \$41 billion was invested in capital purchases and capital grants—an average of \$13.7 billion every year. That was our commitment to infrastructure. That was the commitment of this side of the House when we were in government.

On Sunday and again this morning, the Premier and the Deputy Premier were promoting their existing capital budget of \$35 billion over four years. Let's contrast that with \$41 billion over three years; they are promising \$35 billion over four years. What they failed to say is that between releasing the budget in July and the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review in December, the Labor government slashed capital purchases by \$1.4 billion over the next four years. Capital purchases are down from \$35.4 billion over the next four years to \$33.9 billion. The four-year capital purchases program has been slashed by \$3.6 billion by this Labor government, and I table the documents from the 2014-15 Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review and the 2015-16 Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review that highlight this point.

*Tabled paper:* Extracts from the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review of 2014-15 and the Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review of 2015-16 relating to key fiscal aggregates [326].

That is their real commitment to infrastructure. We know that they are good at producing shiny documents to make it appear as though they have a plan, but they are not good at actually delivering on their promises. What they are good at is blaming everyone else, 'It's the previous LNP government's fault,' or, 'It's Canberra's fault. It's not our fault we can't fund these projects.'

An infrastructure wish list is not a plan. Queenslanders deserve better than this. Only we have the team with the record of delivery to—

*(Time expired)*

### Ipswich Electorate, State Infrastructure Plan



**Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.10 pm): I rise to congratulate the Premier, the Minister for Main Roads and the Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade and Investment on the release of the State Infrastructure Plan. I note the Queensland business community has already been out in force congratulating this government on its initiatives in preparing a plan for infrastructure, the first of its kind in more than three years. This is a government of action. We do not just sit back and wait for things to happen around us. We act.

Like the member for Ipswich West and the member for Bundamba, I was delighted to see that the upgrade of the last section of the Ipswich Motorway is included in the State Infrastructure Plan. I would also like to make special mention of the member for Blair, Shayne Neumann, who has been a tireless advocate for the whole Ipswich Motorway and who has been very vocal in the federal parliament. I point out for those who do not venture west very often that this section of the motorway, from Darra to Rocklea, is vital to our economy. It is the only means for western traffic to get to the Brisbane CBD. It is estimated that around 85,000 motorists sit in traffic every day on this section of the motorway.

When I was elected in January last year, I made a commitment to my constituents that I would fight to ensure that the Ipswich Motorway upgrade was completed. It was my top priority right from the start. I made this commitment because I know how important this road corridor is for my electorate. For too long this stretch of the road has been in need of dire attention.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Ms HOWARD:** I was astounded to hear the opposition talking about this Infrastructure Plan yesterday. I will take the member for Lockyer's interjection. His constituents will also benefit enormously from this.



**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! I will ask members to direct their comments through the chair, please.

**Ms HOWARD:** The opposition were talking about this Infrastructure Plan yesterday. They said, 'The Palaszczuk government's Infrastructure Plan outlines nothing but rehashed, reused and recycled ideas.' I can tell the members opposite that the people of Ipswich do not think the \$200 million commitment to the Ipswich Motorway upgrade is rehashed. The people of Ipswich do not see this commitment to our most significant road connection as a recycled idea. The people of Ipswich are not complaining that this massive injection of money is a reused promise because it is not. There has been a lot of talk from those opposite, but not a lot of action. I can assure those opposite that the people of my electorate are clapping their hands with glee at this announcement. I could show honourable members the front page of the *Queensland Times* from last week if they want proof of how happy the people of Ipswich are about this announcement. I have read the article and I do not seem to recall seeing the words rehashed, re-used or recycled once.


Let us look at the track record of those opposite when it comes to the Ipswich Motorway. The previous federal Labor government understood the importance of this road and made the Ipswich Motorway a priority by spending \$2.8 billion to complete the Dinmore to Darra section in 2012. The former federal Labor government then committed a further \$270 million to kickstart the last six kilometres from the Oxley roundabout. Then the newly elected federal coalition government came forward and said they would match any commitment from the Queensland government. To rub salt into the wound, in 2013 the then federal minister for infrastructure told us all that the upgrade of the final section of the Ipswich Motorway would be completed by the coalition government. That was wonderful news. It would have been wonderful for the people of the western corridor. Finally they would get some relief from this congestion. All we needed was for the Queensland government at the time to commit to the project and it would have happened. However, what did we see from the Queensland LNP government?

From 2012 to 2015 we saw nothing, not one dollar of commitment from that sad government to help complete the Ipswich Motorway. In fact, what we got was worse than nothing. In the 2014-15 Queensland budget the Ipswich Motorway was conspicuous by its absence and the then member for Ipswich was conspicuous in his contempt for his electorate. In a quote to the *Queensland Times*, the then member for Ipswich bemoaned the absence of the motorway upgrade but said that funding for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing took precedence. This would have all been very well if it came from the member for Toowoomba, but it did not. The former member for Ipswich had the temerity to tell his constituents that their needs were less important than those of Toowoomba residents. 'I would love to finish the motorway off,' he said. But what did he actually do? Again, I say to this House that he, his colleagues and the former treasurer did nothing—nothing for his electorate, nothing for the people of the western corridor.

With this plan the Palaszczuk government—

(Time expired)

### Hondow Family, Medical Appointments

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (12.15 pm): I rise today in the House to discuss a situation that Gary Hondow and his family find themselves in. Gary lives in Bundaberg with his wife, Sharmaine. They have a blended family of four children: Annalise, aged 15; Brendon, aged 13; Cody, aged 11; and Dallas, born in August 2008 and who is now 7½ years of age. Dallas was born with severe disabilities including global development delays, autistic traits and epilepsy. He is non-verbal, is in a wheelchair and is tube fed. As a consequence, he sees a surgeon and also has to deal with issues regarding orthopaedics, gastroenterology, neurology and ophthalmology. Dallas was diagnosed at 14 months and four days of age and that diagnostic procedure is still ongoing.

Here we have a regional family who travel to Brisbane and have done so for a number of years, first at RCH and now at Lady Cilento. At RCH it was organised that the appointments for Dallas, which occurred three times per year for three years, would be on consecutive days or all on the one day. In fact, Gary informs me that on many occasions he had to change the appointments, and the appointments followed a sequence of days or were all on the one day.

Gary works on a farm and his wife, Sharmaine, is a full-time carer for Dallas. They were concerned that in 2015 they could not get coordinated appointments either on consecutive days or all on the one day as they had in the past. They went to the Bundaberg community cabinet organised by

the government in 2015. They put their plight directly to the Premier of this state, asking her to intercede. In a separate meeting they spoke directly to the Minister for Health, the CEO of the Bundaberg HHS and the director-general of Health, again requesting intercession by the government to assist them having consecutive appointments or appointments over two consecutive days. He has also met with the CEO of the LCCH and the head of Connected Care of LCCH, again raising the need for consecutive meetings. Nothing has been resolved.

Imagine travelling from Bundaberg to Brisbane over a three-day period to attend appointments on day one and day three, as is now required. They get up at 2.30 am and travel down to Brisbane for an appointment on day one. They have to stop on numerous occasions because of Dallas's condition. They have to take the other three children with them if they cannot find a babysitter and Sharmaine does not like travelling in the city of Brisbane with traffic congestion the way it is. They then have a wait for an appointment on day one, then a layover, then a second set of appointments on day three. They achieved all of those appointments on consecutive days or consecutive appointments at the RCH.

We will all do everything that we can for our children, but regional Queenslanders are being ignored by this government. Here is a young boy who is 7½ years of age and loved dearly by his family and his mother and father, who took the time to communicate directly to the Premier, the Minister for Health and other officials in this government to try and resolve the issue of getting consecutive appointments. The government has now been in power for in excess of 13 months. Regional Queensland needs the help of this government to get the appointments they need for children at the LCCH and other hospitals right across the south-east corner.

The health minister stood in this chamber today and took credit for the digital implementation at the PA Hospital and washed away any obligation to deal with asset sales or dental waitlists on the Gold Coast. It is time for this government to stand up and help regional Queenslanders and indeed help Gary and Sharmaine Hondow deal with the issue of their son Dallas. He deserves better; they deserve better; and regional Queensland deserves better from this government.

### Kallangur Electorate, Events



**Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (12.20 pm): I rise today to make a contribution regarding an exciting event which occurred in my electorate of Kallangur over the weekend of 5 March. We had what I am led to believe is the first community cabinet ever held in Kallangur. My colleague Nikki Boyd co-hosted this event, which had several elements held in her neighbouring seat of Pine Rivers. There is no argument that we are, at least geographically, in the centre of the one of the fastest growing regions in Queensland. In fact, the Moreton Bay region is one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. There is no doubt that my community faces many challenges and opportunities that arise from this growth. How we rise to meet and make the most of these challenges and opportunities is important to each and every one of us in my electorate.

Having the chance for our community to gather and speak directly to our government ministers and the senior members of the departments they lead was an incredible opportunity to have the issues that matter and the challenges and opportunities that we face put before the decision-makers. We had the chance to discuss the plans for our very own regional university on the old Petrie paper mill site, which will transform our area forever. The first intake of students is expected in 2020. The campus will cater for up to 10,000 students in the first 10 years. The site is expected to create 2,800 ongoing jobs. This, coupled with its close proximity to public transport, means that it will be a great asset to our community and is a cause of excitement for our residents.

During the community cabinet, members of the community were able to speak to government ministers about the progress of the long-awaited Moreton Bay Rail Link, which is a vital piece of transport infrastructure that our Labor government is delivering in my region. We were able to talk about the issues, both good and bad, that this project has brought to our area. Some were able to express the things that frustrate us, such as the need for further improvements to infrastructure, public transport and better roads and services, which are also very important to communities such as ours. Our Kallangur community cabinet included some long-awaited announcements. With our mayor, Allan Sutherland, we were able to announce that we are putting over \$300,000 towards new headquarters for the Petrie SES in Kallangur at Murrumba Downs. This site, which is owned by the council, is much closer to major transport corridors and is greatly appreciated by the SES, whose current home is cramped, outgrown and has certainly been restricting membership growth in the SES in the area. The new premises has existing infrastructure for training and the storage of rescue equipment, including their flood boat.

As many in this place would know, I have been a strong and some would say annoyingly persistent advocate for an overdue upgrade to the Dakabin rail station. To say that my community and I were happy with the announcement of an options study plan for this vital upgrade is an understatement. There have been many local champions for works on this station over successive government terms and many band-aids applied to it. The station has been used by some as a political tool, and I am very pleased that we are not playing into adding further band-aids. We are now going to have a real look at just what the needs are for this piece of infrastructure in a very quickly growing area.

We obviously need to address the lack of disability access, which was partially looked at in early 2014. At that time the stairs over the rail line were replaced with stairs instead of a wheelchair-friendly option, the reason for which has always mystified me. We need to look at whether the station is suitable in its current location due to very limited parking options. The car parking which is available is not capable of coping with even a third of the vehicles which are parked along the roadway on both sides of the station on a daily basis. This is a very dangerous situation and there will be an accident one day. It is a situation that definitely needs addressing. There is also a lack of safe access from one side of the station to the other between Narangba and Thompson roads, which has been for many years a dangerous height-restricted single-lane underpass. This study can explore options to address all of these issues while consulting with my community as well so we get the best outcome regarding this outdated and over-utilised station.

To see the exchanges that I saw and sat in over the weekend was terrific. I say thank you to each and every resident who contributed to making the day so successful. These community cabinets make a difference and whilst they are incredibly hard work, they are really worth it. These community cabinets are further proof that the Palaszczuk government is listening to the people of Queensland and the people of my electorate.

## PENALTIES AND SENTENCES (QUEENSLAND SENTENCING ADVISORY COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (12.26 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to establish a Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and to amend the acts mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes, and I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Penalties and Sentences (Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council) Amendment Bill 2016 [327].

*Tabled paper:* Penalties and Sentences (Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council) Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes [328].

I am pleased to introduce the Penalties and Sentences (Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council) Amendment Bill 2016, which will establish the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and deliver the Queensland government's commitment to establish a Sentencing Advisory Council for Queenslanders. Promoting an understanding of our criminal justice system, and in particular our sentencing regime, is vital to ensuring public confidence in the administration of justice. The establishment of the Sentencing Advisory Council is also an important part of the process to improve the effectiveness of sentencing practices to support the principles of sentencing; namely, punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation, community protection and denunciation.

The sentencing of criminal offenders is a sensitive and complex process which requires courts to balance a range of competing interests. Often this process is not readily understood and criticism is directed at sentencing decisions. The establishment of the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council will provide the government and the wider community with a valuable and independent resource that has unique and dedicated functions specific to sentencing matters. The community lost this valuable resource when the former LNP government abolished the previous Sentencing Advisory Council in 2012. Queensland's previous Sentencing Advisory Council represented a superior and comprehensive approach to a sentencing advisory body that provided high-quality work, vital research and undertook community consultations on important issues of sentencing policy.

The proposed new Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council is modelled on its predecessor. The bill sets out the council's functions, which include to provide information to the wider community, to enhance knowledge and understanding of matters relating to sentencing, as well as to obtain the community's views on sentencing and matters about sentencing. If asked by the Attorney-General, the

council is to provide advice to the Attorney-General on sentencing matters. Generally such a request would be made by the issuing of terms of reference which require the council to report to the Attorney-General by a prescribed date. The council will furnish its advice to the Attorney-General, and the Queensland government will decide and determine to what extent, if at all, such advice will be adopted and implemented. The council will also be able to provide the council's views, if requested, to assist the Court of Appeal if the court is considering giving or reviewing a guideline judgement. Allowing the Court of Appeal to decide whether it requires comment from the council is consistent with the court's judicial discretion.

The bill recognises that the council is uniquely positioned as a valuable information source to assist the court if the court wishes. To ensure independence, transparency, accountability and clarity in the council's role, in addition to setting out the functions of the council the bill outlines the structure, membership arrangements and reporting requirements of the council.

The council will be an independent body comprising up to 12 members appointed by the Governor in Council on recommendations of the Attorney-General. To support an understanding of the issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contribute to their overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, the bill provides that at least one member of the council is to be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. The council members will represent a cross-section of the community that have expertise or experience in areas relevant to the functions of the council. The bill provides a non-exhaustive list of such areas, which include victims of crime, crime prevention, law enforcement, criminal prosecutions, criminal defence representation, corrective services, juvenile justice matters, justice matters relating to Aboriginal people or Torres Strait Islander people and justice matters relating to domestic and family violence.

To support its independence, the council will be responsible for the management of its own affairs, including its work plan, and will be required to report annually to the Attorney-General on performance of its functions. The council will be supported by a multidisciplinary secretariat of Public Service officers. It will be through the independence and collective experience and expertise of the council members, the council's dedicated research focus and the ability of the council to consult widely on sentencing matters that the council will contribute to a greater public understanding of the criminal justice system and sentencing process.

Subject to the passage of this bill through parliament, the council is expected to be operational in the second half of 2016. It is intended that, once established, terms of reference will be issued to the council to consider sentencing practices associated with domestic and family violence offences, as committed to during the debate on the Criminal Law (Domestic Violence) Amendment Act 2015. The establishment of the council provides an important and valuable resource to the community that will stimulate balanced public debate about sentencing issues, lead to properly informed sentencing reforms and influence community confidence in our criminal justice system.

### **First Reading**

**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (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.

### **Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee**

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

## **ELECTRICITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Introduction**

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (12.32 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984, the Electricity Act 1994,

the Government Owned Corporations Act 1993 and the Judicial Review Act 1991 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Electricity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 [\[329\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Electricity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes [\[330\]](#).

I proudly introduce this bill to implement another Labor election commitment: to keep our income-generating assets in public hands. At the last state election the people of Queensland were clear in their rejection of the sale of more than \$38 billion worth of assets. This was not the first time that Queenslanders had made their views clear at the ballot box. Labor heard the will of the people in 2012 on this issue and responded accordingly. We developed a measured, modest and responsible plan to set a clear fiscal path for the future that does not involve selling the assets so important to Queenslanders. Our plan allows us to pay down debt while growing our economy. Electricity assets will be kept in public hands, with additional efficiencies introduced by the merger of Ergon and Energex into a single \$25 billion company, one of the biggest corporate restructures in recent history.

The mandate to keep public assets in public hands was clearly expressed by Queensland voters. At the last election, parties which rejected asset sales collectively won 52.9 per cent of the primary vote—a clear mandate for keeping public assets, including power companies, in public hands. The voice of the Queensland people was clearly heard in two of the most dramatic election results in the history of this state. Those who seek to doubt the message of the Queensland people on this issue can only be described as wilful in their ignorance.

Those opposite in their hearts want to sell these electricity assets. This view again betrays an unwillingness to listen to the Queensland people and to act on their behalf. Those who choose to listen to the people of Queensland quickly realise that by voting to keep public assets in public hands they were pragmatic. The value of dividends from public assets now and into the future was clearly valued by Queenslanders more than a sugar hit today. These dividends help fund essential services which Queenslanders need. This valuation comes from the noblest sentiments in our community: to act on behalf of future generations today instead of making future generations pay for whims of today. The introduction of this bill today shows once and for all that Labor has learned from the past and will not be selling our income-generating assets.

On 15 December last year I announced that the electricity distribution businesses of Energex Ltd and Ergon Energy Corporation Ltd are to be merged under a new government owned parent company. A new energy services business will be established as a subsidiary of the parent company. The parent company is expected to be in place by mid-2016. Energex and Ergon are currently government owned corporations, GOCs. As a result of the merger they will no longer be GOCs and will instead be subsidiaries of the parent company, which will be a GOC.

The key objective of the bill is to facilitate the business-as-usual operations of Ergon and Energex following the implementation of this merger. A number of consequential amendments to various acts are made by this bill to ensure that Energex and Ergon can continue to operate under the same level of regulation, without business disruption, when they become subsidiaries of a GOC parent company.

The bill also includes minor clarifying and transitional provisions in relation to the Government Owned Corporations Act 1993 to facilitate the implementation of the merger. This bill supports the implementation of the merger but does not establish the new corporate structure. The framework under the GOC Act for the restructure of GOCs and their subsidiaries will be utilised to implement this merger.

Part 2 of this bill contains amendments to part 7A of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984, which address membership, governance, operational and administrative provisions currently applying to the Island Industries Board. The Island Industries Board, trading as IBIS, operates throughout the Torres Strait and the northern peninsula area, providing essential retail services through a network including two supermarkets, a service station and 16 retail convenience stores.

Many of these IBIS stores are located in the most remote island communities in Queensland and are vital in providing food security to these communities. IBIS is currently in a financially secure state. However, contemporary trends in the retail industry have resulted in increasing pressures upon smaller operators such as IBIS. This has resulted in declining terms of trade, escalating costs and pricing pressures, especially given the remoteness of the area IBIS services and the limited incomes of many of its customers.

The amendments included in the bill are intended to modernise the legislative provisions to strengthen governance; provide the opportunity for enhanced ministerial oversight; strengthen administrative arrangements; and enhance the ability of this organisation to respond to commercial opportunities which may emerge outside its current area of operations. The name change to Community Enterprise Queensland reflects the removal of the geographical limitation on its operations. It is important to note that the trading name of the entity, IBIS, which has a long history in the Torres Strait region, will not change.

These amendments are intended to place this organisation in the most favourable position to satisfactorily address current retail industry pressures and mitigate possible future risks and costs to government while maintaining essential services to the communities where it operates.

### First Reading

**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (12.37 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.

### Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee


**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.

## HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 25 February (see p. 633), on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.38 pm): I rise to address the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, which seeks to amend the Food Act 2006, the Health Ombudsman Act 2013, the Pest Management Act 2001, the Public Health Act 2005, the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. I intend to primarily address what I regard as the most important amendments in this proposed legislation.

Obesity or excessive weight is a major risk factor for a number of health disorders including cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and a number of malignancies. There is a direct correlation between the level of weight gain of an individual and their subsequent risk of developing the aforementioned medical conditions. Almost two-thirds of Australian adults are overweight or obese. Disturbingly, one in four children is overweight or obese. There are high rates of obesity in regional, rural and remote Queensland. Similarly, such geographical areas, as revealed by local government data, also often have high rates of tobacco and alcohol consumption.

For most people, excessive weight is an imbalance between energy intake via one's diet and energy expenditure via physical activity and exercise. Some reports via a cost-benefit analysis have revealed that the total costs of obesity in Australia could be \$8.6 billion, with \$3.8 billion in direct costs and \$4.8 billion in indirect costs. To this end, ensuring nutritional information and the average content is displayed by certain food businesses and outlets as proposed by amendments to the Food Act 2006 is an important part of tackling obesity within Queensland. Informed consumers are more likely to make informed choices with respect to choosing healthy types of food that they consume. This, along with appropriate portion sizes and age appropriate exercise, will lead to better health outcomes across our population with an associated reduction in overall health system costs, and general practitioners are certainly a great source of quality health information for patients within Queensland. Any food menu labelling scheme requires a strong and robust implementation plan with good communication and coordination of various entities involved in putting into place endorsed strategies. Allowing impacted businesses a 12-month transitional period is prudent and wise.


The amendments to the Public Health Act 2005 which allow for registered midwives to access the Queensland Pap Smear Register are positive and will be welcomed by clinicians and patients in our state. Also, amending the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to make clear that the definition of blood products under section 42AB does not include cord blood is sensible and will assist the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry to discharge its functions as well as assisting those clinicians who are treating haematological malignancies.

I now wish to address some other important matters. I do hope that the ministerial code of conduct and other governance mechanisms will potentially mitigate any inappropriate usage of the health minister's powers under amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. There is no doubt the establishment of hospital and health services and associated boards has allowed for strengthened local decision-making and greater community, consumer and clinician engagement along with enhanced accountability. Like other LNP members of the former Health and Ambulance Services Committee, I do have significant concerns and reservations about clause 18 of the bill which proposes to insert a new section 24A into the Hospital and Health Boards Act which will enable the health minister of Queensland to temporarily appoint an individual to a hospital and health board for a period of up to six months and to extend a temporary appointment for up to a further six months providing for a maximum temporary appointment of 12 months. Such appointments may be made if the minister reasonably believes it is necessary to urgently appoint a person as a member of a board for the following reasons: firstly, the board does not have at least five members; secondly, the minister considers the board does not have the skills, knowledge or experience to perform the board's functions effectively or efficiently; or, thirdly, none of the board members are clinicians. There is the real risk of inappropriate exploitation of these provisions by the relevant health minister of the day despite moves or amendments to publish notices of appointment in the *Government Gazette*.

Similar concerns relate to temporary appointments that can be made to the public panel of assessors and the 16 professional panels of assessors under the Health Ombudsman Act 2013. Although no-one would want a delay in matters or proceedings pertaining to health practitioners to occur within QCAT, an abuse of temporary appointment processes could occur, particularly if union representatives are provided preferential access to such roles. There is no doubt that the Palaszczuk Labor government has rewarded health unions such as ASMOFQ and the Together union for their support at the January 2015 state election by giving unions unfettered access to Queensland Health employees and the resources of government. The return of inefficiency and reduced productivity via longer public hospital waiting lists and the return of ambulance emergency department ramping is also inevitable. I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the chair of the former Health and Ambulance Services Committee, the member for Nudgee, Leanne Linard MP, my fellow committee members, our secretariat staff and technical scrutiny staff in the preparation of this committee report with respect to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge the outstanding staff of our public hospital system who work within our individual hospital and health services. Our doctors, nurses and other health professionals do a fantastic job on behalf of all Queenslanders, including the residents of my electorate of Moggill. Following the House adjourning on the Wednesday night of the last sitting week, my wife, Jane, and I found ourselves urgently seeking emergency care for our eight-year-old son, Angus, via the Wesley Hospital's Emergency Centre. Private hospitals and associated facilities also play a vital role in our healthcare system and I would like to publicly thank emergency medicine specialist Dr Adam Wilson and the nursing staff of the Wesley Emergency Centre including Declan Curtin and Lucy Halliday for the empathy, compassion and clinical care that they provided. I also want to acknowledge the care provided to Elisabetta Jannello Rowan by Dr Nigel Dungleison, the ICU team and the staff of 7E given her life-threatening infection and subsequent urgent nephrectomy in the last few weeks.

Such facilities and their clinical and administrative staff would not operate without strong values based leadership and good management, so with that in mind I thank the Wesley Hospital executive including Ann Maguire, Dr Luis Prado, Callan Battley, Fergus Pollock and Judy Gentle. I also thank the director of emergency medicine, Dr Sean Rothwell, and director of intensive care medicine, Professor Bala Venkatesh, for such an excellent facility which services not only patients from the suburbs of my electorate of Moggill but also many people from right across Queensland.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.45 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. There are many aspects to this bill. Some are important for efficient health service delivery, but other aspects of the bill will play a key role in helping consumers to make sensible decisions about food consumption which will assist in dealing with one of the largest public health challenges our community faces—that is, the issue of obesity. First I want to deal with the efficiency issues, and I acknowledge the member for Moggill's contribution. I can only say that in my experience

the unions that I have been involved with—the QNU and the Together union—have always looked at improving efficiency and getting more patients through our hospitals more quickly and getting them back on their feet and making our society generally healthier.

The amendments to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 are sensible, practical and have been supported by the committee. The trading of tissue is rightly an aspect of health care that needs to be managed very carefully. The Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry conducts important work using cord blood obtained from the placenta via the umbilical cord which is used in the treatment of a range of non-solid oncological conditions such as leukaemia. This amendment removes some of the unintended restrictions placed on the cord blood and allows the ABMDR to continue its important work. The amendments to the Public Health Act 2005 are also practical, common sense and supported. It has been historically quite common for nurses to be dual registered both as nurses and as midwives, but over the last 10 years or so it has become extremely common that many people directly enter the profession of midwifery without obtaining any nursing qualifications. This amendment will allow midwives access to the Queensland Pap Smear Register and they will be able to provide better care and advice to the women who use their services. The amendments to the Pest Management Act 2001 were supported by the committee and simply allow for better pest management to occur in health facilities.

I will now move on to discuss the aspects of the bill that deal with temporary appointments to hospital and health service boards and temporary appointments to the public panel of assessors. No consensus was reached in the committee on this issue. Having worked for two HHSs recently and being a healthcare professional who is regulated by AHPRA and the IHA, I am committed to ensuring that we have transparency and accountability in these appointment processes. This is a commitment shared by the government, which is why the provisions in this bill only apply to the temporary appointments to the boards and panels and are designed to allow the efficient operation of these boards and panels in emergent situations. Hospital and health service boards have an incredibly important and complex role to perform. It is a role that does not take a break. During evidence the department outlined a number of situations where the effective functioning of HHSs was impeded by the lack of a mechanism to fill boards on a temporary basis to fill emergent needs while more longer term permanent appointments were made.

We cannot afford to have a situation in which a board does not have enough people in order to fulfil its role or lacks the appropriate skills mix to function effectively. I believe that it is important for a board to have clinical input and I would not want a situation in which a board was left without a clinician, even for a short period. I note that the Australian Medical Association shares those views and supported this amendment for those same reasons, welcoming the fact that the government recognises the importance of clinicians. The appointments are time limited and bound. The minister cannot make open-ended, rolling appointments. Nor is it anticipated that that would be necessary because, during the briefings, the department indicated that there is an annual process for appointments and it is expected that this situation would arise only in emergent situations. The temporary appointments to the public panel of assessors have similar safeguards in place. I am satisfied that the bill provides for the efficient running of the HHS boards and the panel of assessors while providing a process that drives the permanent appointment in a time frame that allows for permanent appointments to occur in a manner that ensures that the best people are appointed to these roles in a permanent and accountable manner.

I turn to a part of the bill that I consider to be of vital importance, particularly as we head towards the lunchbreak. Recently, I spoke about the micro-economics of smoking. We can apply the same theoretical basis to our food choices. Rational consumers will make decisions that maximise the benefits to them, or minimise the cost to them, based on good information. Last week, a quick trip to my local food court with my daughters reminded me of the absolute barrage of choices that are available to the consumer. I could obtain food of various quantities from various ethnic and traditional backgrounds for various prices. There were the trendy new foods, there were the old favourites, there were the refurbished old favourites, there were many options promoting health benefits and others just promising to be tasty and make me want more. Ethnicity, taste, presentation, quality, brand and price were all important and certainly drove my decisions but, as a health professional and a father, I want to know how these foods fit into a balanced diet. At present, I have no way of easily assessing that other than to accept their claims of the health benefits.

We have a problem with obesity in this country, which is the result of a deadly combination of energy-rich foods overlaid on a lifestyle that has become increasingly sedentary. This problem increases our chances of contracting heart disease and diabetes and suffering a stroke, as well as many other problems. Having said that, I have been incredibly impressed by the desire shown in our



communities to take responsibility for this issue. Every park is full of people striving to be healthy. As any quick viewing of our TV will show each night, we seem to have a collective cultural obsession with good food. In my opinion, people are not out there exercising and trying to improve our diet to obtain some predetermined body shape; they are doing it to obtain those really important, long-lasting health benefits.

With all of this activity the question is: why are we not winning? As consumers, our options are changing faster than our capacity to build the knowledge that we need to make good decisions. We are consuming more food prepared by someone else with portions and ingredients that we cannot readily assess. So people need help to make good and informed decisions. This bill will allow a mum, a dad, a student or a busy worker with a short lunchbreak—it will allow anyone—to walk into a food retailer and make decisions about the type of food that they want to eat. These provisions will require larger retailers to provide standard information in a manner that is useful to the consumer and displayed consistently. That will be consistent not only within the boundaries of our state but also across state boundaries—on a national basis—which will help those people who move around and are faced with making similar decisions around the country.

The bill allows for smaller retailers to opt into the system, which I think is a good thing. If they opt in, those smaller retailers will have to display information that is in line with the legislative requirements. The voluntary opt-in mechanism will allow smaller retailers to make decisions about whether they have the capacity to implement the legislation.

I note the evidence of representatives of the Heart Foundation. They stated that this legislation will not only allow Queenslanders to make informed and healthier choices but also incentivise businesses to reformulate their menu items to offer healthier and less kilojoule-dense options. Imagine that! Consumers demanding healthier food, demanding healthier options and businesses responding to that demand, chasing their business! Good information will drive this change and that will only have extremely good benefits for our entire healthcare system. I know that the members of the Heart Foundation have been following this debate quite closely. They were disappointed that they had to wait another two weeks for this legislation to pass—not as disappointed as I was in getting the opportunity to get on my feet and speak in support of this legislation.

Anybody who takes a quick trip through those same food courts that I went through, or who visits any of the fast-food restaurants, or who thinks about the eating choices that we are faced with, would know that we are faced with very large corporations with very large advertising budgets that are focused on selling their product and making a good profit in return for their investors. That is a good thing, but we have to make sure that the consequence of that is not a social cost that is borne by our entire community in the form of increased numbers of presentations to hospitals from cardiac problems, or an increase in the number of people facing or suffering from stroke, or an increase in the number of people suffering from diabetes, losing vision, requiring kidney transplants, requiring amputations and all of the rehabilitation services that go along with that. The members of the Heart Foundation are following the debate on this legislation, as are the folks from the National Stroke Foundation and Diabetes Queensland, because they know what this legislation means. It puts the power into the hands of the consumers to be able to make good and rational decisions about the sorts of food that they want to eat.

Much like the legislative changes relating to smoking that have occurred in our country for over 40 years or more, in my opinion we will inevitably have to consider other legislative options to tackle the public health issues created by the way we consume food. This bill is certainly a great start. It empowers consumers to make good decisions. As I said, if members went to their local park, or if they looked at the popularity of foods that pertain to be healthy, they would know that consumers are looking to eat healthily.

The bill also has the good support of businesses. These are all ingredients of a successful public health initiative. We can try using the stick in public health—and we do on occasions—but the carrot, particularly one that has its kilojoule levels displayed, will always be a more effective tool. This bill is the start of something that we have to continue to work on, which is to make sure that consumers can make sensible and good choices when it comes to the foods that they consume, because it not just impacts on their waistline; it has flow-on impacts on our entire community.

I support this bill. It allows for improved efficiency in a number of areas of health operations, but, most importantly it takes significant steps—steps that have been called for by the Heart Foundation, Diabetes Queensland, the National Stroke Foundation and many clinicians—to tackle a major public health issue. I certainly support this bill. I support its objectives. I commend this bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Mr Kelly, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 12.58 pm to 2.30 pm.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction



**Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016 [\[331\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes [\[332\]](#).

I present to the House today a bill to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994 so as to better protect the environment, the community and taxpayers from the decisions and actions of businesses that fail to take steps to meet their proper responsibilities.

There are two longstanding requirements of environmental law accepted by both sides of this House. They are that, firstly, intensive industries should be required to manage their operations so as to control their pollution and, secondly, that they should be required to clean up after themselves when their business concludes—that is, intensive industries should be required to rehabilitate and stabilise any sites upon which their businesses have operated when those operations come to a conclusion.

Over the past 12 months it has become clear that Queensland's current laws do not adequately ensure that major industrial or mining sites will always take a responsible approach to fulfilling their environmental obligations. This is particularly the case when operated by companies in financial difficulty. This problem is widespread. It has emerged at the Texas silver mine located in the electorate of Southern Downs; we have seen it at the Collingwood tin mine and at the Mount Chalmers gold mine—and these are just the recent examples. At these places Queensland has seen businesses closing their doors without completing the work required to rehabilitate and stabilise their site of operations and without leaving adequate funds available to allow this work to occur.

Right now Queensland is facing down the unacceptable prospect of the taxpayer being left to clean up the bill after the owner of the Yabulu nickel refinery. Any possibility that the Yabulu nickel refinery will be allowed to fall into disrepair should be utterly unacceptable to all in this House. The refinery is located one kilometre from the coast, right beside the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area. Its tailings storage facility contains 3.2 billion litres of contaminated water and its brine pond contains a further 1.2 billion litres of contaminated water. This site requires regular active management to control risks to the environment. Every day contaminated water seeps from the tailings storage facility and this must be pumped back into the holding facility to prevent it reaching the Great Barrier Reef. Any possibility, however remote, that this site might be simply abandoned without any financial provision being made for its rehabilitation must not be tolerated. As the Minister for Environment it is my priority to ensure that the refinery's tailings dams and pumping equipment are appropriately managed into the future.

The Palaszczuk government wants to ensure our Great Barrier Reef is protected from toxic discharge and the taxpayer is protected from having to foot the bill. That is why the government today presents amendments that will allow the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection to effectively impose a legal chain of responsibility for the prevention and remediation of environmental harm. These changes will mean that environmental responsibilities cannot be avoided even when companies are in financial difficulty. It is essential to introduce this legislation into parliament immediately to address the real prospect that substantial clean-up costs could be left behind by operators who have failed to clean up after themselves. This will send a strong message to individuals and companies: if you make a mess you clean it up; if you try to walk away from your mess we will impose a chain of responsibility to bring you back to clean up after yourself; and if you try to avoid your responsibilities by hiding behind elaborate, artificial corporate structures we will impose a chain of responsibility to reach beyond those contrived legal barriers.

This legislation seeks to remedy a longstanding problem which current circumstances have brought into the spotlight. These reforms are long overdue. The Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016 proposes amendments to ensure we have the tools needed to make companies in financial difficulty and their related parties, such as parent companies, responsible

for managing sites against risk of environmental harm and incomplete rehabilitation work. The bill will allow the regulator to take action before a company's financial situation deteriorates by requiring parties who are in a position of influence to take the proper reasonable steps to manage their facilities. The key tool proposed by the bill is to allow an environmental protection order to be issued to a party with a relevant connection to an environmental authority holder. The relevant connection test will capture related parties that have profited from activities carried out under the environmental authority. It will also capture parties that have the ability to influence environmental performance on the site, whether financially through the ability to give directions or otherwise. Examples of a related party under this test include parent companies or company directors. This means that a related party, like a parent company or a company director, can be held responsible for taking action to prevent or clean up environmental harm. In addition, where the state needs to step in to undertake this work itself or through contractors, the regulator can seek to recover the relevant costs. This is similar to existing provisions in the Environmental Protection Act providing for recovery of costs in association with a clean-up notice for contaminated sites.

This bill will allow this parliament to protect the taxpayer from being forced to pay for costs which other parties have allowed to accumulate over a number of years. The bill is designed to prevent any last-minute manoeuvring to avoid the effects of its provisions. I am proposing that certain provisions of this bill, if passed by this parliament, will take effect from today, the date of its introduction.

The government has a clear focus on parties who are actively avoiding their proper responsibilities. The chain of responsibility will not attach itself to genuine arm's length investors, be they merchant bankers or mum-and-dad investors. It will not impact contractors or employees. This legislation targets those who stand to make large profits, those who are really standing behind the company and whose decisions have put the environment at risk and who in many cases have personally profited from the operations that have contributed to the environmental risk or harm.

To supplement these environmental protection order provisions, the bill also strengthens related provisions such as the evidentiary powers, financial assurance requirements and access powers of authorised officers. The bill improves the ability of departmental officers to access sites that are no longer in operation or are in administration. This will ensure that authorised officers have access to sites to monitor the risk of environmental harm in situations of insolvency and financial difficulty. Evidentiary powers are expanded in order to ensure that authorised officers have access to the information required to make decisions about the issuing of EPOs. Authorised officers will also be able to better gather evidence through strengthened legal powers to ask questions about alleged offences committed by an operator.

I am introducing this bill to the parliament to ensure that operators continue to meet their environmental responsibilities, even in situations of insolvency or financial difficulty, and that clean-up costs are not borne by the Queensland taxpayer.

The government's greatest hope is that the Yabulu nickel refinery will continue to operate and provide jobs for Queenslanders, whether that be under current or new ownership and management. However, should the worst come to pass, it should be for Queensland Nickel, Queensland Nickel Sales or their associated companies or officers to bear the cost of managing and rehabilitating the refinery. This should not be up to Queensland taxpayers. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (2.39 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.

### Referral to the Agriculture and Environment Committee


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Elmes): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

## HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 691, on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (2.40 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Unhealthy eating is a leading cause of excess weight and chronic disease. Shockingly, more than half of Queensland's population is overweight, that is, 2.3 million or close to 65 per cent of Queensland adults are overweight. That is a terribly sobering thought. Obesity causes serious economic, physical and social damage. This is a serious issue and one that I am pleased to see the Palaszczuk government is addressing.


The Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 amends six Health portfolio acts to support the Palaszczuk government's commitment to ensuring the health of all Queenslanders. The bill amends the Food Act 2000 and will require large food outlets to list the kilojoule content in foods that they sell. We know that takeaway food and eating out often means bigger portions and more calorie-dense foods that are high in fats and sugars, which is good for neither our health nor waistlines, nor is it good in the long term for our economy.

In 2014, 30 per cent of Queensland adults consumed takeaway food at least once a week and a large proportion of those Queenslanders were young people aged 18 to 24. Unfortunately, whilst fast-food options are often very tasty, they are not always the healthiest food choices. This puts people at greater risk of a range of health issues, including type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Assisting consumers to make better informed and healthier choices when purchasing fast food is essential to combatting these health problems. I have always had an interest in a good diet. My father did not enjoy good health and, as a consequence, my mother was extremely particular about our diet. Her lessons have stayed with me. I have always been concerned about the food that my family and I eat.

This bill will ensure that nutritional information will be available at the cash register for ready-to-eat food, which includes fast-food chains, snack food and drink chains, bakery chains, cafe chains and supermarkets. These display requirements will apply only to licensed food businesses that have more than 20 outlets in Queensland or 50 outlets in Australia, ensuring that small businesses are not unduly impacted. For consistency and to prevent confusion, food outlets that are not captured by the scheme but voluntarily display nutritional information will be required to comply with the display requirements. Businesses must clearly display the average content in kilojoules for each standard food item. To give some context to the average energy content, businesses will be required to display a statement that the average daily intake is 8,700 kilojoules.

The bill gives food businesses plenty of time to ensure that they are meeting these requirements, with the provisions only applying 12 months after the bill comes into force. It is great to see that some businesses already voluntarily have this information displayed. Applying the scheme across Queensland will help to ensure consumers receive consistent messages about the nutrition of fast food. These changes will roll out over a 12-month transitional period and will allow time for the Queensland government's community education campaign to take effect. This campaign is designed to help Queenslanders to better understand and correctly use nutritional information on menus. The menu labelling scheme will allow consumers to consider the complete picture and take into account their total energy requirements before they buy. They will take the guesswork out of ensuring that we enjoy a healthy diet.

This is another example of the Palaszczuk government delivering on an election commitment in the Health portfolio. I thank the minister for his dedication to the health of all Queenslanders. I commend the Health Legislation Amendment Bill to the House.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (2.44 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the debate on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill. Firstly, I want to talk about the issue of temporary appointments to health and hospital boards. Health and hospital boards were introduced into Queensland in 2012. In my electorate of Beaudesert, we hook into three of them: the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service, the Metro South Hospital and Health Service and the West Moreton Hospital and Health Service. During our time in office, significant advances were made in the offering of healthcare services to the people in my electorate, including the reintroduction of maternity services in Beaudesert and other procedural services as well as the establishment of a community advocacy group to enable people in the community to have their voice in relation to health services. Such groups communicated directly with the boards of their respective health services and the boards took account of their views.

Terrific advancements were made in the West Moreton space, as well. As I understand it, before 2012 the West Moreton service was consistently running at a deficit in terms of its operating expenditure compared to its revenue. That had an impact on the amount of services available to patients. The health board in place now at West Moreton has put a stop to that. It is running at surplus; at least it was the last time I checked, which was in relation to the 2014-15 financial year. That enables more services to be offered. The establishment of health boards has had a terrific effect on the services offered to my electorate and, I am sure, across the whole state.

The measure in this bill to enable temporary appointments to be made to those boards must be used carefully. Certainly I hope—and I am sure other members do, too—that this is not a way for the government to take power away from the boards and repatriate it back to the health bureaucracy in George Street. That is not what any of us want, because the reforms have had a very positive impact on the health services provided to all Queenslanders. It was the Queensland Health bureaucrats in Brisbane who presided over the debacle involving the Health payroll system. Years ago, the Labor government and its bureaucrats allowed health care in the town of Beaudesert to wither on the vine as services were shut down. We do not want to see that happen again. When the minister responds to these second reading speeches, I urge him to clarify how the temporary appointments will work. As I said, terrific advancements have been made and we want to ensure that they continue at a local level through our hospital and health service boards.


I wish to touch briefly on the amendments to the Food Act. I am sure that some of the additional information that will be provided will be of benefit to consumers. I want to relay an experience told to me by a constituent who lives in Boonah. My constituent regularly sells jams and other homemade goods at the Boonah Country Markets. This issue relates to the Food Act and provisions for the labelling of food. Recently, my constituent had an experience that was very unsettling. Officers from the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service came all the way from the Gold Coast to Boonah. They wandered around the Country Market stalls, checking the labels on bottles of jam and pickles, and other small market goods that are sold at those types of markets. We know that under the Food Act there are regulations and rules as to how things are sold. However, having inspected the food labels on the jam or pickles—whatever it was—if there was a slight deviation from what is required under the regulation, people were intimidated and threatened with the prospect of receiving a \$50,000 fine for not having correctly labelled their jams or pickles. This is heavy-handed behaviour from the Gold Coast Public Health Unit—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I will take that interjection. It is a nanny state approach. These are people who are trying to make a few extra dollars on the weekend. They do not need to be intimidated by officers from the Gold Coast Public Health Unit because their jam and pickles are not labelled correctly. I call on the minister to look into this issue.

It is a heavy-handed approach. It disappeared when we were in office. It was there beforehand. Unfortunately, we see this type of heavy-handed behaviour—it always comes from those opposite when they are in office—coming back to affect, threaten and intimidate people who are just trying to make a few extra dollars on the weekend.

Food labelling is a very important issue, but we need to look at things with a bit of perspective and reasonableness and not attack the little guys who are just trying to make a few extra dollars. I conclude my remarks on that note. I urge the government to tread cautiously in both the areas that I have addressed this afternoon.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (2.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Although all aspects of this bill are important, it is that aspect of the bill that deals with the Food Act and requires fast-food chains, snack food and drink chains, bakery chains, cafe chains and supermarkets to display nutritional information that I wish to particularly speak about today.

This is something that I feel incredibly passionate about. I was brought up to think that being healthy and making healthy lifestyle choices was really important. My family's philosophy was probably nothing more complex than observing the food pyramid and making sure we all got out and did some physical activity every day.

As the member for Greenslopes said earlier today, things have become a lot more complicated since then in terms of the range of choices that now face all of us as food consumers. My passion about this subject went up a significant notch following the inspired decision by former premier Peter Beattie to establish a premier's obesity task force in his government.

As a senior public servant I had the opportunity to run the secretariat for that task force. I was confronted on a daily basis with the facts and figures about the worrying and growing levels of obesity in Queensland and the many ways in which this terrible issue really needed to be addressed. Since that time I have been passionate about—and, in fact, my family would probably say I am obsessed about it—how important it is for us to be healthy and make healthy lifestyle choices, but also how important it is for the government to take a proactive role in helping people make those choices.

There has been excellent work done on this over a sustained period of time in Queensland—except for a blip that I will talk about in a moment. I acknowledge the dedicated and hardworking public servants who have been working in health promotion for many years. They have been trying to make a dint in this.

The task force set up by Peter Beattie was the first time there was recognition at the most senior levels of government that this issue had to be made a priority and that it was going to take cooperation from all of the relevant agencies to make the strides that we needed to make. That was the first time that I really became aware just how serious this obesity epidemic was and, unfortunately, continues to be and the cost it has on individuals, the community and, let us face it, the Health budget.

We have already heard during this debate that around 2.3 million adult Queenslanders are overweight or obese. That is close to 67 per cent of Queensland adults. We know that economically obesity costs us through days lost from work, medical costs and lost wellbeing. It has social impacts such as a lower quality of life, discrimination and lower wages. This Friday is the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence. There is no doubt that children with weight issues are at an increased risk of being bullied.

Physically, excess weight, especially obesity, is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, some musculoskeletal conditions and some cancers. As the level of excess weight increases so too does the risk of developing these conditions and the ability to control or manage chronic conditions.

Even if we ignored the personal and social costs of obesity and were completely utilitarian about this issue, as a government what would be reason enough to act would be the cost to our Health budget of these chronic conditions that are caused by obesity. I used to know the formula that showed the impact of every dollar spent on preventative health. For every dollar spent at the beginning of the issue we save at the other end in hospital and other costs—that is, in treating these chronic conditions that are outcomes of obesity. The figures are quite significant if the investment is made at the beginning of the process rather than at the end.

We have slowly made strides in this area. This is an enormously difficult issue on which to make an impact at the population level. Queensland had been slowly trending forward. That is why it was outrageous that the LNP, quick as a flash almost when they came into government, sacked the health promotion staff in the health department so there was barely anyone left with any expertise and barely any work happening on the ground. That was three years of nothing when it comes to one of the most serious issues to face the Queensland population in a long time. It was absolutely outrageous. It is wonderful that the health minister has moved so quickly to get things back on track.

As with so many areas of government policy, if we put the effort in at the beginning we save so much in terms of the personal, social and economic impacts at the other end. That is why bills like this are so important. Although it is encouraging to see that the evidence suggests that our rates of obesity have slowed, we really have to continue making changes to address the issue. It is not a simple task.

A single strategy approach is not going to get us the outcomes we want and need. We have to come at this from as many different angles as possible. I congratulate the minister on the range of strategies he is supporting to address the statistics around obesity. This bill is one of those important strategies that incorporates all of that work.

Unhealthy eating is clearly a primary cause of obesity. We know that eating takeaway food and eating out can result in us eating bigger portions than we would eat at home and eating foods that are high in calories, high in fat and high in sugar. I heard the member for Lytton mention the figure that something like 30 per cent of Queensland adults consume takeaway food at least once a week. Those figures were from 2014. Goodness knows what those figures are now. We know that fast-food options are not always healthy food options.

This bill will help consumers make better informed and healthier choices when they are purchasing fast food. It is essential to combatting the health problems that arise from obesity. My children who are 15 and 25 try hard to be healthy. Of course they want to look their best. They do not


want to put on weight. They feel quite perplexed when they are out ordering takeaway and try to find something that is healthier. Even when they try hard it is quite difficult for them to work out the best choices to make. They are going to love this legislation, as I know a lot of young people their age will.

I have been discussing this bill with a number of my school principals and people who have children. They are very excited that this is going to be available to us now. For us, our kids' health is the No. 1 priority.

It was good to see in the report of the Health and Ambulance Services Committee, as it was called at the time, that they quoted the Heart Foundation Queensland. They noted in a recent survey that 90 per cent of survey participants supported the introduction of a kilojoule menu-labelling system in fast-food and snack-food chains. That certainly seems to reflect the feedback I have had in my electorate.

As we know, the bill is going to require chains that sell ready-to-eat food to provide nutritional information at the point of sale with the average energy content of standard food items and the statement that the average adult daily energy intake is 8,700 kilojoules. This is going to mean that anyone can walk in and know how many kilojoules they are going to be choosing. Many people do not even know what the average calorie intake needs to be anyway. That basic information is going to make a really big difference.

It was great to see that the key stakeholders who work in this space, people like the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, Diabetes Queensland and the Heart Foundation, are backing this scheme. I know that some people will be saying to me that we are being a nanny state and that we should just let people do whatever they want to do. However, I think that, when it comes to issues like this, government has to be proactive. This is about a population level issue, and we are responsible to look after people. I congratulate the committee for their excellent work on this very, very important issue. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (3.00 pm): I rise today to support the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 as it supports government initiatives and the effective operation of the following acts: the Food Act 2006 to require fast-food chains and the like to display the nutritional information of their products; the Health Ombudsman Act 2013 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 to allow the minister to temporarily appoint persons to hospital and health boards; the Pest Management Act 2001 to enable the CE to delegate powers to appropriately qualified employees of the HHS; the Public Health Act 2005 to streamline the process for enabling registered midwives to access the Queensland Pap Smear Register; and the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 to make clear understanding of the definition of 'blood products'.

We have heard from many different speakers today and in the past regarding the impact that the Food Act amendments will have on the positive outlook for people who consume the various foods under this category. For that reason, I do not propose to continue to feast on that part of the bill—pardon the pun. Instead, I much prefer to shape my debate around the amendment to the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979 aspect of the bill before the House today.

The purpose of this amendment is to make clear that the definition of 'blood products' under section 42AB does not include cord blood—that is, blood obtained from the placenta via the umbilical cord for the collection of stem cells. Part 7 of the act clearly articulates the issue of trading tissue. Trading tissue is defined in the act as 'an organ, blood or part of a human body or a human foetus' or 'a substance extracted from an organ, blood or part of a human body or a human foetus'. The definition expressly excludes immunoglobulins—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr STEWART:** I take the interjection from the most learned member—or laboratory reagents, or reference and control materials, derived wholly or in part from pooled human plasma. The issue of tissue trading is defined as 'buying, agreeing to buy, offering to buy, holding out as being willing to buy, or inquiring whether a person is willing to sell the tissue' and 'selling, agreeing to sell, offering to sell, holding out as being willing to sell, or inquiring whether a person is willing to buy the tissue'.

The explanatory notes state that the cord blood is captured by the definition of 'tissue' and is therefore subject to trading conditions. Why is this aspect of the bill, the issue of tissue and, more specifically, stem cells, in need of change? If I may, please let me explain why stem cells are so important. Stem cells are collected from cord blood and are used to treat a range of conditions including leukaemia, lymphoma and anaemia, as well as immune and metabolic disorders.

If we look specifically at leukaemia and specifically acute leukaemia as a case in point, we see the importance of stem cells and their role in vital treatment. Acute leukaemia usually requires immediate and intensive treatment. Depending on the particular type of leukaemia and many other things about the individual patient, treatment options might include chemotherapy, steroids or a more intensive procedure such as a stem cell transplant combined with high-dose chemotherapy.

High-dose chemotherapy is the most effective currently established method to kill leukaemic cells and can cure some patients. However, it also severely damages the remaining normal blood-forming cells in the bone marrow. To replace these cells, patients are given a stem cell transplant. The cells for the transplant can be collected from the blood or bone marrow of a healthy donor. In fact, the transplant includes not only stem cells but also important immune cells that help to kill leukaemic cells. A patient's own cells can sometimes be used for the transplant, if it is possible to collect enough healthy cells before the treatment is performed. If a different donor is needed, they must match the patient's tissue type otherwise the transplanted donor cells will be attacked by the patient's immune system and therefore rejected.


Stem cells are particularly effective for treating certain types of acute leukaemia. However, the procedure is intensive and risky with the potential for substantial after-effects. Therefore, this type of stem cell transplant is only considered when standard dose chemotherapy fails to eradicate the disease.

The National Stem Cell Foundation in the USA explains the role of stem cells from cord blood in treating metabolic disorders as follows. There are thousands of metabolic disorders with symptoms that range from mild to devastating. They are difficult to diagnose because many of the symptoms mimic other diseases and often occur in combination. In general, metabolic disorders are inherited genetic defects that interfere with the body's metabolism or the process by which the body gets energy from food.

Symptoms vary from syndrome to syndrome but often include developmental delays, vision and hearing problems, loss of intellectual function, muscle weakness, seizures, abnormal movements, stunted growth, pain and shortened life span. It is not unusual for an affected child to have been misdiagnosed with cerebral palsy, autism or other conditions whose symptoms can be similar to metabolic disorders. One in every 4,000 children are affected by one of these disorders. In some cases, dietary changes and vitamin supplements may help alleviate symptoms, but there is currently no cure for metabolic disorders. A successful bone marrow or stem cell transplant may help slow or halt the progression of certain syndromes, but early diagnosis is critical to prevent irreversible disease progression.

Section 42AB of the Transplantation and Anatomy Act provides that certain entities are exempt from trading restrictions. For tissue other than blood products, an exempt entity is an entity that is party to an agreement with the Commonwealth or the state for the buying or selling of tissue and that is prescribed by regulation.

The Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry, ABMDR, is a non-profit organisation that conducts searches for matching cord blood units. We have just heard about the importance of stem cells that are harvested from that product. The explanatory notes state that it was intended that the ABMDR be exempt under this provision for the purposes of trading in cord blood. However, it is arguable that cord blood is a blood product. Therefore, this amendment will correct that anomaly. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (3.07 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill. It is of great concern to me when reading this bill that over 2.3 million Queensland adults are overweight or obese. As a percentage, that is close to 65 per cent of our actual adult population in Queensland that is in this category. This is a very serious issue and one that I am pleased that the Palaszczuk Labor government is addressing, along with the Minister for Health.

Obesity not only causes physical and social damage but also economic damage. This can be through work days lost, medical costs in our health system and lost wellbeing. One of the leading causes of excess weight gain and chronic disease is unhealthy eating. For a busy family a quick takeaway is sometimes an option for lunches or dinners. It is a known fact that these fast-food options are not always healthy food choices and it often means bigger portions and more calorie dense foods, higher in fat and sugar. Studies have shown that consumers greatly underestimate the amount of energy, saturated fat, sugar and salt in this unhealthy food. The bill amends six health portfolio acts to support policy initiatives of the government and to improve the effective operations of the acts.

I will focus today on the proposed amendments to the Food Act. Specifically, the bill will require fast-food chains, snack food and drinks chains, bakery chains, cafe chains and supermarkets to display nutritional information and to authorise disclosure of confidential information for limited public health



and safety reasons. The businesses included in the menu labelling scheme will apply to businesses that have either 20 outlets in Queensland or 50 outlets nationally. As I said, these include fast-food chains, snack food and drinks chains, bakery chains, cafe chains and supermarkets. These businesses sell ready-to-eat food such as pizzas, burgers, hot chips, cooked chickens, pies, kebabs, sandwiches, salads, ice-creams, juice, soft drinks, coffee, doughnuts, cakes and muffins—no doubt many of those have been eaten at one time when on a big night out. The amendments will not apply to convenience stores, cinemas, service stations, dine-in-only restaurants, catering services, mobile food vans, not-for-profit home delivery—companies such as Meals on Wheels—or patient food services in health facilities.

In the Gladstone region there are in excess of 50 food outlets that will be captured by this bill. Alarming, of those 50 outlets I mentioned above, we have 20 separate fast-food stores. You do not have to drive far in Gladstone to get your fix, with many takeaway stores to choose from. In June 2015 the Queensland Government Statistician's Office reported the population of the Gladstone region to be 67,905. Many people in my electorate talk to me about the proportionally high number of fast-food outlets that we have. With the boom we have had in Gladstone, we have seen an increase in the number of fast-food stores in Gladstone.


This bill will allow people to make more informed decisions about the food choices they make not just for themselves but also for their families. It is well known that the widespread availability, marketing and consumption of these unhealthy foods are key factors in developing obesity. Studies have shown that consumers greatly underestimate the amount of energy, saturated fat, sugar and salt contained in these unhealthy foods.

This bill establishes a statewide menu labelling scheme to assist people to make informed and healthier fast-food choices by providing them with easily understood and nutritional information at the point of sale. The amendments implement the government's 2015 election commitment and demonstrate this government's commitment to a nationally consistent approach for food labelling. As committee members have noted, submissions largely indicated support for the menu labelling scheme, particularly for a nationally consistent approach and a community education program to support the introduction of this legislation.

The National Retail Association broadly supports the amendments in the bill as it is consistent with New South Wales and because of the government's commitment to an education scheme. The Heart Foundation of Queensland made a submission that this bill would not only allow Queenslanders to make healthier food choices but also encourage food outlets to give some menu items a healthy makeover, which I look forward to.

In addition to food labelling, the proposed amendments to the Food Act 2006 will allow Queensland Health to better protect Queenslanders in relation to food safety issues. At present the legislation does not permit Queensland Health to disclose information that is defined as confidential. There are some exceptions to the restriction on disclosing confidential information such as where a person consents or where the disclosure is for the purpose of ensuring public health or safety and the information is being disclosed to certain entities. However, these exceptions do not go far enough and arguably the Food Act, as it stands, protects the reputation of commercial entities at the expense of public safety.

Queenslanders have the right to be fully informed when it comes to food safety, and as such this bill proposes an amendment to ensure confidential information may be disclosed where disclosure is reasonably necessary to prevent or reduce the possibility of a serious danger to public health or to mitigate the adverse consequences of a serious danger to public health. An example of the current lack of protection was evident in 2015 when Queensland Health was not able to issue warnings to the public to not consume certain brands of eggs known to be linked with outbreaks of salmonella. This bill will protect Queenslanders by permitting Queensland Health to issue these important public safety messages in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (3.14 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 and, in particular, the new food menu-labelling system. I have been a vegetarian for many years—this is sort of personal but we are all one big, happy family—and I recently learnt that my cholesterol levels were slightly elevated. This led me to do some research and to find out what I needed to do to get my cholesterol down. What I learnt led me to abandon all animal products and pursue a vegan, plant based diet. This was about three months ago and I have never felt better.

**An honourable member:** And you look all right, too.

**Ms HOWARD:** Let us hope that this wellbeing translates to a healthy cholesterol level. I will not lecture or bore members with the virtues of veganism, as I can see everyone's eyes glazing over. I do not intend to convert anyone sitting here, but I feel I would be remiss in not sharing with members just how healthy a change it has been in my life. As I said, I will not bore members with the details but switching to veganism has taught me many lessons, one of which is you really need to know what goes into your body.

Members would be shocked to find out how much processed food and fat appears in ostensibly vegetarian and vegan food, especially when eating out. Whether it be animal stock, animal rennet or random flecks of meat, you do require a certain sense of vigilance when it comes to your food. I am not alone in making these choices as there are many among us who choose to follow this way of life. However, there are even more who have it thrust upon them. Diabetics, coeliacs and those who are lactose intolerant, to name a few, do not get to choose but, rather, have their diets forced upon them. These people are given no options and the severity of some cases can leave them bedridden for days, or worse, due to an accidental intake of the wrong type of food. Therefore, I commend the Minister for Health for taking the initiative to establish these new amendments, specifically the amendment to the Food Act 2006 to give people the knowledge they deserve to make the right choices when it comes to food.

The Palaszczuk government has always been a government that puts the wellbeing of its constituents front and centre. After landmark bills passed on smoke-free places and alcohol fuelled violence, we have consistently shown that we are a government that puts the health of Queenslanders first. That is why it is of paramount importance that we, as a government, make the effort to assist all Queenslanders in their journey to ensure they and their families are making the right choices when it comes to their food.

Queensland is a state of big eaters, something I am sure many members can sympathise with. However, when 30 per cent of Queensland adults consume takeaway at least once a week, we have to ask ourselves how much we know about what we are putting in our mouths. While many fast-food chains such as McDonald's are providing their customers and our constituents with the nutritional information they require on many fronts, there are still some that have not taken the initiative. This is a gamble with our health that we cannot afford to take. That is why I applaud the minister for taking the bold step to consult with industry leaders and draft some much needed amendments to the Food Act 2006.

The bill will require chains that already sell ready-to-eat food to provide nutritional information at the point of sale. This will include everything from fast-food chains to bakery and cafe chains and even supermarket chains. This will provide the average Queenslanders with the necessary knowledge to make an informed choice on their food. These restrictions will be applicable only to licensed food outlets that have 20 or more outlets in Queensland or 50 outlets in Australia, leaving small businesses like the local cafe or bakery with the choice to follow suit. Queenslanders are on average well-informed people. However, I can understand that there may be some confusion over not just what is healthy but also how much on average they can and should eat.

That is why I am proud that this government has taken a comprehensive yet simple approach to teaching Queenslanders what is what when it comes to their meals. The daily average intake of an adult is considered to be about 8,700 kilojoules, give or take. By making sure that businesses across the state are prominently displaying this labelling information in their stores, it is our belief that Queenslanders will be given a chance to look at this from a wide perspective and make it easier to approach this topic and consider their own daily energy requirements.

It is time that we as a state take responsibility for what we put in our mouths. With around 2.3 million adults classified as overweight or obese—close to 65 per cent of our population—we need to take a long, hard look at ourselves and ask what we can do to help. This amendment put forward by the Palaszczuk government is a positive step in the right direction for our state. This bill will not just have a positive impact on the health and lives of our people, but will get the ball rolling on a serious discussion about Queenslanders' eating habits. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise this afternoon to also make a short contribution to the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. We have heard previous speakers—and we will hear it again—reiterating some of those statistics around the concerning rate of obesity in our state: 2.3 million adult Queenslanders, which is around 65 per cent, are obese. It is a serious issue and I am pleased that this Palaszczuk government is making a commitment to address this particular disease.

Obesity causes serious economic, physical and social damage. Economically, obesity costs us through days lost at work, medical costs and loss of wellbeing. Social impacts include a lower quality of life, discrimination and lower wages in some cases. I am encouraged to see that evidence has suggested that our rate of obesity has slowed. However, we must continue to make changes to address this issue. The bill will establish a menu labelling scheme to assist consumers to make better informed and healthier choices when purchasing fast food. The amendments will require licensable food businesses to display for consumers the average energy content of each standard food item and a statement that the average adult daily energy intake is 8,700 kilojoules.

I can reflect back on the weekend. It was a busy weekend. As most of us in this House do, I went out and saw constituents. I was with the member for Everton at one location in his electorate at the Pine Hills baseball trophy day. We were both talking about the importance of sport and also diet in our lives as our youths grow up in that environment. I was also at the Samford bowls club and it was a pleasure to be there. On Saturday it was also great to be with the Minister for Main Roads and Road Safety to open the first stage of the Samford Cycle Link from Ferny Grove to Samford, another example of the fine contribution this government is making to infrastructure growth in our state.

I would note that one of the submissions to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee's inquiry into this bill from the Health Foundation of Queensland noted that in recent Queensland surveys more than 90 per cent of the survey participants supported the introduction of a kilojoule menu labelling system in fast-food and snack chains. This will give Queenslanders the information they need to make those healthier fast-food choices. In 2014, 30 per cent of Queensland adults consumed takeaway food at least once a week and a large proportion of those Queenslanders were young people aged 18 to 24. Mr Deputy Speaker, I think you would know yourself that in many cases the fast-food outlets market their advertisements towards youth to hopefully pick up that end of the market and to encourage them to consume their foods. I know sometimes it is a lifestyle challenge. I myself on occasions go down to the local fast-food outlet and purchase some fast food occasionally. It is probably more convenient to make planned choices, shop around and make healthier choices around what this bill will provide: people making a choice based on the kilojoule numbers and the type of food they are purchasing.

I do note that over the weekend I heard in the media that KFC first opened in Australia in 1968 and in Queensland in 1969—just up the road from where I grew up in Chermside—at Kedron. How that has evolved over the years will now encourage people to be aware of their consumption and the quality and quantity they are purchasing through those fast-food outlets. Unfortunately, fast-food options are not always healthy food choices, putting people at greater risk of a range of health issues including type 2 diabetes and heart disease. The bill will require chains that sell ready-to-eat food to provide nutritional information at the point of sale. This includes fast-food chains, snack food and drink chains, bakery chains, cafe chains and supermarkets. Their display requirements will apply only to licensable food businesses that have more than 20 outlets in Queensland or 50 throughout Australia, ensuring that small businesses are not unduly impacted. The menu labelling scheme will allow consumers to consider the complete picture and take into account their own total energy requirements before they purchase their food. I commend the bill to the House.



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (3.25 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contribution to the debate on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Many of those contributions were very thoughtful, particularly from the members of the government, and I will make comment about those addresses to the parliament in due course.

The second reading debate could be characterised as being in two parts effectively. On one hand we had bipartisan support for amendments to introduce a menu labelling scheme that will benefit all Queenslanders. On the other hand we witnessed what could only be described as unnecessary and unreasonable criticism about sensible and what would otherwise be regarded as uncontroversial amendments recommended by my department to improve the operation of two Health portfolio acts, namely the Health Ombudsman Act 2013 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. The contributions made by LNP members on amendments proposed to these acts demonstrated the LNP's profound reckless and wilful ignorance of the importance of effective governance arrangements, cabinet processes generally and the provisions of both the current Hospital and Health Boards Act and the Health Ombudsman Act.

I will first turn to the contributions made to the debate about menu labelling. I do want to thank all members for their support for the menu labelling scheme amendments to the Food Act, which will deliver a key election commitment for the Palaszczuk Labor government. I do want to comment on the thoughtful address by the member for Ipswich. All of her contributions in this place are thoughtful. I must

make a declaration that my father was a butcher. After returning from the Second World War he worked on a property west of Bundaberg and then he started a small business with his brother, my uncle, Milton Dick. They worked together for many decades after that. It is fair to say that my father did not understand vegetarianism. He was a very tolerant man and a thoughtful man, but he had no comprehension of vegetarianism.

I do thank the member for Ipswich, because at the heart of her address to the parliament was that we all must take care for what we consume. We all must be aware of what we consume and in particular the energy content of what we consume. It is not just the labelling of menus that is important in this proposed legislation; it is the number, 8,700 kilojoules, which is the recommended daily energy intake for an adult in Queensland. That is a number that we should all be aware of. When we are consuming food during the day—and, of course, it depends on the energy we use which may vary depending on occupation and employment, physical activity and recreational pursuits—we must be mindful of that. I thank the member for Ipswich for her contribution.

I also want to thank the organisations that made submissions to the committee in support of the menu labelling amendments. The member for Thuringowa reminded us of the important role our key health organisations play. I want to acknowledge the important work of those stakeholders. I was pleased to see the support for the menu labelling scheme, and not just from the Heart Foundation and Diabetes Australia, but also from the AMA Queensland, the Queensland Law Society, NAQ Nutrition and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. As members and stakeholders have noted, obesity rates are at unacceptable levels in our communities. The costs to individuals, their families and the community are also unacceptable and demand action. The goal of the menu labelling scheme is to help reduce the burden of obesity by ensuring Queenslanders can make informed choices at the counter or in the drive through of fast-food restaurants.

The scheme will ensure that people going into a fast-food store to buy a quick dinner or a treat for the kids will have easy-to-understand information about the energy content of the food on offer compared to the average daily energy intake. For example, a menu board may show that a meal deal of a burger, large chips and a large soft drink has more than 5,000 kilojoules. When put in context of the average adult energy intake of 8,700 kilojoules a day, it will be clear that this one meal is over half of the average daily intake for adults. We all know that particular foods are high in kilojoules, but I know I have been surprised to see just how high in kilojoules some fast foods are, including sometimes the so-called healthier choices. That is why this information is so important. It will allow the consumer to make an informed choice not just for themselves, but also for their children and others in their care, and to hopefully change behaviour. I am also hopeful that requiring the display of this information may encourage fast-food outlets to change their menus to include truly healthy choices.

The scheme balances the need to inform consumers with the cost of business. The prescribed display requirement will be mandatory for larger businesses, including fast-food chains, but will be voluntary for a range of other enterprises. Standard food outlets that are not captured by the mandatory scheme but that choose to voluntarily display nutritional information will be required to comply with the prescribed display requirements. This will ensure the consistent display of nutritional information to consumers. Food outlets will have 12 months to comply with the display requirements, and during this time the Department of Health will work with businesses—and I have asked the department to do that—to assist with transitional issues and conduct consumer education activities.

Last month I tabled the government's response to the former Health and Ambulance Services Committee which outlined the proposed menu labelling education strategy. This education strategy will support businesses to comply with the new requirements and educate consumers to understand the nutritional information and make healthier choices. As part of the Healthier, Happier, Straight Answers campaign we will dispel myths about diet and exercise and provide information to help Queenslanders get healthy. I am very excited about that program and its rollout.

I would like to briefly address the issues raised by members opposite about the menu labelling scheme. I was pleased to hear the member for Caloundra agree that the proposed scheme will have an impact, and today I acknowledge the opposition's in-principle support for food menu labelling. I also acknowledge that individuals must take responsibility for their own behaviour, including their food choices. Ultimately there is only so much that governments can do, but a well-informed consumer can make the right choices. However, as members of this House we are in a unique position today to ensure that when making these choices Queenslanders have as much information as possible to help make informed decisions that could improve their health and wellbeing.

The member for Caloundra thought some food businesses would merely pay lip-service to the requirements. I am advised that the opposite is true. Experience in Queensland and other jurisdictions suggests that businesses make every effort to comply. My department recently completed a baseline survey of food businesses voluntarily displaying kilojoule content. Every sample taken showed that the kilojoule content was being accurately displayed with only a small margin of error. This is a cause for optimism. If these results are replicated when the scheme is implemented, consumers can reliably expect kilojoule information to be accurate. However, in the event this optimism is unfounded and the odd food business chooses to deliberately mislead consumers about the kilojoule content of their food, the bill contains significant financial penalties for both individuals and corporations. A corporation found to have intentionally breached the requirement to display nutritional information will face a maximum penalty of \$294,500.

I thank members and stakeholders for their support of other amendments in the bill; for example, the amendments to the Public Health Act to streamline access by midwives to information held on the Pap Smear Register. As the member for Nudgee points out, the Pap Smear Register helps save lives. These amendments facilitate that important goal. I would particularly like to commend the Australian College of Midwives for their advice to the committee and support in relation to these amendments.

I am also pleased to see support for the amendments to the Pest Management Act 2001 and the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979. These amendments are minor and technical in nature but will improve the operation of health portfolio legislation. I commend the member for Townsville for his thoughtful contribution on those provisions.

Before I turn to the amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act, the member for Beaudesert made some statements about Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service employees attending markets to examine food labels. Those officers of the Department of Health and hospital and health services who work in public health have a difficult job to do. They have to balance public safety with ensuring regulation is not overly burdensome, particularly to business, but we all know the exposure that individuals have to food risks in the community. To me it sounded like officers working in the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service were just doing their job and exercising their functions under the Food Act. I would say to the member for Beaudesert that if he considers the issue warrants further consideration, I would ask him to provide me with more details and I will communicate that to the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service.

I would like to address some of the issues raised in relation to the proposed amendments to the Health Ombudsman Act 2013 and the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. I feel it is regrettable that I need to do this, but because of the contributions—many of them I think completely and utterly inaccurate and frankly misleading—made in the debate by the Liberal National Party I feel that I have to respond. The member for Caloundra has advised the House that the opposition will oppose amendments to these pieces of legislation. Can I say at the outset it is ironic that members oppose the amendments to the Health Ombudsman Act, because those amendments mirror the existing temporary appointment power already included in the Health Ombudsman Act. I ask rhetorically: who put those existing temporary appointment powers into the act? I wonder who it was. Of course it was the man who sits two seats up from the shadow minister for health. It was, of course, the member for Southern Downs when he introduced the Health Ombudsman Bill 2013. He was supported in the House by the members for Caloundra, Buderim and Mudgeeraba.

Section 119 of the Health Ombudsman Act already provides that the minister may make temporary appointments to professional panels of assessors—a power that they were happy to give to their minister for health, a rational and sensible temporary appointment power, but now when they are in opposition and want to play politics of course it is a power that should not exist. What the member for Southern Downs forgot to do when he introduced the 2013 bill was to include an equivalent temporary appointment power relating to the public panel of assessors, and that is why it was necessary that I propose the amendment to insert a new section 118A.

Given the issues raised during committee proceedings and this debate, particularly by the members for Caloundra, Buderim, Moggill and Mudgeeraba, it is worth reiterating the context for these amendments and establishing what they actually do. The Health Ombudsman Act provides for the establishment of a public panel of assessors and 16 professional panels of assessors in such areas as nursing and midwifery. The role of assessors is to assist the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal judicial member hearing serious disciplinary matters relating to registered health practitioners by advising on questions of fact that may arise. These assessors play a significant role in upholding professional standards for health practitioners across Queensland. Currently the Health Ombudsman Act allows the minister to temporarily appoint individuals to the professional panels subject to certain

conditions for periods up to six months, but no such provision exists for the public panel. QCAT is required to schedule hearings as soon as practicable after receiving complaints. Any delay to appointments being made to the public panel may result in QCAT having to reschedule hearings, which in turn would result in delays to disciplinary matters being heard. I doubt that any member opposite would think that delay would be appropriate in relation to disciplinary matters for health professionals who may face very serious allegations. That would simply not be an acceptable outcome.

The member for Caloundra spoke of 'undue interference and influence by the health minister'. The member for Caloundra must not have read the amendments correctly nor the current Health Ombudsman Act. This amendment and the current Health Ombudsman Act already protect against interference and influence. The amendments to the Health Ombudsman Act allow the minister to make temporary appointments to public panels, but only on the advice of the principal registrar of QCAT. As the minister, I cannot make a temporary appointment unless the Principal Registrar comes to me and says 'We need more assessors', either because no public assessors will be available for a disciplinary proceeding, or an assessor of a particular gender is required but not available for a disciplinary proceeding.

Section 126 of the Health Ombudsman Act makes it clear that it is the principal registrar of QCAT, not the Minister for Health, who decides which assessor sits on particular disciplinary proceedings. Section 132 of the Health Ombudsman Act ensures assessors must disclose any conflict of interest. Where such a conflict is identified, subsection 132(2)(b) protects both parties, stating that the assessor must 'not take part in the proceeding or exercise powers for it, unless all parties to the proceeding and the president agree otherwise'. The amendments I will move during consideration in detail will further enhance the transparency of temporary appointments to both the public and professional panels by requiring these appointments to be published in the gazette.

I turn now to the amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. The member for Caloundra has made a number of claims to the effect that the Labor government did not support local hospital boards, that somehow it was not in our DNA. What complete and utter nonsense and a complete and utter misrepresentation of history. Those members opposite should be embarrassed by making claims that are so completely contrary to history. The 1923 Hospitals Act, passed under the Theodore Labor government, instituted independent hospital boards and districts. The 1936 Hospitals Act, passed under the Labor government of William Forgan-Smith, reaffirmed the independence of hospital boards. That act lasted for over 50 years. The system of independent local authorities continued under the Goss government—the board structure converted to regional health authorities in 1991—independent legal entities, with members appointed by the Governor in Council and given specific power to hold property, to enter into contracts and to receive gifts.

This federated structure, created and refined by Labor, came to an end under the Borbidge National-Liberal coalition government. In 1996 the Health Legislation Amendment Act (No. 2) was enacted, ending the existing regional structure and turning chief executives into mere managers who were subject to the control and direction of the director-general of the Department of Health. The member for Southern Downs voted in support of that legislation.

Labor has always supported independent hospital boards. The then shadow health minister, Wendy Edmond MP, said in debate on the bill—

Never before have we seen such an enormous grab for centralised power. Never before have the people of Queensland been so dominated by Charlotte Street, Brisbane. Never before have the people of rural, regional and remote Queensland—

those people the members opposite purport to support as part of their political organisation—

been so comprehensively duded by a Government.

It was those opposite who sought to wreck the federated structure. Labor brought back hospital boards. The legislation—the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011—was introduced and passed by the Labor government in which I served.

I will not be lectured to by the member for Caloundra or the member for Mudgeeraba on the importance of local control, on the importance of a strong board system. The only Queensland governments that have ever done anything to implement genuine local control and governance of health services have been Labor governments. I am happy to quote the member for Caloundra in the debate on the Hospital and Health Boards Bill in 2011. He said in the parliament on 12 October 2011—

As I have said, what the bill does is put in place what are called local hospital health networks or, as the LNP refers to them, local hospital boards. The principle behind the bill is the devolution of power—

I say again: a bill introduced into the parliament by the then Labor government—

from the central state authority based in Brisbane to the networks so that they have a say in the allocation of funds and the delivery of services in their communities. Their involvement in their community includes a governing council that oversees each network on which sits locally, suitably qualified individuals to provide that local knowledge allowing for greater flexibility in the delivery of services and also providing local accountability.

That was Labor's bill and Labor's plan. Hospital and health boards exist today because of Labor. We would not be having a debate about these amendments today without Labor creating hospital and health service boards in the first place.

The Hospital and Health Boards Act requires hospital and health boards to consist of a minimum of five board members including the chair. The act requires that at least one board member must be a clinician. Last year I approved updates to the guidelines for recruitment, selection and nomination of persons to health statutory agencies, making the appointment process more robust. The revised guidelines mandate standards for advertising local vacancies on hospital and health boards, reflecting the Palaszczuk government's expectation that hospital and health board recruitment activities must be conducted in an open and transparent manner and contribute towards the government's target that 50 per cent of appointments to government bodies be women. However, without a power to enable temporary appointments of board members, there is a risk that boards may not be properly constituted at all times, given this permanent appointment process can take several months. Enabling temporary appointments to the board will ensure the board has the appropriate number of members for a quorum and the appropriate skills mix to continue to conduct its business. It will ensure that a robust permanent appointment process can be undertaken while maintaining business continuity for the board.

The amendments will allow the minister to temporarily appoint a new member to a hospital and health board. The minister can do so only if the board does not have at least five members, there is no clinician member or the board does not have the skills, knowledge and experience to perform its functions. That is very clearly articulated in the bill. Temporary appointments will be for an initial period of up to six months with a possible extension of a further six months, ensuring a maximum temporary appointment period of 12 months. Temporary board members will still be required to have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience needed to be recommended for appointment under the usual appointment processes under the act. The additional requirement to notify the temporary appointments in the gazette—I will move amendments in consideration in detail—will ensure the transparency of these appointments.

The member for Caloundra is intent on painting the amendments as part of some grand conspiracy to centralise power in George and Charlotte streets. The member for Mudgeeraba followed up with claims that I am making a sneaky power grab and will wield unfettered and unscrutinised power to hire and fire hospital and health board members. I can assure the members for Caloundra and Mudgeeraba that this is not the Newman government. There is no sneaky power grab, no unfettered and unscrutinised power-hungry health minister and there will be no appointment of anyone such as the former member for Chatsworth, Michael Caltabiano. Mr Deputy Speaker, do you remember the day Campbell Newman was interviewed on the radio? 'We have been processed to death,' he said when asked about the appointment of Michael Caltabiano. How did that work out for the taxpayer of Queensland? Was it \$500,000 or \$600,000 burnt—completely wasted? This was the party of fiscal rectitude in government, the party that was against waste. It wasted half a million dollars on one of its hand-picked LNP mates.

We know that their government was a government by and for LNP mates. That is how they ran Queensland. Of course, there was no process around the appointment of Michael Caltabiano and a corrupted process within government. Let us face it, the then premier did not believe in process, which we saw in his conduct in this parliament and the way he treated this parliament and parliamentary democracy in Queensland. Those opposite are silent now. They were not rushing to send him to Canberra. I thought they might send him to Canberra just to get him out of Queensland, but he is still there. That is their legacy in Queensland. We will continue to ensure there is a transparent selection process.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** I know that the member for Mudgeeraba does not like it. I know that the member for Mudgeeraba served in the cabinet until even Campbell Newman thought she should not serve in the cabinet. It is very difficult for them to understand the sorts of corrupted processes they oversaw when they were in government.



The member for Mudgeeraba was one of the spear carriers for Campbell Newman—one of his strongest supporters. The member for Mudgeeraba claims that this bill is an attempt to 'give the Minister for Health unmitigated powers to sack and appoint members of our local hospital and health boards'. She went on—

In fact, the minister can feasibly sack—

this is what she said in the parliament—

every hospital and health board and appoint any new members based on politics or personal leanings, whenever he chooses.

That is what she said in this House on 25 February this year. This is complete nonsense. What is worse, the member for Mudgeeraba was told as much during a briefing of the committee. The department explained to the committee during its inquiry—

... the provisions you are reading do not give—

the minister—

power to dismiss a board member ...

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** That is what she was told by independent public servants, and she has been calling out nonstop. She has been calling out nonstop during the debate. I listened to her in silence, but of course when she hears the truth she cannot but interject. She must talk nonstop. She was briefed in the committee by independent public servants that the provisions do not give the minister power to dismiss a board member. Rather, they give him the power to add to a board to ensure it is capable of performing its governance role. She was briefed in a committee and of course misrepresented that in the chamber when she spoke in the second reading debate. I can only conclude that the member for Mudgeeraba failed to understand the explanation given, was not listening, was not interested or is seeking to mislead the House about the effects of the amendments.

For the benefit of the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Caloundra, let me put these changes into perspective. I know it is difficult for members opposite to understand the law of Queensland, but let me put it into perspective. These are minor changes recommended by the department. I said that in my second reading speech—recommended by the department. They ensure hospital and health boards can perform their important functions in Queensland's public health system. They do not change the very limited circumstances in which a sitting board member can in fact be suspended or removed from office. The act is very clear about that. The minister is able to suspend a board member under section 27A of the current act, but the minister cannot remove a board member. That can only be done by Governor in Council. Section 28 of the act provides that the Executive Council may remove a member from office if they are insolvent, disqualified from managing a corporation or have been convicted of an offence or the minister recommends their removal. The minister can only recommend removal if satisfied the member has been guilty of misconduct, is incapable of performing their duties, has neglected their duties or performed incompetently or has been absent without permission from three consecutive meetings. There is no unfettered power for ministers to remove board members, and so that should be because they are responsible for running and delivering health services in Queensland.

During the debate the member for Mudgeeraba also selectively quoted from the AMAQ's submission to the committee inquiry in relation to the Health Ombudsman Act amendments. What the member for Mudgeeraba failed to point out was that the AMAQ strongly supports the amendments to enable temporary appointments to hospital and health boards. The AMAQ submission states—

We are strongly in favour of the amendment to ensure that HHSs are not compromised by the departure of board members. We are pleased that the Queensland Government has recognised the importance of clinicians in the amendment.

Those members opposite may not wish to support the AMA Queensland, but we are pleased to do so as a government.

As I have already explained, the temporary appointment powers were recommended to me by the department. They are powers to appoint new members, not powers to remove existing members. They are sensible administrative amendments identified by the department to avoid problems it has experienced in the past and may well experience again in the future. I am advised that the Commonwealth Corporations Act provides a provision for the appointment of temporary directors. It provides that temporary appointments to such large public companies as Qantas, BHP, Telstra or any of the four big banks must then be confirmed at the following annual general meeting which, at most,

would be 12 months away. Temporary appointments can be made by large corporations in Australia, but the opposition—the Liberal National Party—does not believe it is appropriate for temporary appointments to be made to Queensland hospital and health boards in what otherwise would be regarded as standard corporate practice. This is an important provision and the operation of our hospital and health services is important. That is why when there are less than five members or an individual with expert skills is missing from the board it is vital that a temporary replacement can be quickly appointed. This is especially important when the board is missing a clinician whose appointment is required under the act and the board would otherwise be unable to act without that temporary appointment. We all agree that it is vital that our hospital and health boards are able to function effectively with full membership, and these amendments will help achieve that goal.

In summary, this bill will change the way we look at fast food. As informed consumers we will be able to make better choices for ourselves and our families which assist the fight against obesity and associated health burden. I want to thank the committee and committee staff members for their detailed consideration of the bill. I also want to thank all dedicated officers within the Department of Health and the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel involved in developing the bill. I acknowledge the work of the officers within the Prevention Division, in particular Roger Meany, Liz Good, Tenille Fort and Leanne Fulmer; the Office of Health Statutory Agencies, in particular Mark Strong, Steven Ralph, Charmaine Ward and Deb Pedley; and the legislative policy unit, in particular David Harmer, Jeremy Kirby, Kirsten Law and Anita Eenink. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 12, as read, agreed to.

Clause 13—



**Mr DICK** (3.55 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 1 **Clause 13 (Insertion of new s 118A)**

Page 13, after line 30—

*insert—*

- (4) As soon as practicable after making the appointment, the Minister must publish notice of the appointment in the gazette.

I table the explanatory notes to all amendments I intend to move.

*Tabled paper:* Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, explanatory notes to Hon. Cameron Dick's amendments [\[333\]](#).

I touched on these during the second reading debate, so I will not take any further time of the House to explain those further. Amendment No. 1 inserts subsection (4) into new section 118A of the Health Ombudsman Act to provide that the minister must publish notice of the temporary appointment to the public panel of assessors in the gazette as soon as practicable after making the appointment. That is a public transparency process that is associated with temporary appointments to the public panel of assessors.

**Mr McARDLE:** We intend to oppose clause 13. This clause deals with the amendment to the Health Ombudsman Act giving the minister virtually unfettered power to make a determination as to who or who shall not be appointed as an assessor to one of the panels. The minister made much of the fact that the AMAQ supported the amendment to the HHS board membership and said that if that is the case we should support it as well. However, the AMAQ said that the proposed amendment to this section should not proceed and that it undermined the principle of independence required by the community and profession to allow this amendment to go through. I can guarantee that this side of the House is not going to give unfettered power to the Labor Party to do what it wants with our health system. We have been here before. We have seen the outcome and the minister can wax long and lyrical about what he sees as the right way or the wrong way to do things, but this side of the House will not support under any circumstances a Labor government intent on controlling our health system to the nth degree. This is a matter that the AMAQ has made very clear should not proceed. In those circumstances, the logic imposed and proposed by the health minister should also be followed in relation to this clause. We oppose the clause.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 41:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir.

Pair: D'Ath, Walker.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Division: Question put—That clause 13, as amended, be agreed to.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 41:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir.

Pair: D'Ath, Walker.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 13, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14—

**Mr DICK (4.05 pm):** I move the following amendments—

**2 Clause 14 (Amendment of s 119 (Temporary appointment of panel of assessors))**

Page 14, line 3, 'Section'—

*omit, insert—*

(1) Section

**3 Clause 14 (Amendment of s 119 (Temporary appointment of panel of assessors))**

Page 14, after line 5—

*insert—*

(2) Section 119—

*insert—*

(4) As soon as practicable after making the appointment, the Minister must publish notice of the appointment in the gazette.

Again, during the debate I spoke at length on these amendments. They also relate to temporary appointments. Amendment No. 2 is a technical amendment to the legislation. Amendment No. 3 amends section 119 of the Health Ombudsman Act to provide that the minister must publish notice of the temporary appointment to a professional panel of assessors in the gazette. Again, that is public transparency of those appointments. I think that public transparency is a public good and this amendment should be supported.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 15 and 16, as read, agreed to.

## Clause 17—



**Mr McARDLE** (4.07 pm): Clause 17 amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011. The health minister again waxed lyrical about the history of hospital boards and the role of the Labor Party in regard to hospital boards. Let me make this very clear: in the early 1990s Wayne Goss and Kevin Rudd pulled the hospital boards apart. They were the ones who dismantled the hospital boards. It was ironic that Kevin Rudd was the catalyst to put them back into place. The Labor government of the time did not want them. The Labor government was forced to put back the boards. When the LNP was in government, it made the boards work.

There is no doubt that, on reading the ALP's 2015 election platform, it wants to reinstate George Street and Charlotte Street in running the hospital boards. The proposal before the House in the next clause of this bill is simply that. It is a proposal to deal with the centralisation of power back to Charlotte Street and George Street and the ALP government.

The hospital boards are the crux of our hospital system in this state. They are the basis upon which local people make local decisions on local issues. For the ALP members to stand in this chamber and to try in some way grab the glory for making these hospital boards work is an absolute nonsense and a disgrace. Under Lawrence Springborg, the hospital boards flourished. They worked well and they will work well if the ALP does not tinker with them. To stand in this place as the minister did and make some of the most ridiculous statements in regard to the ALP's fondness, love and care of hospital boards is a nonsense when the man who pulled the rug out from under them was an ALP man to his bootstraps. That same man then had the audacity to put the boards back into play.

This side of the House will never allow the degradation of these boards, as outlined by the ALP in its 2015 election platform document, because these boards are the voice of the people—the constituents right across this state. It is those people who make up the local hospital boards. The local accountants, the local doctors, the local dentists, the local physicians and the local nurses are the people who should be running hospital boards, not Charlotte Street and not George Street. To suggest in any way that the ALP government is in favour of hospital boards is an absolute nonsense as the ALP's 2015 election platform indicated quite clearly that it wanted to coordinate, control and centralise power back in George Street.

**Mr SPRINGBORG:** I rise to participate in the debate on this clause to tell a few home truths to those members opposite. The Labor Party did not establish hospital boards. In fact, it established hospital networks. The Labor Party hated the term 'board'. It was anathema to the Labor Party. The Labor Party wanted to have people running around the state basket weaving when that meant absolutely nothing.

When we came into office the first thing that we did was to change that legislation so that it clearly renamed and redefined those entities that Labor proposed from networks to boards with the autonomy that was necessary for those hospital and health services to do their job. For the minister to now claim that the ALP put hospital boards in place is absolutely wrong. They talked about networks with a restricted mandate on what we have in place now.

There are three or four key differences, and I will talk about a couple of those now, that were critical to the success of hospital boards. Unlike any other hospital board around Australia after the agreement that was reached between Bligh and Gillard, or Bligh and Rudd, we gave hospital boards autonomy over the ownership of their own assets.

We transferred ownership of assets, which was something that Labor never wanted to do. In the Hospital and Health Boards Act we gave the boards prescribed employer status so that they were able to manage their own workforce and efficiencies. They are two things that were glaringly absent from Labor's health and hospitals network legislation. It was not autonomy under Labor; it was restricted, centralised, Charlotte Street control, the same sort of control that delivered a \$300 million budget deficit in health in the last full year of the Labor Party government in 2010-11. When I took over it was \$140 million in deficit with three months to go. The accrued surpluses that stayed in the health system courtesy of our Treasurer over a period of time were well in excess of \$500 million. In one year alone in the hospital and health services it was around \$200 million across Queensland because they had real autonomy and they had real control.

If members of parliament let this go through today, they will lose their autonomy. There will be centralised control from Charlotte Street with the puppetmasters in George Street who will take away the autonomy that is necessary for the functioning and the efficiency of the system. In the Hospital and

Health Boards Act there was the position of a ministerial delegate on a board who could provide advice, not a temporarily imposed union operative for a period of 12 months, which is what this minister wants to do. This is about neutering hospital and health boards in Queensland, boards that this government first abolished in 1991 in Queensland. They never wanted to put them back and certainly never wanted to give them autonomy. It is autonomy, local control and local responsibility that give real performance. That is the way our hospital and health services have operated. Dental waiting lists were eliminated, there was virtual elimination of long wait surgical patients and significant downward pressure with regard to outpatients.

**Mr DICK:** I will not waste the parliament's time on any more of the fantasies of the Liberal National Party and their historical revisionism. I will not waste any more of the parliament's time. This is standard corporate governance practice. It is okay for the big end of town—BHP, the big four, Telstra; they can have temporary appointments but not our boards? Doesn't it show everything that the Leader of the Opposition stands for? He is willing to come in and waste time about amendments to the Health Ombudsman Act that he voted against when he had temporary appointments for similar panels when he was the minister for health. He opposes what he supported and put in the parliament when he was the minister. What a fantasy. That shows the complete hollowing out of the Leader of the Opposition. Talk about a hollow man. Talk about someone who does not believe in anything. He will pass legislation in the 54th Parliament and completely oppose it in the 55th. We have wasted too much time on this. I urge all members of the parliament to support the amendment.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I ring the bells, I have had preliminary discussions with the Leader of Opposition Business and the Leader of the House. I understand both are agreeable for it to be a one-minute division.

Division: Question put—That clause 17 stand part of the bill.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 41:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir.

Pair: D'Ath, Walker.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—

**Mr DICK (4.17 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**4 Clause 18 (Insertion of new s 24A)**

Page 15, line 28—

*omit, insert—*

(5) As soon as practicable after making the appointment, the Minister must publish notice of the appointment in the gazette.

(6) In this section—

The amendment relates to temporary appointments to hospital and health boards and provides that the minister must publish notice of the temporary appointment to a board in the gazette as soon as practicable after making the appointment.

Amendment agreed to.

**Mr McARDLE:** This is the crux of the amendment to the act. It gives the minister the right to appoint a member to the board on a temporary basis if the minister believes the board as it stands does not have the skills, knowledge or experience to perform the board's functions effectively and efficiently. This gives unfettered right to the minister to appoint a person to a health and hospital board. The process is circumvented by the content of the amendment and places at risk the independence of the process of the board and, more importantly, the independence of the board itself. I cannot stress

strongly enough that these boards need to be independent. It is a retrograde step that would compromise the independence of the boards if a minister has the unfettered right to appoint a person to the board in limited circumstances without the appropriate protections in place for that process.

During the second reading debate, I spoke at some length about my fears in relation to the government's proposal for hospital boards as a whole. I pointed out two factors that were of enormous concern to me: the charter of responsibility in the Hunter report and the system leadership executive, which are going to revamp the hospital and health networks. The process to be put in place will revolutionise and, in my opinion, decimate the current board process. It will reduce and sink to a minimal level the independence of the boards in their local communities.

The minister simply cannot be given the power to do what this clause will allow him to do. This step removes independence. This step takes from the local communities their right to make determinations. This is a step that subjects the local community to the whims of a person sitting in George or Charlotte streets and cannot be supported by this side of the House. If members of this House want independence, they must not support this amendment. Let us remember: the local boards are comprised of men and women who work in the regions and understand the circumstances, medical and otherwise, that are so essential to allowing those boards to operate effectively. This particular clause will remove that right and negate the process that has worked so well to date. We must not allow power to be assumed back in George Street. We should let local people have a say about their local outcomes. We oppose this clause.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Before I ring the bells, I have had preliminary discussions with the Leader of Opposition Business and the Leader of the House. Both are agreeable for the bells to be rung for one minute. Ring the bells for one minute.

Division: Question put—That clause 18, as amended, be agreed to.

**AYES, 43:**

**ALP, 41**—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Crawford, de Brenni, Dick, Donaldson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Miles, Miller, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Pitt, Power, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Stewart, Trad, Whiting, Williams.

**INDEPENDENT, 2**—Gordon, Pyne.

**NOES, 41:**

**LNP, 41**—Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Cripps, Davis, Dickson, Elmes, Emerson, Frecklington, Hart, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, Perrett, Powell, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir.

Pair: D'Ath, Walker.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 18, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 19 to 31, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.24 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.24 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 1 December 2015 (see p. 2980).

### Second Reading



**Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (4.24 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I introduced the Disability and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 on 1 December 2015. The bill was referred to the former Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee. In February 2016, responsibility for the inquiry was transferred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, which tabled its report on the bill on 1 March 2016. I thank all members who participated in the committee's examination of the bill and the stakeholders who made submissions to the committee. In its report, the committee made three recommendations. I table a copy of the Queensland government's response to the committee's report.

*Tabled paper:* Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 13—Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015, government response [\[334\]](#).

I am pleased to inform the House that the first recommendation is that the bill be passed. Secondly, the committee recommended that the powers of authorised officers referred to in section 200F, clause 44 of the bill, be clarified. The Queensland government accepts this recommendation and I will move three minor amendments during consideration in detail to remedy this. I will also be moving a further amendment during consideration in detail that amends the commencement date of the bill to 1 April 2016. Queensland's early launch of the NDIS commences on 1 April 2016 and it is essential that a robust quality and safeguards framework is in place and operational by this time. This simple change will achieve that objective and provide clarity to people with disability and service providers as to the quality and safeguard requirements in Queensland. These amendments have been circulated in my name and are accompanied by explanatory notes.

In its third and final recommendation, the committee recommended that the issues raised by stakeholders in their submissions that did not relate directly to this bill be considered as part of the next stage of the review of Queensland legislation to support the full scheme rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The Queensland government accepts this recommendation. The issues raised by stakeholders will also form part of Queensland's continued feedback to the Australian government, which is leading the development of the implementation of the national quality and safeguards framework as part of the implementation of the NDIS. Queensland is an active partner with all other jurisdictions in the design of this framework and is advocating for appropriate levels of protection for people with disability across Australia.

Beyond this national forum, the bill ensures that issues raised by stakeholders in their submissions can be revisited at a later date. In particular, clause 51 of the bill inserts new section 241A into the Disability Services Act 2006. This will require the Minister for Disability Services to review the efficacy and efficiency of the act by 30 June 2019. This legislative trigger will ensure the act remains contemporary and relevant. It will also provide the opportunity for government to consider the implications for Queensland as a result of the implementation of the NDIS quality and safeguards framework.

The bill before the House is the product of the first stage of a whole-of-government review of the Queensland legislation. This review has identified the critical and essential amendments necessary to support Queensland's early transition to the NDIS from 1 April 2016. The amendments give certainty to people with disability and organisations by having consistent rules and expectations while working across two systems. These amendments are both critical and essential to ensuring that, during the transition to the NDIS over the next three years, all Queenslanders with disability receiving specialist disability services are protected and safeguarded regardless of whether those services are funded by the Queensland government or through the NDIS.

This outcome is being achieved through some key changes which will redefine the scope of the Disability Services Act 2006 for the transition period. Essentially, the safeguard system will be extended to service providers that provide disability services prescribed by regulation that are funded under the NDIS participant's plan.



In its report, the committee considered the approach taken in the bill to be a simple and effective means by which to achieve the bill's main objective of facilitating the extension and consistent application of the existing statutory safeguard requirements. There was broad support from all stakeholders for the establishment of consistent legislative protections for all recipients of disability supports and services in Queensland during the state's transition to the NDIS.

Both the Public Advocate and the Queenslanders with Disability Network acknowledged in their submissions that the bill will ensure the application of criminal history screening practices, the availability of complaints mechanisms for NDIS participants and their supporters, and that the protections under the existing restrictive practices and positive behaviour support framework apply to NDIS participants.

Throughout the period in which people with disability transition to the NDIS, Queensland will be required to continue to monitor quality and safeguard compliance of service providers funded under an NDIS participant's plan. The bill inserts new provisions into the Disability Services Act 2006 to enable authorised officers to carry out this function. This function will have an expiry date. It will cease on 30 June 2019, prior to the full rollout of the NDIS in Queensland. These powers will not be required once the NDIS is fully implemented in Queensland as national quality and safeguards are expected to be in place by then.

In its report, the committee considered that part 6A of the bill will appropriately empower authorised officers to monitor and investigate issues concerning abuse, neglect or exploitation of people with a disability and to monitor service delivery standards and legislative compliance among NDIS service providers. The inclusion of these new powers was supported by the Public Advocate, the Queensland Law Society and Queensland Advocacy Inc.

In particular, the Public Advocate noted in her submission that these changes will enable the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, an entity independent of the National Disability Insurance Agency, to monitor the compliance of NDIS non-government service providers and to undertake investigations as required. The Public Advocate considered that having 'this independence in executing such functions is of significant value to an effective and accountable system'. I share the views of the Public Advocate and do not underestimate the importance of the safeguarding function Queensland will undertake.

While Queensland will monitor providers, the NDIA will be responsible for any enforcement measures required to be undertaken to address noncompliance. This includes the power to deregister providers under the Commonwealth National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013. In its report, the committee identified the need for clear and consistent departmental referral pathways to be established to ensure the NDIA is provided with full and timely advice to support it in performing its role. I am pleased to advise that Queensland is close to finalising working arrangements with the NDIA which assigns roles and responsibilities to both parties and operationalising the quality and safeguards system during the transition period.

The bill also amends the Disability Services Act 2006 to provide that the chief executive may enter into arrangements for the giving and receiving of information about persons receiving services funded or delivered by Queensland government departments who may meet the access criteria for entry to the NDIS. The purpose of this power is to facilitate the monitoring and reconciliation of Queensland's funding contribution through the transition period. In its report, the committee considered that legislative provision for consistent record keeping and secure information sharing is critical to ensuring continuity of funding and service provision for both people who transition to the NDIS and for those persons identified by the NDIA as being not eligible.


While the majority of the amendments relate to the Disability Services Act 2006, the bill also extends other elements of Queensland's quality and safeguards system making amendments to the Coroners Act 2003, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. The committee considered the proposed amendments to this suite of other acts as crucial to ensuring the availability of key external oversight mechanisms to NDIS participants and found that they will serve as important protections to the system of safeguards provided under the Disability Services Act 2006.

In particular, stakeholders were generally supportive of the expansion of the responsibility of the community visitor program. As the Public Advocate noted in her submission, community visitors provide a level of scrutiny that would otherwise be absent in accommodation and support services for people with disability and enable an important safeguard to mitigate abuse and negligent in such settings. The

Public Advocate and National Disability Services Queensland also welcomed amendments to the Coroners Act 2003 which expand the definition of 'death in care' to allow the State Coroner to continue receiving the necessary information to enable the monitoring of all deaths in care in Queensland, including those of NDIS participants.

This bill gets it right. It will prevent the creation of a two-tiered system where Queenslanders with disability would otherwise have widely divergent safeguards in place, depending on the source of their funding for their supports. This bill puts the rights and protections for people with disability first.

Again, I express my thanks to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for its examination of the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (4.36 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is the most significant social reform that Australia has seen since the introduction of Medicare. Queenslanders with disability have long called for a system that provides them with access to services that are reflective of their needs, that respond to personal aspirations and that allows for choice and control over their support packages. I am very pleased that the LNP in government enabled people with disability and service providers, through Your Life Your Choice, to trial that concept which is central to the NDIS.

It is a time of great change. It will have far-reaching effects, not only for participants but also throughout the disability sector as service provider organisations change from the block funded arrangements with governments to individualised funding for people with disabilities based on individual needs assessments. The NDIS is a market based model.

The purpose of the bill is to provide legislative amendments to enable the transition to the NDIS this year. In order to prepare for the transition, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services undertook a whole-of-government legislative review. The bill before the House is the first stage of a two-stage process. The first stage was to identify essential elements to facilitate the transition from 1 April this year and the second stage will make the necessary amendments needed for the full scheme in 2019.

The LNP supports the introduction of the NDIS in Queensland. It is why we signed the heads of agreement. We will not oppose the passing of this bill. However, we seek a firm commitment from the government to address all of the concerns raised in the submissions and ensure that any future consultation reaches out to a very broad range of stakeholders.

Delivering the best NDIS we can in Queensland should always be our goal. Giving consideration to a broad range of views helps to achieve that end. I note in recommendation 3 the committee recommends that the government consider those issues raised by submitters which do not directly relate to the bill as part of its reviews of the Disability Services Act 2006.

The bill amends six acts. Most of the amendments are contained in the Disability Services Act 2006. However, it also amends the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998 and the Coroners Act 2003.

There are four objectives of the bill. The first objective is to ensure that Queenslanders who are receiving specialist disability supports funded through the individual package under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders who are in receipt of specialist disability supports funded by the department. The second objective of the bill is to provide the department with the necessary powers to monitor the compliance of NDIA non-government service providers and with safeguards to protect NDIS participants receiving disability services.

The third objective of the bill is to provide the department with the authority to request identifiable client information from other Queensland government agencies for the purpose of reconciliation against the National Disability Insurance Agency. The fourth objective of the bill is to ensure the regulatory burden on non-government service providers is limited, as far as possible acknowledging that during the transition period service providers will be required to be registered with the NDIA and meet Queensland's strict quality and safeguard requirements.

People with a disability in Queensland deserve the same safeguards whether their service is delivered by current government funded disability service providers or NDIS non-government service providers. Queensland currently has a robust quality framework and it is essential that people with a disability feel assured that when they choose their provider the provider is delivering services within a vigorous quality assurance context. The Australian government is currently working with Queensland

and other jurisdictions to develop a national quality and safeguards framework. However, this will not be finalised before transition commences, so it is appropriate that these amendments be made. I acknowledge the minister's comments that we are very close to achieving that with the NDIA.

To that end, the bill makes a number of amendments to the Disability Services Act. These include expanding the list of disability services under the DSA to include 'another service prescribed by regulation' in order to capture NDIS services that have different terminologies to those used in the DSA. There will be some exemptions including hospital and health boards. I did note a specific reference to Accommodation Support and Respite Services, which will be considered as a disability service provider for the purposes of the DSA until it becomes an NDIS service provider.

A number of people have raised concerns with me in the past 12 months about the government continuing to directly deliver services under the NDIS. The LNP does not believe that this is the core business of government. Whilst not directly related to the bill in a broader sense, there are still questions around competitive advantage of government provided NDIS services over other service providers and the sustainability of a service that is more expensive to purchase without top up from the state government. How will the government explain to participants that they cannot continue to receive government provided accommodation support and respite services because the NDIS pricepoint does not cover that service? I look forward very much to receiving a briefing from the minister on that matter.

The bill also makes amendments to extend the definition of 'funded service provider' to include a 'service provider that provides disability services prescribed by regulation to a participant under the participant's plan'. Importantly this amendment allows for complaints about services delivered by NDIS non-government providers to be made to the chief executive. It also extends the application of the restrictive practices framework to NDIS non-government providers.

There are quite diverse views about restrictive practices and that was certainly reflected in the submissions. In 2003 the LNP introduced the Disability Services (Restrictive Practices) and Other Legislation Bill. This went a long way to contemporising the restrictive practices framework by giving clarity to the purposes of restrictive practices whilst acknowledging that we are in a time of significant change as we move to the NDIS and with the knowledge that a national regulation of restrictive practices was to be developed.

Within that bill safeguards were put in place for clients by emphasising the need for a positive behaviour support approach, having a principle that restrictive practices should not be used as a punishment and requiring funded service providers to report on the use of restrictive practices. Importantly, it introduced a requirement for service providers to provide a statement to adults and their families about the use of restrictive practices. With the changes proposed in the bill we are debating today, NDIS non-government providers will also be bound to those practices which I think is extremely important.

Clause 8 in new section 16A gives authority to the chief executive to obtain the criminal history of people engaged by NDIS non-government service providers to ensure that people with disability know that the service they are receiving is being delivered by a suitable person. This criminal history check does not include participants of the scheme who self-manage their package.

In order to be able to monitor the safety and compliance of NDIS non-government service providers, the bill also introduces a new part which gives monitoring powers to authorised officers of the department. It is appropriate that in circumstances where there is serious concern about the safety and wellbeing of a person authorised officers can obtain the relevant information and documents they need, as well as power of entry if they are investigating matters involving abuse, neglect and exploitation. I do note that the NDIA will have enforcement responsibility on referral from the department.

Whilst the overwhelming majority of disability service providers deliver quality, compassionate services, it is important that new entrants to the market understand that the community has an expectation that the best interests of the person with a disability sits central to the delivery of those services and that there will be no tolerance at all for those who do not uphold those principles.

It will be incumbent on the government to ensure that there is adequate resourcing for the department to deliver the compliance monitoring operations. This is just too important a function to have to absorb from existing resources, so I trust the minister has already spoken to the Treasurer about that funding, because it will be required to implement the process within the department.

The bill also makes amendments to the DSA for the sharing of information between government departments for auditing purposes so that Queensland does not suffer financial impact. There are several other acts too that are amended in the bill. Amendments to the Powers of Attorney Act 1998

will expand the definition of a personal matter so that a substitute decision-maker can be appointed to include services provided to a principal—that is, the person receiving the supports. Amendments to the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 inserts a number of new definitions including expanding the definition of a visitable site. Visitable sites include places other than private dwellings where adults with impaired capacity who are funded by the NDIS live. The expansion of the definition was strongly supported by submitters.

The amendment to the Coroners Act extends the definition of ‘death in care’ so the coroner has the ability to investigate the deaths of participants if they live in residential services or they receive funding under the NDIS participant plan. The Public Advocate saw this as an opportunity to identify and analyse emerging issues and/or trends to assist with the development of initiatives to ensure that recurrences of similar instances are avoided and it encourages the continuous improvement of current systems. There are also amendments to the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is dedicated to the vision of a community that values people with disabilities. The NDIA on their website say that the community as a whole benefits from inclusive arrangements, not just people with disability. In the broader sense, inclusion can enhance Australia’s social capital by engaging more people within the community and, through that, better reflecting the community’s diversity. I could not agree with those sentiments more.

Earlier I mentioned Your Life Your Choice. Mr Deputy Speaker, I cannot tell you how heartening it has been over the last few years to hear the stories of how having choice and control of their support packages has made such a difference in the lives of people with a disability. I wish to share a little story. In fact, it was probably this story that cemented my very early commitment to the NDIS and the determination to enable people with a disability to have choice and control of their supports when and where they choose.

It is the story of a woman in her 30s whose significant physical disability confined her to a wheelchair. She is a bright, gregarious and well-educated woman. She has her own business. This lady lives independently in her own home and it is equipped so that she is able to complete most daily living tasks without support. Having that independence is very important to her and living what we see as an ordinary life is also very important to her. However, one of the things that she was unable to do without support is to put herself to bed. She relies on a support worker to come in and assist her with that task. The problem was that, in the absence of having choice and control over purchasing her supports, she was receiving assistance when the service provider could schedule her in. This meant that at six o’clock at night she was assisted into bed and at seven o’clock the next morning she was assisted out. All she wanted was to have the ability to engage a provider who would come at a time of her choosing so that she was not forced to spend 13 hours a day, seven days a week in bed because that was all that was on offer to her under block funding arrangements.

This is an example of what we in the broader community often take for granted, but for people with a disability this significantly inhibits their ability to determine the course of their daily life. If we are truly committed to the notion of people with disability living the life that they choose, then having options to do that, even for what we might see as simple things like choosing what time we go to bed, can be achieved under an NDIS because participants are in control of their support packages.

In closing, I would like to thank all of those who made submissions: the Public Advocate, QAI, QDN, the Queensland Law Society and National Disability Services. I would also like to thank the committee members for their examination of the bill.

Today, the Premier announced that she had finally signed a bilateral agreement. We assume it is the agreement that was offered by the federal government late last year. On a day that should be bipartisan, a day that people with a disability have waited for, it was disappointing that the Premier chose to use the occasion to accuse the federal government of playing politics. Rick Morton, the social affairs writer with the *Australian*, tweeted today—

QLD playing poor politics on NDIS signing. Wanted changed \$ terms, bilat delayed. Now signed, they put out release before feds have signed.

I ask: who, in fact, is playing politics? Disappointingly, this appears to be the manner in which this government does business. It makes an announcement and sends out a media release before an agreement is confirmed by both parties. Then it engages in the blame game. Queenslanders with disability, their families and their carers deserve better than that on a day like today. The LNP has always supported the NDIS—and continues to—because it is the right thing to do, and we strongly believe that Queenslanders with disability should have every opportunity to live the life they choose.



**Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (4.51 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. From the outset I would like to acknowledge the work of the previous Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, which included the members for Pine Rivers, Caloundra, Sunnybank, Redlands, Warrego and Cairns, for their time and consideration of this bill. The former committee was dissolved and responsibility for tabling the report transferred to my committee just over one week prior to the required tabling of the committee's report. The report tabled in the parliament under my name as chair of the former Health and Ambulance Services Committee—now the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee—and the recommendations contained therein were certainly the result of the former committee's deliberations and efforts.

Having said that, it is a pleasure to speak in support of this bill, which will assist in Queensland's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The bill before the House will ensure that Queenslanders who receive disability supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders in receipt of disability supports funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. In doing so, it will prevent the creation of a two-tier system where people with disability have divergent safeguards in place as a result of the source of funding for their supports.

The bill represents stage 1 of a review of legislation to facilitate commencement of an early launch and transition to the NDIS. As part of stage 1, all relevant agencies across the Queensland government were required to identify the amendments to their portfolio legislation that are critical and essential to enable and support early launch and transition. Through this process, it was identified that most of the critical and essential amendments relate to the operation of Queensland's quality and safeguard system. As the NDIS rolls out, the department's existing funding contracts with disability service providers will be phased out and NDIS participants will purchase supports directly from providers. As a result of a phasing out of these existing contracts and the resulting loss of the contractual link between the department and providers of disability services, many of the existing legislative and contractual safeguards will be lost. This bill is vital to ensure that Queenslanders who are receiving disability supports under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders who are in receipt of disability supports provided by the department.

In requiring NDIS service providers to comply with the existing quality and safeguard system, Queensland is ensuring a level playing field. The result is that NDIS non-government service providers will be required to meet the same levels and standards, including criminal history screening, as providers that are funded by the Queensland government. These standards and safeguards are vital to ensure consistent and transparent processes are in place to support and protect the fundamental rights of people with disability. This safeguarding of the fundamental rights of people with disability is the key objective of the bill. Amendments are required to redefine the scope and extend the application of the Disability Services Act 2006 to include organisations that provide disability services prescribed by regulation to an NDIS participant under that participant's plan. These changes will not impact on government providers of NDIS supports.


The new threshold definitions contained in the bill will ensure the NDIS non-government providers are subject to the complaints management system. The bill introduces a new definition to ensure individuals engaged by NDIS non-government service providers are subject to criminal history screening requirements to ensure they are deemed a suitable person to support people with disability. The bill also introduces a new power for the department to monitor the compliance of NDIS non-government service providers with the provisions under the Disability Services Act 2006, including the power to require relevant information and documents and the power of entry pursuant to a warrant. These powers can be invoked to investigate issues concerning abuse, neglect or exploitation of people with disability, service delivery failures and compliance with the act. The national disability agency will have the option to deregister providers for noncompliance issues. The next stage of reforms will address the necessary amendments to enable full scheme rollout and maximise the opportunities that the NDIS will offer to thousands of Queenslanders.

The difference that this scheme will make to the estimated 97,000 Queenslanders who will be supported when it is fully rolled out is truly significant. It is a Labor initiative that represents a transformational approach to the provision of disability services in this country. It will deliver benefits to people with disabilities, to their carers, to their families and to the wider community including in the form of an additional 700 jobs predicted in Brisbane north alone over the three-year rollout of the NDIS.

While my aunt and uncle, both living with intellectual disability, are now outside the scope of the scheme due to their age, I cannot help but reflect on what a difference such a scheme could have made to their lives and those of my grandparents, father and siblings, who have cared for them throughout

their life. The move away from a crisis model where families only receive support if they are unable to continue in their caring role and there are no other options to one that responds to each individual's goals and aspirations for their lifetime, where people have real choice and control over their supports, will make a meaningful difference. It will make a meaningful difference to those living with disability and to their carers and families. I am so pleased that other families across Queensland and the country will have the benefit of such a scheme, even if mine were unable to.

I would like to again thank the former committee for their stewardship of the bill. I would like to thank all submitters to the inquiry. I would like to thank the department for their expertise and support. I would like to thank the minister for her leadership at this exciting time of transition to the NDIS. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.57 pm): I rise to address the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. This legislation amends the Disability Services Act 2006, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. The primary purpose of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 is to assist with the transition to, and the implementation of, the National Disability Insurance Scheme here in Queensland. Whilst there are many agencies in Queensland which will have amendments to their portfolio legislation, this legislation deals with the important element of ensuring a high-functioning, quality assurance system with appropriate checks and balances as a key foundation and pillar of the new disability services framework.

With the transition from a state based jurisdictional model to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, a number of changes and amendments are required here in Queensland. It is important that Queenslanders who are currently receiving disability support and services via the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services continue to receive a high standard of care with appropriate oversight and the necessary powers by government to monitor the performance of disability service providers and the care of vulnerable individuals.


Supporting those with an impairment, whether cognitive, physical, developmental, congenital or otherwise, is the right thing to do as a compassionate society. Ongoing advocacy, reform and support for those with disabilities in Queensland is vitally important. Ensuring that mechanisms are in place to address the rights of people with an impairment must continue to evolve as part of a tolerant Queensland, particularly with respect to the local implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I would encourage successive Queensland governments to invest in rights related education and training for carers and families of those who live with a disability.

Ensuring coordination of care and collaboration among service providers will optimise outcomes for all in the disability sector. Transforming the lives of those with a disability by providing hope and a real future through private-public partnerships needs to be core business of government. Promoting employment opportunities by flexible work practices, including individualised contracts and tailored hours of work, will increase the workforce participation of those living with a disability. I know that the newly appointed federal Assistant Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Jane Prentice MP, will be a great advocate for ongoing reform in this important public policy area, and I congratulate the federal member for Ryan on her recent appointment as part of the Turnbull ministry.

In my electorate of Moggill we are very fortunate to have the McIntyre Centre. This community organisation offers pony riding and other equine programs for people with a disability. The McIntyre Centre's strategic purpose is to deliver evidence based education and therapy programs with the ancillary benefits of enjoyment, recreation and support for participants and their families. I take this opportunity to recognise the hard work of the McIntyre Centre board chairman Mr Mac Boulton, his fellow board members, CEO Mr Jankees van der Have and the many staff, coaches and support workers, including Michelle Beatty, Veronica White and James Green, as part of this organisation assisting many in our community with disabilities. The translational benefits to many of the McIntyre Centre's program participants are truly inspirational, given the improvements in physical, psychological, social, educational and occupational functioning that I have seen firsthand.

I conclude by commending the members of the former Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their work, along with the inquiry staff, technical scrutiny staff, committee staff and current members of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their work in finalising report No. 13 with respect to the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I would also like to acknowledge all those who made submissions to the committee.

Ensuring transparency and clear accountability in our disability services sector is an important endeavour for our state of Queensland as we transition to the local implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Ensuring that the rights, safeguards and protections of those with disabilities are maintained is a fundamental responsibility of all elected members of the current Queensland parliament. I commend the bill and the recommendations contained in the committee report to the House.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.02 pm): I rise in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I start by thanking the previous committee—they did by far the majority of the work on this bill—and I also acknowledge the hard work of the minister. I know her commitment in this area. It was certainly evident and on display last year when we had the opportunity to go down to the mall together for the All Ability Rowing Challenge. It was certainly a challenge for me.

It gives me great pleasure to rise and speak in relation to any bill that relates to the NDIS. I believe it is an economic reform that our entire nation will be proud of in years to come, ranking up there with Medicare, the universal healthcare system and universal superannuation. It builds on the tradition of solving significant issues in our community in a way that empowers individuals and shares responsibility across our society.


From the perspective of an economist, this is an exciting and intriguing paradigm shift—something that is often theorised about but seldom enacted. It is now being enacted, and that is a good thing. Fundamental to market efficiency is the capacity for individual consumers to drive consumption decisions, and that is at the core of the NDIS. This should, in theory, lead to consumers obtaining the services they believe they need to meet their physical and emotional needs, which will ultimately help people with disabilities to become full participants in society in every respect: family, community, work, sports, arts, science and technology. This change should also drive organisations to become more efficient. While that is exciting from an economic perspective, the most important change this will really bring is the empowerment of people with a disability, creating the capacity for self-determination and the dignity that this brings.

I think of the great work being done in our community by organisations that support, educate, develop, advocate for and ultimately empower people with disabilities. Organisations like the Nursery Road State Special School, that start the education journey for young people with disabilities, Vision Australia, Queensland Narrating Service and Carers Queensland all provide valuable services to people with a disability as they move throughout life; specialist organisations like the MND and Me Foundation provide people with support as they deal with a very specific type of disability and TAG 5, an organisation that focuses on sport and recreation for people with disabilities. The NDIS will assist these organisations to work with people with disabilities and their families to achieve full community participation and empowerment. I think of the great work being done not for money but solely for love by families like the Dennis and the Marler families or the Stanley family—people who have made, and continue to make, great sacrifices to support a relative with a disability to live a life of dignity and meaning. I think about a young lady in my electorate who I have met many times now named Angela. I have met and got to know her much better thanks in large part to the power of technology that has enabled us to communicate. Angela has a physical disability but, much more importantly, she has almost completed a degree in social work, lives in her own house and cares for her lovely pet dog.

The NDIS is so much more than just an economic exercise: it will make a real difference to these people and the organisations in my community. But with change and opportunity come risk. We will be asking people who often have had little opportunity to make decisions to move into a situation where they have to make those decisions. Inevitably the capacity for individuals to make choices about who provides services will attract new providers into the market. We have seen some of the pitfalls that can bring in recent history in other areas such as VET education and childcare services, where we have seen overservicing and rent-seeking behaviour. These issues pose a great risk for consumers, so it is fundamentally important that we get this right. This bill recognises that the way we regulate organisations that provide services to people with a disability will need to change as the NDIS drives a change in the way that services are provided. The bill provides for a smooth transition as the NDIS is introduced, ensuring that people with a disability will receive high-quality services by allowing for monitoring of all service providers to ensure that the operators use existing safeguards.

There are also amendments that ensure that adult community visitors have the capacity to play an important role in supporting and advocating for people with disabilities. Like anyone who has worked with people with disabilities and in caring professions in other capacities, I would hope that a death in care is extremely rare, but it does happen and when it does occur it must be properly investigated. This bill ensures that the coroner can continue this important work as the NDIS is rolled out.

At its core the NDIS is an initiative that has been driven by people with a disability, their families, the organisations that support them and the broader community as a change that will allow people with a disability to become full participants in our community. This will bring not only dignity to the individual but will allow those individuals to make great contributions and bring great benefits to our community. Just as we have seen that waves of immigrants bring significant benefits and change to our society, empowering people with disabilities to become full participants in our society will bring immense benefits that we can only dream of at this point. We must get the NDIS right to achieve these benefits for those individuals and for our entire community, and this bill is a fundamentally important part of that process. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (5.08 pm): I rise to speak to the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The bill before the House follows stage 1 of the Queensland government's review of legislation to facilitate Queensland's transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the NDIS. The NDIS is a new way of providing support to people with disabilities which was developed on the basis of recommendations made by the Productivity Commission in its 2011 report, *Disability care and support*. Much like Medicare, the NDIS will insure all Australians against major disability, with the costs of support services shared amongst the wider community.

At its core, the NDIS is founded on the idea of giving Australians with disabilities the chance to make decisions about their own support and care, moving away from standardised services that often do not fit individuals very well. All states and territories have agreed to implement the NDIS from 1 July 2016, with the full rollout of the scheme to be completed by 1 July 2019.

Queensland has committed to the early launch of the NDIS at three trial sites in Townsville, Charters Towers and Palm Island from 1 April 2016. The bill aims to ensure that Queenslanders who receive disability support under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders who are in receipt of disability support funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services; enable the department to monitor NDIS non-government service providers' compliance with safeguards to protect NDIS participants receiving disability services; provide the department with the authority to request identifiable client information from other Queensland government agencies for the purpose of reconciliation against National Disability Insurance Agency, NDIA, invoices; and ensure that the regulatory burden placed on non-government service providers is limited.

In December 2012 then premier Newman and minister Davis committed Queensland to the NDIS, laying the foundations for one of the biggest single increases in disability funding that Queensland has ever seen. Queensland inherited a significant underfunded disability service from the Beattie-Bligh governments, with the previous LNP government determined to lift Queensland's disability spending as budget repairs occurred. It is encouraging to learn that the National Disability Insurance Agency, the NDIA, following the release of the latest quarterly report on the NDIS, reports that the NDIS is benefiting more people with disabilities, their families and carers. The most recent of these reports for the December 2015 quarter shows that the scheme is on time and on budget. Importantly for Australians with disabilities, the report also shows that more than 90 per cent of participants are satisfied with the NDIS. The report shows that delivery of the NDIS continues to be on time and on budget. More than 19,700 people are now benefiting from the NDIS, with more than \$1.2 billion invested in the services and equipment Australians with disabilities need to live more independent lives. It is incredible to think that, ultimately, 460,000 Australians, their families and carers will benefit from the NDIS.

The scheme is making a real difference to the lives of people with disabilities, their families and also their carers. It is likely to be the most significant economic and social reform since the introduction of the Medicare scheme in the 1970s and compulsory superannuation in the 1980s. It is much needed reform as the previous system of disability care was broken, with a 2011 Productivity Commission report finding the nation's disability system was underfunded, unfair, fragmented, ineffective and giving people with disabilities very little choice. It is much needed reform because, before the NDIS, government spending on disability was spiralling out of control, with the NDIS putting disability services on a sustainable footing. A 2011 PricewaterhouseCoopers report found that, without the NDIS, government expenditure on disability would increase two to three times the projected costs of the NDIS.

The NDIS is a once-in-a-generation reform to benefit the lives of people with disabilities, their families, their carers and the community as a whole. It is important we get this right. A robust quality and safeguards framework is critical to ensure vulnerable people have the necessary protections and receive supports that are of a high quality. In essence, it is about improving the lives of people with disabilities and maximising the opportunities that the NDIS can bring to the lives of Queenslanders living with disabilities, their families and their carers. I commend the bill to the House.





**Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (5.14 pm): This afternoon I rise to speak in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and to give voice to what I have heard over and over again from my constituents in Sunnybank. Anticipation for the National Disability Insurance Scheme is high in my area, with various community organisations holding seminars and distributing materials in anticipation of the rollout. We have heard this over and over, but the NDIS will revolutionise the way people with disability will access their services. When you are in a position where your ability to go to work or to university or even just to the grocery store hinges on the quality of the services available to you, these improvements are life changing.

The NDIS is the legacy of the Gillard Labor government. It is based on an investigation by the Productivity Commission in 2011 which concluded that the existing disability services system was 'underfunded, fragmented, unfair and inefficient'. The commission's report uncovered some shocking truths about the standards people with disability have been subjected to—standards that generations of governments have turned a blind eye to. The structure of the NDIS was developed in response to these commission findings. It works in a similar way as our Medicare system in that every Australian with a permanent or significant disability who needs support will be entitled to it. The federal government anticipated that the NDIS would affect around 760,000 Australians with severe or profound disability.

The scheme shifts the focus on to the individual. It requires the creation of a targeted and flexible whole-of-life strategy through consultation with the participant, their families and their carers. This includes consideration of the goals and aspirations of the participant and the creation of strategies to facilitate the desired interaction within the wider community. NDIS participants can choose their own service providers within the program and have the power to change if desired. For Queenslanders with disability, perhaps the most basic and integral outcome of the NDIS is the certainty that they will continue to receive the support they need over their lifetime. The scheme is funded by the Commonwealth and the state and partly by a 0.5 per cent increase in the Medicare levy.

On introducing the act into the federal parliament, former prime minister Julia Gillard said that the NDIS was a 'united embrace of national responsibility and a great act of mutual care and solidarity'. In my opinion, the use of the term 'national responsibility' is key to this debate. As a society we have a responsibility to care for those in need and to ensure that they have access to a dignified life. This includes not only access to the basics we need to survive but also self-determination and, as far as possible, the opportunity to live out our individual goals and aspirations. The Commonwealth legislation was passed with bipartisan support in 2013 and, in the years since, Australian governments have been working together to prepare for the program's implementation.


As a state MP, I have had great pride in informing my constituents, especially those with disability and their families, that our government is currently fast-tracking the implementation of the NDIS. That being said, the Premier and her ministers are determined to ensure that this enormous undertaking will be carried out smoothly. These reforms will affect the whole of the Queensland government and the Minister for Disability Services has spent a large amount of her time over the past year reviewing all legislation and identifying areas that need amending. The focus of this bill is to ensure the transfer of our currently existing quality and safeguard frameworks for service providers to the new system. In particular, this bill ensures that the standards regarding complaints management processes, criminal history screenings and restrictive practices frameworks are not lost as direct funding contracts are phased out.

It will also establish a body to conduct independent quality reviews of NGO service providers and to monitor compliance with government standards. The proposed legislation also includes a review clause, ensuring that the amendments in this bill are re-evaluated in 2019. There can be no doubt that the Palaszczuk government is taking a thorough and reflective approach to this monumental reform.

One of the primary objectives of the NDIS is to ensure that people with disability have the tools to participate in the wider community, both socially and economically. In preparation for this, the department of disability services has been building relationships with community organisations across Queensland. Kyabra Community Association Inc. in Runcorn has mobilised in support of the early implementation of the NDIS, holding multiple information sessions to inform locals of the changes to come and how best to prepare. Organisations such as Kyabra are the backbone of our community. They are most attuned to the needs of Queenslanders and I am glad that the government is relying on them to help implement such a wide-reaching scheme. Kyabra will be relied upon in the coming years to help people with disability find opportunities to advance their social and economic participation.

The government has also been active in preparing Queenslanders for employment in the inevitable boom to our disability services sector. The minister's office has launched the NDIS NGO Workforce Strategy, which will deliver up to 1,043 jobs in Brisbane's south alone. This is big news for my electorate, which has many young people who are eager and willing to work. This strategy will ensure that they are trained up and prepared to offer quality support to people living with disability.

As I said, it is my belief, and that of this government, that people with disability deserve access to everything that they need to live a quality life. The NDIS is a groundbreaking policy framework that is already a very hot topic of conversation in Queensland communities. I commend the work of this government in carefully fast-tracking the implementation of the NDIS and I support the changes proposed by this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.21 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. This bill will build on the efforts of the former LNP government to deliver a whole-of-government legislative and policy framework for the delivery of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland.

The NDIS is one of the largest reforms ever implemented in the disability services sector, ushering in a new way of providing support to people with disabilities. It also marks a significant change in philosophy in the way that support is provided to people with disabilities, placing additional emphasis on individual choice and personal autonomy. All states and territories have agreed to implement the NDIS from 1 July this year, with the full implementation of the scheme to be completed by 1 July 2019.

With the introduction of such a large-scale national reform, a great deal of responsibility fell on the former LNP government to ensure that appropriate legislation was in place to facilitate the introduction of the NDIS. It would be remiss of me if I did not begin by acknowledging the hard work of my good friend and colleague the member for Aspley during her tenure as the minister for communities, child safety and disability services. Her work as the minister during the initial stages of the NDIS establishment ensured that Queensland would be able to cater for the long-term implementation of the NDIS. I know that one of her first priorities as minister was to work with her department to craft a framework for Queenslanders with a disability to self-direct their funding, providing greater flexibility for people with disabilities in the lead-up to the NDIS implementation.

After the good work of the member for Aspley to get Queensland prepared for the NDIS, it is disappointing to see that this Labor government has only today signed the NDIS bilateral agreement in a snap decision, with its delay putting the NDIS transition at risk. This snap decision comes after an extended period of pressure from the LNP to do the right thing by Queenslanders with a disability as well as their families and carers.


This bill will introduce a number of further policy changes as the NDIS comes on line later this year, building on the achievements of the member for Aspley to ensure that Queenslanders who receive NDIS support will have the same safeguards as those who receive support from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. It also aims to ensure compliance by NDIS non-government service providers and limit the regulatory burden on those providers. These amendments will include definitional amendments that will redefine the scope of the Disability Services Act 2006 to ensure the application of three key legislative safeguards to non-government service providers that are not funded by the department but through the NDIS. These are the disability services complaints management framework, the criminal history and screening requirements and the framework governing the use of restrictive practices to manage challenging behaviours displayed by some individuals with intellectual or cognitive disabilities.

This bill will also introduce amendments to enable a department to monitor the compliance of NDIS non-government service providers by granting powers that are currently exercised by departmental appointed authorised officers to NDIS non-government service providers. These include the power to require relevant information and documents, relevant powers of entry to premises and the power to search and inspect premises while requiring an occupier to give the authorised officer reasonable power to help exercise these powers. I note that these provisions were supported by the Public Advocate, who considered that having this independence in executing such functions is of significant value to an effective and accountable system. However, the committee considered that, as the NDIA will be responsible for any enforcement measures in relation to services provided under the NDIS, it is crucial that clear and consistent departmental referral pathways are established to support the NDIA in this role.

This bill will also introduce information-requesting powers to enable the chief executive to reconcile the Queensland government's funding contributions against NDIA invoices during the transition to the NDIS. The bill will also amend several other acts and regulations, including the

Coroners Act 2003, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 to ensure that those receiving support through the NDIS are covered by the safeguards in these acts.

After the initial consideration of this bill was conducted by the former Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, the current Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee recommended that this bill be passed on a bipartisan basis. As a proud supporter of a number of disability services providers in my electorate who work every day to support and care for people with disabilities in my local area, I am pleased to see the work started by the member for Aspley is being continued. It is important that we continue to ensure a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to the rollout of the NDIS and update our existing legislation to meet the provisions of the NDIS to ensure that those who will receive care through the NDIS are entitled to the same protections as those who receive care through the department. It is for those reasons that I support this bill.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (5.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** I will go nice and slow just for the member. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is good for Queensland in more ways than one. It is also good for jobs and job creation. We know that the NDIS will be great for people in Queensland who have a disability as it provides them with choice and control over the services that they require.

I generally enjoy banter with the member for Mudgeeraba and the member for Buderim as they are also members of the committee that considered this bill, but the patting on the back of the great work that the LNP has done in regard to the NDIS is an absolute travesty. It is a joke. Let us look at the history. The LNP was dragged kicking and screaming—

**Mr Crandon:** You weren't here. You wouldn't know.

**Mr HARPER:** I will take that interjection. The member is absolutely right. I was not here.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Order! Member for Thuringowa, can I draw you back to the long title of the bill, please.

**Mr HARPER:** I take the interjection. I was not here. I just read the *Courier-Mail* and watched the TV like everybody else. There were thousands—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order members! We will wait until everybody calms down and then we will get going again.

**Mr HARPER:** Like very many concerned Queenslanders, I saw the thousands of people protesting that the Newman government had absolutely delayed the signing of the heads of agreement to the NDIS.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** Yes, you did. Now you pat yourselves on the back and are caring?

**Mr Crandon:** Why don't you just say something sensible?

**Mr HARPER:** You do not like hearing the truth.

**Mr Crandon:** Say some positive stuff about the bill.

**Mr HARPER:** I think I have struck a nerve. If I can get back to it, we know that direct funding will be provided.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** You do not like hearing it. Direct funding will be provided from the National Disability Insurance Agency. We know that.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Order! Member for Mudgeeraba, your interjections are not being taken.

**Mr HARPER:** I would also like to commend the Premier and our Minister for Disability Services for their commitment to signing the bilateral agreement. The Premier knows just how important this is to the people of Queensland. The NDIS will support more than 90,000 people with disability, doubling the number of people currently receiving disability services. I agree with Minister O'Rourke who is calling for Malcolm Turnbull to sign the bilateral agreement and provide certainty for those people.

Importantly, through the transition period people do not need to stress as the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will continue to fund disability services for those clients who have not yet entered the NDIS scheme. An important issue for the NDIS transition relates to the funding arrangements and reconciliation processes that will occur throughout the transition period. Importantly, the objectives of the bill are to ensure Queenslanders who are receiving disability support under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders who are in receipt of disability support as funded by the department.

The Queensland government is working closely with the Commonwealth government to get that bilateral agreement signed and working with local communities and the disability sector to ensure a smooth and carefully managed transition to the NDIS. There are just 108 days to go until the NDIS starts in Queensland. Providing the correct services for people with disability is vital. We need to ensure that we get the legislation and policy checks and balances right and correct before the implementation of the NDIS statewide. I know that the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland is incredibly in touch with and proud of the work people do in the area of service provision for the broad disability sector in Queensland. I know that the minister is proud of the fact that the NDIS will create some 13,000 jobs in Queensland. Given the minister's other portfolio as the minister representing the Premier in North Queensland, job creation is an important and key element of the rollout of the NDIS in Queensland. I also commend the minister's work in this space. I have joined the minister several times in Thuringowa and Townsville visiting CPL—Choice, Passion, Life—in Kirwan and Cootharinga Disability Services. From listening to the minister engaging with mums and dads or people with disability I know that we have a genuine minister, one who cares about people. The work of rolling out the early launch of NDIS in Townsville, Palm Island and Charters Towers from January 2016 was a very proud moment for the minister and her team in achieving this important initiative that puts people first.

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is leading a whole-of-government review into the Queensland legislation. That review is being completed in two stages. In stage 1 all relevant government agencies are required to identify amendments in their portfolio that are critical and essential to enable and support early launch and transition. It also involves the review of legislation to facilitate the commencement of the early launch from 1 April 2016. Stage 2 will address the necessary amendments to enable the full scheme rollout from 1 July 2019.

Broad consultation was conducted across all relevant government departments as well as the State Coroner and relevant statutory advocates, including the Office of the Public Guardian and Office of the Public Advocate. Further, the approach adopted by Queensland in the bill is broadly consistent with other jurisdictions. However, given that the quality and safeguard systems in each jurisdiction operate differently, each state and territory is required to adopt an individualised approach. When one examines the bill one will see that within the 62 clauses there are particular amendments to the following: the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Powers of Attorney Act 1998, the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 and, importantly, the Working With Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. These amendments are important for ensuring the safety of all in relation to the rollout of the NDIS. In closing, we need to do all we can to ensure Queenslanders with disability are safe. Ensuring that they can uphold their rights is a matter of obvious importance for our government. I know the minister and her department are committed to ensuring and improving the lives of Queenslanders and maximising the opportunities the NDIS will offer to thousands of Queenslanders.

I acknowledge the previous committee's work, from its members to the secretariat. Whilst we only recently received the bill we, under the good work of our chair, will continue to carry on the outstanding good work of the previous committee and the extensive professional work of all in the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr PYNE** (Cairns—Ind) (5.37 pm): I rise to speak to the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Having intimate knowledge of disability and disability issues I have been on the board of the Australian Quadriplegic Association, the father of the Treasurer appointed me to the National Disability Advisory Council of Queensland and I have held numerous other positions in the

disability advocacy area. It is good to see this bill coming forward to make many amendments prior to the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme which has been long awaited by people with disabilities and their families. It will certainly be a great day when this legislation is passed and the NDIS is rolled out in full in Queensland. As the member for Cairns I would much rather have seen the early launch site in the Cairns area and the Indigenous community of Yarrabah than the Townsville area and the community of Palm Island, but such is life.

This bill amends a number of pieces of legislation to facilitate the introduction of the NDIS. Having campaigned and criticised the former Newman government for not signing up to the NDIS agreement it has certainly been a frustrating 12 months for me in terms of constituents approaching me, not just from my own electorate but others as well, because I guess they associate me with disability issues, and having to say, 'Well, it is going to be signed soon.' Then, of course, October comes and having to say, 'It is going to be signed soon.' Then in November telling people, 'It's going to be signed soon.' Eventually you stop believing yourself that this bilateral agreement is ever going to be signed. It has been quite frustrating. It is a great thing to see this bill in the Queensland parliament. Hopefully that long-awaited bilateral agreement will be signed soon.

Historically, Queensland has been many years—as much as a decade—behind other states in terms of the delivery of services to people with disabilities. In one way that made reform easy, because we simply looked at the legislation in the other states that were doing things better and have been playing catch-up for some time, as is still the case. However, the great thing with the NDIS will be to have a national framework so that we can have more consistent policy delivery. The fact is that many people who are getting disability support services will get more support and some people who have no support will be getting support. That is going to be a wonderful thing.

It is hard to explain to those not exposed to disability the level of stress and pressure that can be put on families. It is really important that disability advocacy services have a prominent role and the consultation on this bill is very important. Disability advocacy services often represent people who do not have the capacity to fully advocate for themselves. Whether it is Rights in Action in Cairns, Independent Advocacy in tropical Townsville or one of the other disability organisations, having a voice is really important. In the past the problem has been that, by and large, people with disabilities and their families feel quite disempowered because they are dealing with services delivered from a very bureaucratic structure. Over recent years, we have seen the emergence of many community based services delivering disability services, which is a really great outcome because people with disability can have more control over management. You will often see parents of children with Down syndrome or intellectual disabilities form committees to deliver services to their children and family members.

In Cairns, Independent Living Support Association and Leisure Connections Association are two such organisations, but the biggest provider is Arc Disability Services. Many of those service providers are very apprehensive about the introduction of the NDIS. They are concerned that they may not be able to deliver services for the same cost per hour of service delivery as some of the bigger organisations that may come in with the introduction of the NDIS. It is really important that those disability services have a person centred approach, which is inherent in the legislation. It is not about offering young Sam 20 hours a week of supported accommodation at a particular rate; it is about looking at young Sam and seeing what his life goals and aspirations are and working out the best way to plan for that young man so that he can have the best possible life as a part of the community. For me, that is at the heart of it. It is about being part of a community. In the past, there have been separate accommodation centres for people with disability. Of course, it can be cheap to service many people in a separate accommodation setting, but that is not what we want. We do not want segregated support; we want inclusion where people with all sorts of disabilities are part of the mainstream community. I thank the minister and those involved in the introduction of the bill. I commend the bill to the House.



**Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (5.43 pm): I rise to throw my very strong support behind the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I remember when Barack Obama was running as the Democratic presidential candidate and he released the Plan to Empower Americans with Disabilities. That was astonishing to me at the time. As a former speech pathologist who had spent a number of years working closely with people with disability and their families, it was astonishing that here was a presidential candidate in the most powerful country in the world fairly and squarely placing disabilities on the national agenda and saying, 'This is a really important issue.' In 2008 when Barack Obama gave his acceptance speech, he directly referred to people with disabilities. At the time, what struck me was not only what he had done to make that such a national priority but also the fact that in

Australia we did not have a similar debate happening. I knew that among the organisations working with people with disability, the schools that have children attending with disabilities, the families and the people with disabilities themselves that debate was happening, but at a national level there was no advocacy, there was no lobbying and there was not the maturity in our conversations to know what needed to happen to help people with disabilities and their families.

In 2011 the Productivity Commission report was released. I think it is fair to say that that was the start of getting the major reforms for disability services that had been so long needed in Australia. The Productivity Commission deemed existing systems to be underfunded, unfair, fragmented and inefficient. Accordingly, it sought to address this by proposing new arrangements to fund lifetime support needs of all Australians who have a permanent and significant disability or who require assistance as a result of catastrophic injury such as major brain or spinal cord injury. In 2011, the COAG meeting agreed to lay the foundations for the NDIS. In 2013, Julia Gillard launched the NDIS, which was called Disability Care Australia at that time. That was a very emotional moment. Now, here we are: all states and territories are preparing for the rollout of the scheme, with coverage expected to progressively commence on 1 July 2016 and be completed by 1 July 2019. In Queensland, early transitions to the NDIS were announced on 25 September 2015 for Townsville and the NDIS trials will commence on 1 April 2016.

I felt really strongly about making a contribution to the debate on this bill and I had no intention of actually inserting any politics into this. However, after the contributions of a couple of the members on the other side, I cannot let this speech go by without having a go back. Queensland was the only one of the states or territories that would not contribute to a pilot program. They were asked to contribute \$20 million to a pilot program, but they could not bring themselves to do it. They could bring themselves to spend \$70 million on the Strong Choices campaign and all of the other things that were required to prepare our state for asset sales—they were happy to spend \$70 million on that—but they were not happy to spend \$20 million on a pilot program for the NDIS. I am sorry: do not come into this House and say do not bring politics into the NDIS!

A newspaper article refers to then prime minister Julia Gillard being brought to tears in parliament when she introduced the legislation to fund the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It contains some lovely words that I will read a little later on. She said—

In March, we gave it a place in our nation's laws. Today we inscribe it in our nation's finances.

She was in tears and we were in tears with her, seeing what a significant event this was.

I will read the ABC report of the opposition's interest in that speech at the time. We talk about what Julia Gillard did and said about the funding of the scheme. The report stated—

Opposition spokesman on families Kevin Andrews was the only Opposition MP in the House to hear the PM speak.

Today we have the wonderful news that the Premier and the Minister for Disability Services have actually signed off on the NDIS rollout. Now we are waiting for Malcolm Turnbull to sign it as well. We are waiting and waiting. The Minister for Disability Services has been working so hard. She has been working to the point of exhaustion to make up for the fact that we did not have a pilot program running in Queensland. She has had to do so much to catch up and to get us to the point we are at today. I express my deepest admiration for her and what she has achieved and acknowledge the comfort and support that she has shown people with disabilities and their families. She was intent on making sure that Queensland is part of this and that this is actually going to be done properly. On behalf of all of the people in my electorate, I thank her for what she has done to make sure that this happens. I am not going to say anything more about it. I cannot have people saying they are not going to be political when they go on to say political things.

Now we have the NDIS. This is about providing support to people with a disability. As the minister said in her introductory speech, it is a game changer. There was a lot of media coverage at the time the NDIS was introduced. The words of an editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald* at the time the NDIS was introduced are as true now as they were then. It stated—

DisabilityCare will come to be judged the great legacy of what was the Gillard government. But for 400,000 Australians, it is much more important than that.


Monday is the day that every person who cares for someone with a disability has some weight lifted from their shoulders. For people with a disability, it marks the beginning of hope for the future.

It is a future in which their care and ability to participate in the community is not decided by their income. Nor will it be decided by whether they are lucky enough to get into available services. From Monday, everyone with a significant and permanent disability starts to get the same, fully funded chance at reaching their true potential.

For me that encapsulates all of the things that are so important about the NDIS. I acknowledge the fine words that have been spoken by members on both sides of this House about their experiences with working with people with disabilities and just what this is going to mean to them. Regardless of the politics, I know that members on all sides are very genuine about their support for what the NDIS is going to provide.

This bill deals with the practicalities of implementing the NDIS. Little would we have known what we were going to be doing. In 2008 I was thinking about Barack Obama and how we needed to have a national debate about disabilities. Here I am now actually speaking in this parliament about the implementation of this scheme. That is a wonderful thing.

I am not going to talk about the things that this bill will achieve because they have been very well covered by other people. Aside from the clear benefits that the NDIS will provide, what has happened since the NDIS was introduced is that there has been an ongoing debate around people's dinner tables and ongoing national awareness about what it means for people with disabilities to live in this country. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.53 pm): I rise tonight to make a brief contribution in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I have no doubt that all honourable members in here can relay stories from their own electorates, their own communities, their own families of people who have had to deal with adversity in the disabilities sector. There is no doubt that disability services have come a long, long way over the last couple of decades.

It was 65 years ago this year that we saw the establishment of the Cootharinga society of North Queensland.

**Ms Davis:** They're wonderful.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** I take the interjection from the member of Aspley. That is a wonderful organisation that has served the North Queensland community magnificently over the past 6½ decades. It has rolled out services in Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, the Burdekin, the Tablelands and Mount Isa. It has certainly come a long way from the embryonic days as the North Queensland Society for Crippled Children.

The name Cootharinga, for those trivia buffs, is the old name for that North Queensland icon that stands like a beacon over the city of Townsville. Of course, I am referring to Castle Hill. I particularly acknowledge the directors and volunteers of Cootharinga over the years who have been there supporting the staff in the delivery of services. I particularly want to acknowledge iconic North Queensland businessman Allan Parry. He gave many years service to Cootharinga. I salute Allan for that service. I am sure the people of the city of Townsville, where I lived in the past, and other places around the north acknowledge his contribution to Cootharinga.

It is marvellous to see new blood coming through the ranks. I acknowledge my good friend Wade Chiesa. Nowadays he is part of the Cowboys call team on 4TO FM. I worked with Wade before coming into this place. I know that Cootharinga is very dear to his heart. He does some terrific work at Cluden racecourse promoting the good cause that is Cootharinga.

Col McPherson runs the office for Mackay and the Whitsundays. I have known Col for a long time through Rugby League—the sport that brings the people of North Queensland together. Col has been doing a terrific job in flying the flag for Cootharinga in Mackay and the Whitsundays.

There is no doubt that there are many other providers in this space. One that comes to mind is the Endeavour Foundation. For as long as I can remember a cousin of mine Robert Mackenzie came in from Calen in the cane fields in the rural heart of my electorate to Eva Musset Park on the north side of Mackay. I know that his family were very grateful for the service that Endeavour provided for people like Robert. That is a long time ago.


There are a number of people in the Whitsunday community who come to mind because they have had to deal with adversity. One of those is Alan Dufty, the Paralympic legend who represented his country in the UK in 1984, in Seoul in 1988 and then in Barcelona in 1992. Alan came to the Whitsundays in the early 1970s.

Like many people coming to North Queensland, he came to the place that I call paradise in search of opportunity. Unfortunately, due to an accident in 1973 Alan would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He began work with the Proserpine shire council in 1975 and the following year he said, 'Let's get into it.' He started playing sport in spite of what had happened to him. He went on to compete at various levels.

Debate, on motion of Mr Costigan, adjourned.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Portfolio Committees, Referral of Auditor-General's Reports and Reporting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.58 pm): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 6 of 2015-16 titled *State public sector entities: 2014-15 financial statements* be referred to the Transportation and Utilities Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 7 of 2015-16 titled *Public non-financial corporations: 2014-15 financial statements* be referred to the Transportation and Utilities Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 8 of 2015-16 titled *Major transport infrastructure projects* be referred to the Transportation and Utilities Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 9 of 2015-16 titled *Provision of court recording and transcription services* be referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 10 of 2015-16 titled *Queensland state government: 2014-15 financial statements* be referred to the Transportation and Utilities Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 11 of 2015-16 titled *Management of privately operated prisons* be referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee; the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 12 of 2015-16 titled *Follow up report 12: 2012-13—community benefits funds: grant management* be referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee; and the Auditor-General's report to parliament No. 13 of 2015-16 titled *Cloud computing* be referred to the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee.

The committee has also resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report on the Penalties and Sentences (Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council) Amendment Bill by 29 April 2016; the Finance and Administration Committee report on the Electricity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 12 May 2016; and the Agriculture and Environment Committee report on the Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill by 15 April 2016.

## MOTION

### Carmichael Mine

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.01 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to immediately provide all state government approvals necessary for Adani's Carmichael mine to proceed to help drive the creation of thousands of jobs for Central and Northern Queensland.

I think that we all understand in this place the significant nature of the proposed investment with regard to Adani's Carmichael mine. As I understand it, it is the largest proposed coalmining development in all of Australia and it is so significant because of the world's increasing energy demand. We also need to understand the growing sense of frustration for not only the many communities in Central and Northern Queensland but also the many communities around Queensland including in South-East Queensland where there is a direct correlation between the prosperity of their businesses, whether it be in engineering, mining services, financial services, accounting services or whatever the case may be.

It also behoves us to understand that over a significant period of time the proponents of this mine have invested hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars in preparation around this and have employed hundreds of people in preparation around this. I think we all understand the sense of frustration as this project has been delayed. Indeed, only recently we had the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection indicate that the environmental licences would be granted to this mine, but the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has indicated that there may be a fair way forward before the final mining approvals will be granted. It is my understanding that those things which would stand in the way of state governments giving the approvals for the matters that it is responsible for have largely, if not all, been completely cleared. Therefore, there is no logical reason as to why this should be delayed.

I look forward to next month when I am in India meeting with the proponents behind this particular proposal, as I know that state government ministers on the other side would have done previously and also those who were ministers on this side of the House in the time that we were in government would have done so. We know that this mining proposal will generate thousands of direct jobs and thousands more indirect jobs. Significantly it also clears the pathway for major investment in infrastructure through Central and Northern Queensland, not to mention that we have a circumstance where a significant amount of money would come into the state government's coffers by way of the royalties generated.



Whilst there is an argument within the community that the energy mix in Australia and worldwide does need to change—and that is an argument which we all understand—it is not going to happen to the extent that some people propose in the short to medium term. If you look at Japan and if you look at India, a significant mix of their energy equation going forward is reliant upon coal. If you look at what is happening in Queensland, there has been no real fall in the export tonnages of coal. Indeed, they have been escalating with regard to both thermal coal and metallurgical coal, and that is the way it will continue to be.

I think we would be cutting off our nose to spite our face if we did not understand that this is a significant project which not only will provide benefits to our state and provide many jobs and infrastructure opportunities but also will provide an energy pathway for other countries around the world and, if you look the Indian situation, will lift many millions of Indians out of poverty. If they do not get it from Australia, they will get it from somewhere else around the world. That is what we need to understand with regard to this. Other places around the world do not have the high level of environmental standards and oversight that we apply here in Australia. They do not have that.

Therefore, I think this is an important motion. It is a motion that recognises that this mine project has had significant ongoing support from our side of politics in government. Indeed, as I listened to the Premier last week, the Premier indicated that she was supportive of this project as well. If we have that support for a major job-creating project which will boost our Queensland economy, I think we should be moving immediately to provide those approvals given that the environmental issues have been largely cleared by the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. This does not seek to declare that those things which are beyond the power of this parliament should be interfered with. When it comes to state government approvals, we can at least do this for the Adani mine to ensure investment security.



**Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (6.06 pm): Let me say from the outset that we will not be opposing this motion. When it comes to Adani's development of the Carmichael mine, there has been no bigger friend of this project than the Australian Labor Party. We on this side of the House have been supporters of this project since it was first submitted to the Queensland government in 2010 for approval. During the Bligh government and during the current government, we have done all we can to facilitate and encourage this project within the law of the land and to make sure there is a benefit for the entire community. It is without hesitation that we support this motion.

It was under the Bligh government that the proposed Carmichael coalmine and rail project was designated a significant project. The Bligh government was a great facilitator of the Carmichael mine, not merely guiding the project through the regulatory process but also facilitating the development of the Carmichael mine through the associated infrastructure including the Abbot Point Coal Terminal. We did so much to develop Abbot Point that it was too much for the member for Callide. Let us remember what he said in this place. He did his best Al Gore impersonation. He said we were being environmentally irresponsible. The member for Callide said Labor were being environmentally irresponsible. He said the proposed Abbot Point Coal Terminal was too big. It was too large. How dare we be ambitious!

The member for Callide derided the Bligh government about Abbot Point. What did he do when he got onto the government benches? He did what all conservative governments do—he stopped work, pontificated and stalled the project for 12 months because it was not in their name. It took just two months for the member for Callide to end uncertainty by scrapping the whole proposal for the Abbot Point expansion at that time. The member for Callide then dithered and consulted. He tried to reshape the project and got consultants on board in a vain attempt to rebadge it LNP. The whole time the member for Callide created further uncertainty for coal companies, port corporations and construction companies by flip-flopping on this important project for Queensland. When he could not get the support, he decided to play wedge politics with the dumping of dredge spoil. First, it was in the ocean. Then, when he could not put it there, he wanted to put it in the protected Caley Valley wetlands. There is plenty of time to waste when politics can be played by the member for Callide.

For all the sanctimonious pontificating by those opposite about red tape, the development of the Carmichael mine at Abbot Point lost crucial months and years under their watch. After the people of Queensland handed down their judgement on those opposite around 12 months ago, we on this side of the House got back to work. This government said from day one that we would have a collaborative approach and a consensus style to governing, something that is a foreign concept to those opposite. The expansion of the Abbot Point Coal Terminal is a case highlighting how a consensus style approach can pay dividends.

Within weeks of coming into government—and I remember it like it was yesterday; I remember sitting down with the Deputy Premier and Minister Lynham—we sat face-to-face with representatives from Adani and heard what was required to see this job-generating, economy-building project proceed. Adani expressed their exasperation at the delays of red tape that had accumulated under the LNP. Just weeks later a new agreement was reached to put in place an environmentally sustainable proposal for the expansion of the Abbot Point Coal Terminal. This agreement eliminated the dumping of dredge spoil on wetlands or in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

This agreement between the government and Adani was a long time coming. After various iterations of the dredging plan, we now have an environmentally sustainable and fiscally responsible proposal. There is no denying the economic benefits of \$16 billion of investment this project would bring to North Queensland and to the rest of the state. Expansion of Abbot Point is the linchpin for developing the Galilee Basin coalfields. The Galilee Basin mine, rail and port projects are expected to create jobs and build economic development. The Carmichael mine will generate up to 1,075 jobs during construction and up to 3,800 jobs during operation. The associated rail line will generate up to 1,400 jobs during construction and up to 120 jobs during operation. The potential flow-on effects to regional communities are also significant.

We on this side of the House did this by getting the balance right. We got the balance right between the environmental need to prevent the offshore disposal of dredge spoil and the need to get Adani's project up and running. I hope those opposite are listening. It is possible to facilitate investment in the resources sector and care for the Great Barrier Reef. This is what Labor does; we get the economy working while protecting what Queenslanders hold dear—that is, our environment. We get the economy right because we get the projects right and we facilitate jobs for Queensland.

I support this motion because it is what we on this side of the House have always done, and that is get results for Queenslanders. This will be one of the most significant decisions that would be made by this government. I fully support this motion. I know it will have the support of all members of this House.



**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (6.11 pm): Six years and \$3 billion—that is right; it is almost beyond comprehension that a company would spend that amount of money and time on a mine, rail and port project in this state without turning a sod. That is exactly what has happened with Adani's Carmichael mine. Today we have heard from the Premier, the Deputy Premier and a number of ministers about their infrastructure plan, yet when it comes to delivering one of the biggest job-creating projects in Queensland's history, they are frozen at the wheel. Why is the Premier stalling? Why is she taking so long and hanging the people of Central and Northern Queensland out to dry when we so desperately need the jobs that this project will create? Their own draft State Infrastructure Plan states, 'Unlocking untapped coal reserves in the Galilee Basin will have significant economic benefits for centres like Rockhampton, Mackay, Bowen and Townsville'. That is right; it will have significant economic benefits that could have been flowing into our communities around the state. The uncertainty and the lack of confidence that currently exists in our northern communities is a direct reflection on this government.

The Premier should try telling that to the business owners in Bowen and Collinsville who invested millions of dollars in the belief that this project would go ahead and who have now been declared bankrupt because of the delays in granting the necessary approvals while this government are sitting on their hands. She should try explaining to the families who had to pack up and leave because they could not wait any longer for this project to commence and who were sick of waiting at the end of an unemployment queue why she will not fast-track this approval. I know my colleague the member for Gregory tells a similar story about how towns in his electorate like Alpha, Jericho, Barcaldine and Emerald are hurting because of the downturn in the mining sector and are mourning the lost opportunities in training apprentices such as electricians, diesel fitters and boilermakers that are so important to grow this state.


Make no mistake: this is a history-making project that comes along only once in a lifetime. This is a mine expected to yield 50 million tonnes of coal a year with the company planning to construct a 189-kilometre rail line to transport the coal to Abbot Point. The project is set to create thousands of jobs and generate \$22 billion in taxes and royalties. I wonder what we could do with \$22 billion around the state of Queensland in the present economic climate. Furthermore, the federal environment minister, Greg Hunt, has reapproved Adani's coalmine and rail project under 36 of the strictest conditions in Australia's history.

What is the reason for the delay? Is it because we have a government being held hostage by the ideologically driven green groups, or is it because this government is caught up in its own bureaucratic web that has hamstrung it to the extent that it cannot deliver real projects and jobs for Queenslanders?

Frankly, I am amazed that Adani has stuck around and continued to fight this battle. After all, they have been continuously embroiled in expensive and ongoing legal challenges by radical green groups, submitted countless environmental impact statements and basically had to defend their own business's confidence in investing in Queensland. This government's procrastination is threatening the economic viability of our region at a time when jobs and economic development are paramount.

The Premier has no idea what it would mean to the people of Central and Northern Queensland to see this project approved. They need hope and commitment, not empty promises and buck passing. I have communities in my electorate like Bowen and Collinsville who are experiencing the biggest downturn in their history, who are fighting for survival and who are on the brink of becoming mere shells of their former vibrant communities. I say to the Premier that we have sat in this place month in, month out and listened to her rhetoric around jobs, yet when the opportunity presents itself to sign off on a project that will deliver thousands of jobs to Queenslanders she is found wanting. The time for talk is over. The thousands of people in regional Queensland want jobs, economic growth and futures for their towns, businesses and their children.

We cannot afford to let this opportunity slide. I am calling on this government to give this project the green light and sign off on all the approvals necessary for Adani's \$16 billion Carmichael mine to proceed. I cannot state it more simply for the Premier than to say: for the sake of Queensland, make it happen.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (6.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion. This project is critical to the future of my electorate, both economically and environmentally. That is why I am so proud to be a member of the Labor Palaszczuk government that approaches issues by listening to all of the points of view, considering all of the information and making a balanced decision.

Mining and the service industry associated with mining supports direct employment of 8,000 full-time workers in Mackay and the Mackay region and a further 44,400 full-time workers indirectly associated with the resource industry. Many families in my region are associated with the mining industry. My son, Ian, drives a road header in one of our local underground mines.

The resource industry represents 36 per cent of the region's gross regional product. In fact, last October the QRC Chief Executive, Michael Roche, described my region of greater Mackay as the world's leading province for the production and export of high-quality coking coal so essential for the world's steel production. The resource sector also supports many businesses and charities and contributes to the liveability of the region. Australian coal is in demand because it is low in ash and in sulphur. It is a clean-burning coal that is better than that produced by many of the other coal-producing countries.

It is no secret that my electorate has been hard hit by the current slump in commodity prices as have many of the regional centres in Queensland. As a service centre for the Bowen Basin, our region's economy has flourished on the back of the resources boom. Mackay's Paget engineering precinct boasts one of the highest concentration of patents per capita. It is, indeed, the Silicon Valley of the mining industry. At the same time we also have a thriving tourism industry creating jobs and development on the back of our natural environment and the iconic Great Barrier Reef.


Under the Labor Palaszczuk government we are growing the economy, supporting our regional communities and protecting our environment. The people of Queensland responded to our election commitments on the reef, Adani and this Carmichael project. We are meeting these commitments. We have prevented the dumping of capital dredge spoil on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area. We have prevented the dumping of dredge material on the nationally significant Caley Valley wetlands. This decision was welcomed by the community of Mackay. There will be no taxpayer funding for capital dredge and the disposal of dredge spoil. We have legislation that prevents the at-sea disposal of capital dredge material from ports in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area and stops the development of ports in the World Heritage area. We have restored objection rights, and at the same time we are also listening to the people of North Queensland who are calling for jobs and economic development.

The Minister for State Development has been to Abbot Point and has met the stakeholders, including the Juru people, who want jobs and a bright future for their young people. He has been to Mackay and has seen what \$2 million plus in Building Our Regions funding means for Mackay. I know that, like me and the rest of the cabinet, he wants to see regional Queensland and communities strong and sustainable. That is why I am entirely confident that he will be progressing this properly and with due care and careful consideration to ensure that it is done properly.

The Labor Palaszczuk government is following a thorough, methodical process, consulting with all stakeholders. This approach has proven to be effective. We can have industry and a sustainable environment, safeguarding our endangered flora and fauna. This is in contrast to the federal member

for Dawson, who never lets the facts get in the way of a photo op or a Facebook rant. So far Mr Christensen has opposed legitimate third-party objection rights and blamed the state government for delays in this process. It is pretty rich when his own Canberra colleague the Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt—

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (6.21 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition. There are few things more uncomfortable than looking at a bloke with one leg either side of a barbed wire fence, and that is what we saw with the contribution of the Treasurer to tonight's motion before the House. We saw the Treasurer of Queensland hopelessly conflicted between the core constituency of the Labor Party and the extreme green movement, and the necessity to try and support some sort of economic development opportunity in the resources sector in the state of Queensland. The Treasurer tonight had one leg either side of a barbed wire fence, and that is a most uncomfortable and unfortunate position for any gentleman to be in.


The Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has had the same problem since he was sworn in. The biggest, most gaping, massive hole in the Treasurer's argument tonight in relation to what they had done with respect to approvals processes for associated infrastructure for the opening up of the Galilee Basin was his argument about what they were doing at Abbot Point. Why did the Treasurer and the Palaszczuk government simply not go back and reinstate the approval that they had given for the expansion of Abbot Point before they lost government in 2012 if they were so committed to the opening up of the Galilee Basin and the Adani project, the Carmichael mine? Why did they not just put in place the 35-million-tonne approval that was put in place by the former minister for the environment, the current Minister for Education, the member for Ashgrove? Because they do not really support the Carmichael mine project proposed by Adani and they have never really supported it. It is fake, phantom support that they have always provided to the resources sector.

Since the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines has been in office, there has been another dance around taking the steps necessary to get this project approved. We are crying out in the resources sector in Queensland for opportunities. We want to attract new investment but we have stall, stall, stall. Last month the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection issued an environmental authority for this project. As the former minister for mines, I know that that is the last piece of administration that needs to be put in place before the mines minister can sign a mining licence. It is true that there were other outstanding issues that did not involve state government approvals, including an agreement with the local government authority and a native title agreement, but both of those things could be completed subsequently to a mining lease being issued, and the minister knows that. The minister knows that, but he has hidden behind a fake barrier to say that he wants those things done before the mining lease is actually signed.

We know that since that time the EA was put in place the agreement with the local government authority has been entered into, and we know that native title agreements have now been struck. There are no impediments left to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines signing that mining lease for the Carmichael mine project.

**Mr Seeney:** Jackie Trad.

**Mr CRIPPS:** I take the interjection from the member for Callide. There is one more barrier, and her name is the Deputy Premier of Queensland. She is the boss. She is the puppetmaster. She is the one who sits in cabinet as a full-frontal roadblock to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines from actually doing his job. He is ashamed of it; he is embarrassed; he is a political carcass. He is swinging in the breeze, unable to fulfil the responsibilities of his portfolio. When I finish my contribution to the debate on this motion, I will start the stopwatch on my phone and I will measure the time from then until we get a public statement from the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines that he has signed the mining lease for the Carmichael mine project proposed by Adani. He will forever be measured by the time that it takes him to do his job.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion and inform the House that the Palaszczuk government has been assessing and approving the necessary approvals for the Carmichael mine and associated infrastructure. I will take confidence and intelligence over ignorance any day of the week. This government strongly supports the sustainable development of the Galilee Basin for the jobs and economic development that it will provide for regional Queensland. For that reason, this government and the independent Coordinator-General have been working closely with Adani to facilitate their approvals in accordance with statutory obligations.

The approval processes for Adani's project have included extensive and detailed environmental impact studies of more than 32,000 pages for mine, rail and port projects. The Coordinator-General meets with them on a fortnightly basis. Adani's Carmichael mine and the North Galilee Basin Rail Project have both been approved by the Coordinator-General under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act and by the federal government under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. The state Department of Environment and Heritage Protection issued the environmental authority for the mine on 2 February 2016, further meeting Adani's approval obligations. Furthermore, 12 material change-of-use approvals have been given by the Coordinator-General relating to applications from Adani for the mine and rail projects.

When Labor came to government, one of our first tasks was to restore balance to the community and the Abbot Point project and to ensure that the environment was protected. We committed to protecting the Great Barrier Reef. We committed to protecting the Caley Valley wetlands. The government worked with Adani to redesign their dredging operations to ensure land based disposal of dredge spoil. My Department of State Development led the design and approvals work for the revised Abbot Point dredging project, funded completely by Adani. The federal government approved the EIS in December 2015. The Coordinator-General approved the dredge spoil disposal as part of the revised project on 8 February 2016. The tidal works approval for the dredging was granted on 14 March 2016. The responsibility for the delivery of the project will now sit with North Queensland Bulk Ports.

However, I reiterate our election commitment here again: there will be no dredging for Adani's coal terminal at Abbot Point until Adani demonstrates it has the necessary finance in place for the full mine, rail and port project. Further, we are holding to our commitment that this infrastructure will never be funded by Queensland taxpayers. A number of other matters are still ongoing with related parts of the proposed project. There is an Indigenous land use agreement; other outstanding issues include approvals for power, water, roadworks, quarries and the airport; and a series of management plans, including some still required by the Commonwealth.

With regard to the mining leases, members will be aware that these cannot be approved until compensation agreements have been finalised. I can assure the people of Queensland, particularly those who want jobs and the economic development that this project can offer, that I will only make decisions armed with all the relevant facts and with careful and detailed consideration. My focus is to do this thoroughly. Statutory assessments and the decision-making process must be robust and comprehensive to minimise any risk of legal challenge. I am aghast at the lack of understanding of appropriate process by those opposite and, most disturbingly, by the member for Hinchinbrook. Surely, I thought, a previous minister would know better. I find his Facebook posts from 3 February very disturbing when he said—

The EA is the last step prior to a Mines Minister considering an application to issue a ML.

Again he said—

Quite frankly, the EA should have gone directly from the Environment Department to the Mines Department for ... immediate decision ...

It is this kind of shoddy, gung-ho attitude to appropriate process and procedure that was the call sign of the LNP. Did those opposite not learn from the experience of the federal environment minister, Mr Greg Hunt? I will be considering these matters very carefully indeed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 6.32 pm to 7.30 pm.

## AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Report



**Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (7.30 pm): I lay upon the table of the House the Agriculture and Environment Committee's report No. 15 on the Racing Integrity Bill 2015.

*Tabled paper.* Agriculture and Environment Committee: Report No. 15—Racing Integrity Bill 2015 [335].

As I have explained to my committee members, I am a part owner of a thoroughbred and member of a racing syndicate, and I believe that this experience has given me as a member of this House an acute understanding of the racing industry's importance to the state and the need to protect its integrity


and long-term sustainability. The Racing Integrity Bill is clearly an important piece of legislation for ensuring the industry's future, which I personally support. While the committee could not agree whether the bill should be passed, our report on the bill is a unanimous report and our recommendations to strengthen the bill are also unanimous. I thank my fellow committee members for their diligence and I commend the report to the House.

## DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 727, on motion of Mrs O'Rourke—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (7.31 pm), continuing: As I was saying prior to the dinner break, Alan Dufty is a local legend in the Whitsundays after attending three Paralympics—'84, '88 and '92. Whilst before my time when he came back from the UK—I was a young boy growing up in Mackay—I remember reading the press reports of the day as he came back to the great sugar milling town. There was a huge parade. In fact, many people who came out on the main street of Proserpine last year to celebrate the presence of the Queensland State of Origin team were there in the aftermath of Alan's heroics in 1984. Alan and his wife, Olga, have been a fixture in our local community and contribute to many great causes. They were in business for a number of years in the upholstery game and Alan also later acquired some laundromats and other business ventures, but of course he is now retired.


It would be remiss of me not to recognise his contribution to local government. It is part of local folklore in the Whitsundays that one of his first jobs was to find out how to get his wheelchair into that place—literally. That is still talked about on the streets of Proserpine today. In fact, Duff, as we know him affectionately, and I have had our differences over the years. I can remember him coming into my office and he had the hide to turn up in a sky-blue New South Wales State of Origin jumper. He never forgot to remind me that that is where he came from—from the Riverina, a great part of the world. He would proudly wheel himself into my office wearing that sky blue jumper as a proud cockroach.

He is not the only Paralympian from our part of the world. David Nicholas, a local cyclist, has been capturing the imagination of many local people with his heroics. I acknowledge David's outstanding achievements on the world stage and in more recent years. Alan Dufty has been a great advocate for disability services in the community. He is still involved in the community through Proserpine Senior Living which offers nearly 50 units for independent living for over-65s in the Whitsundays. It is Alan who continues to bang the drum for greater disability access to even basic facilities and shopfronts in the main street of Proserpine, including the Department of Transport and Main Roads. That is an issue that has not gone away. Those access points are available in the provincial cities up and down the coast, but in the country towns there is still a lot of work that needs to be done. I acknowledge Alan's advocacy in that space.

It would be remiss of me not to reflect on the life and times of a cousin of mine, Noel Costigan, who came back from the Korean War—the forgotten war. After serving in the Pacific theatre of World War II and surviving that conflict, he went to the Korean Peninsula. He did come home, but unfortunately Noel Costigan never walked again and was confined to a wheelchair. I carry his middle name to this day and I understand that that is how my mother was named when she was born. Noel came back from Korea and in little Walkerston on the outskirts of Mackay it is also part of folklore how the local community rallied to put a concrete ramp out the front of the iconic Duke of Edinburgh Hotel so he could not only cross Dutton Street but wheel himself into the Duke, as it is known locally, and have a few beers with his mates. That went on for decades, but of course he has since passed on.

As I have said, disability services have come a hell of a long way and we have many people to thank for that. I talked about the great people of Cootharinga North Queensland earlier, formerly the North Queensland Society for Crippled Children, and the Endeavour Foundation and other agencies that are out there doing their bit. It is also important that we do recognise those volunteers. Tonight I just came from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission parliamentary reception. I had the privilege of listening to His Grace Archbishop Mark Coleridge. Our mutual friend the late Alby Schultz had to deal with a disability in his later life. Some people would say that Alby was pretty one-eyed as the member for Hume. He did lose the sight of one eye and I know that, having known the family very well for a long time, Alby had to deal with that. He represented an electorate the size of Belgium and had to deal with that on the back of an accident that happened at Cootamundra many years ago.

In closing, this is enabling legislation that paves the way for the local implementation of the NDIS. It does have bipartisan support. It has had it for a long time. The argy-bargy has been over the money—let us not kid ourselves—about how we are going to fund this across the various jurisdictions. It was pleasing to see the trial sites coming online at Aurukun, Palm Island and Townsville. Needless to say, I know people in some of those places and I am sure it is going to be well received and we look forward to seeing how those trials operate when they start on 1 April—not too far away. In closing, it is tremendous to rise to speak on this piece of legislation. It is an important part of public policy, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (7.37 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The National Disability Insurance Scheme, commonly known as the NDIS, is a new way of providing support to people with a disability. The bill will ensure that Queenslanders who receive disability supports under the National Disability Insurance Scheme will have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders in receipt of disability supports funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, known as DCCSDS.

Last year I reported to the House about a group of adults with disabilities working as supported workers at the Mackay Endeavour workshop. One of these adults is my neighbour Johnny. This group of workers face barriers many of us would struggle to comprehend embracing new challenges, learning new skills and jumping over new hurdles. Despite all the challenges life has thrown at them, they work with a sense of pride. This is how they want to live their lives, having opportunities to embrace life and extend themselves. They are all looking forward to the possibilities the NDIS rollout will bring to them, but they and their parents and carers are also apprehensive of the responsibilities the NDIS will bring.


As the NDIS rolls out, the DCCSDS funding contracts with disability services providers will be phased out and the NDIS participants will purchase support directly from providers. The loss of a funding link between the DCCSDS and the provider would mean that many legislative safeguards would be lost. The amendments to the Disability Services Act 2006 are necessary to redefine its scope so that it extends to the providers of disability support that are not funded by the DCCSDS.

The excited adults, their parents and carers need to have legislation in place that will protect them in this new world of choice. I have also had contact with parents of young children with disabilities. Like all parents, they have aspirations for their children and are looking forward to engaging in services that will meet the individual needs of their children. The question I often get asked by parents and carers is, 'What if we get it wrong? What if the provider does not live up to expectations?' That is why we need to have this legislative change. The choice that the NDIS will bring is welcomed by the parent groups, but we also need to make sure that we look after them so that they have the support that they need. They feel apprehensive because they do not have the benefit of a trial site that people in other states around the country had. There are possible pitfalls and uncertainties with any new scheme. That is why these safeguards are necessary for the clients of the NDIS.

The amendments prevent the creation of a two-tiered system where people with disabilities have divergent safeguards in place as a result of the funding source of their supports. The amendments to the DSA are also required to facilitate monitoring and compliance of NDIS non-government disability service providers with existing safeguards.

The amendments to the Public Guardian Regulation 2014 permit an adult community visitor to visit an NDIS participant with impaired capability residing in supported accommodation. Another critical issue relates to the funding arrangements and financial reconciliation processes throughout the transition period. An amendment to the DSA will provide the DCCSDS with the authority to request identifiable client information from other agencies for the purpose of reconciliation against invoices.

Johnny, my neighbour, was born with his disability. There are other adults in his workplace with disabilities that were acquired through illness, such as strokes, or through accidents. The outstanding thing that they have in common is not their disability; it is their zest to participate in a meaningful life. This bill will give this vulnerable group of citizens who are living in our neighbourhoods safeguards to manage the NDIS, which has the potential to let them reach their goals. I commend the bill to the House.


 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.42 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This is very pleasing legislation. The NDIS will come into being over the next few years and it will be a great asset to the community. I would like to acknowledge some of the people in my area who have assisted in providing community services for a long time. The regional director, Brooke Winters, does a wonderful job in my area. She is very good to deal with. My area also has some great services. Alara is based at Ipswich, but it has a facility in Laidley. Anuha Services in Gatton has a recycling facility and about 30 people with disabilities work at that facility. It also has some units for people with disabilities.

That facility was set up by the Lutheran pastor Eric Leibelt and his wife, Shirley, 30 or 40 years ago. A lot of such services were started by church groups or community groups and they have done a great job. Eric is a fairly old gentleman now. Recently, he came back to Anuha Services for its 30-year reunion. In 2013, in Adelaide in South Australia he opened Betty's House of Respite. He is one of those people who is fairly driven and over the years has managed to put a lot back into his community. There is also the Endeavour Foundation in Gattton and the Lockyer Valley Community Disability Association. All of these groups do a wonderful job in raising funds for people with disabilities and in offering respite to people. I notice in the explanatory notes that Anuha Services was one of the groups that the department consulted with on this bill. It is good it see that some of the consultation extended beyond the city in the south-east.

I am sure that, during their parliamentary career, some of the newer members will have older community members come in to see them about their son, or daughter or other family member who has severe disabilities. Those parents are very concerned about what is going to happen to their loved ones when they pass on. They are in their 70s and their child is in their 40s or 50s. That is a very difficult situation for families and for brothers and sisters. These situations occur regularly. To have something like the NDIS as a backup will be interesting. As the member for Whitsunday said, it is going to be interesting to see how we transfer funding from some people who have fairly good funding packages across to the NDIS and how the staff who are involved now will be transferred across to the NDIS. There are also some people who are concerned about what is going to happen to the groups that are already established. But I am sure that, with common sense and a proper process, the NDIS will work well and will really improve circumstances for everyone.

Over the past 20 or 30 years, caring for people with disabilities has gone from communities just trying to help each other out with a little bit of support from the government to the government giving a fair bit more support. The bill makes amendments to the Public Guardian Regulation, the Powers of Attorney Act and the Guardianship and Administration Act. Those amendments are important, simply for the fact that there can be that conflict situation where someone with a severe disability has some mental health issues as well. Of course, the parents are trying to do something and the Public Guardian is trying to do it a different way. There can be some real conflicts. I am sure that the minister sees this sort of situation occur nearly every day. They are difficult issues to solve and not one solution can fit all situations. I know of a client at Anuha—I will just call him Steve, but I do not think that was his correct name—who had been there for something like 20 years. He was a worker and he had done his duty. Somehow something changed—there must have been a chemical imbalance because of the drugs that he had been taking or something—and he ended up being locked away for quite a while because he had become violent. After a person being so good for so long, it is a very difficult situation for families to manage. These are the difficult issues that the community has to deal with.

Unfortunately, there is no silver bullet, but hopefully the NDIS will assist with funding, will assist community groups and get things on track for some really good service delivery. I congratulate all of the community groups in my area. I again acknowledge Brooke Winters, who does a wonderful job.

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (7.48 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. The National Disability Insurance Scheme will provide opportunities and help to improve the lives of thousands of Queenslanders. I note that, when introducing this bill, the minister described the NDIS as a 'game changer—a once-in-a-generation reform that will benefit the lives of people with disability, their families, carers and the community as a whole'.

It is great to see that there will be an early launch of the NDIS in North Queensland. I know that there is great anticipation of the NDIS in my electorate of Stretton. In particular, I would like to commend Multicap at Eight Mile Plains and the Kyabra Community Association in Runcorn for the work that they have done to provide information to the community. Since I have been elected I have had the opportunity to speak to many members of my electorate who have a disability. For many of them, the NDIS cannot come soon enough.

As the transition to the NDIS takes place, people with a disability will receive funding to purchase their supports directly from the National Disability Insurance Agency. Ensuring that Queenslanders with a disability are protected, kept safe and are able to uphold their rights is very important. Queensland already has some of the strongest quality and safeguard frameworks in place to protect the interests of people with a disability. This bill will extend this robust system to all NDIS participants and providers during the transition period.


As the NDIS is rolled out, the DCCSDS funding contracts with disability service providers will be phased out as NDIS participants will purchase supports directly from providers. These amendments will ensure that the loss of a funding link between DCCSDS and the provider does not mean these



legislative safeguards are lost. These legislative safeguards include complaints management, criminal history screening, a restrictive practices framework and positive behaviour support plans. This bill will make sure that the strong safeguards that are in place under Queensland legislation will continue to be in operation during the NDIS transition period. It is vitally important that these safeguards are in place to protect Queenslanders with a disability.

The objectives of the bill are to provide the same level of safeguards to Queenslanders who are receiving specialist disability supports funded through the NDIS as Queenslanders who receive specialist disability supports funded by the department; to provide the department with the requisite powers to monitor the compliance of NDIS non-government service providers and with safeguards to ensure that NDIS participants receiving services are protected; to provide the department with the authority to request other Queensland government agencies provide identifiable client information for the purposes of reconciliation against National Disability Insurance Agency invoices; and, finally, limiting the regulatory burden on non-government service providers as far as possible given that service providers will be required to be registered with the NDIA and meet Queensland's quality and safeguard requirements.

This bill facilitates the extension and consistent application to NDIS non-government service providers in relation to restrictive practices, complaints management and criminal screening. The NDIA will have responsibility for enforcement measures in relation to NDIS service provision and will have the ability to deregister service providers. Queenslanders with disabilities need certainty and protection. We need to get the NDIS right. This bill will assist in achieving this objective. I congratulate the committee on all their hard work and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (7.51 pm): I rise to speak on the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. I commend the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland for the introduction of this bill. We are very close to a landmark moment in the way the country and this state approaches disability services. The scale of change we are about to see with the introduction of the NDIS has few historical comparisons from a public policy perspective. As has been mentioned, it rates only with the likes of Medicare and compulsory superannuation. It is worth reflecting on what the NDIS actually is. It is a change in the way that disability services are provided and a change in the way they are funded so that it focuses on the needs of the individual as well as empowering people to make choices about their own particular circumstances and needs. It is about providing an opportunity to people with disability, their families and carers, an opportunity to build a better life. In a wider sense though I think the NDIS says a lot about what sort of country we are; who we are as Australians. This plan is ultimately about dignity and it is about respect. It is inspiring to me that we have come together as a nation at a time that has too often been marked by overly cynical politics and produced such a major reform based on these values of dignity and respect.

I congratulate everyone who has been involved in the development and rollout of the NDIS in Queensland, especially those people who campaigned tirelessly to put this plan on the agenda. Sure, it was not an easy process and there have been some bumps along the way but we are getting there. From next month the first Queensland participants, children and young people under the age of 18 in Townsville and Charters Towers where my brother's family live and all eligible people with a disability on Palm Island, will begin receiving supports from the NDIS. This is a truly exciting moment. In many ways it is hard to truly predict the significant impact this rollout will have on the lives of those young people with disability in the north of our state. Our role as a government is to make sure that the NDIS is the best that it can be for people receiving those supports. This bill is an important part of fulfilling that role.

As has been mentioned, Queensland has a robust quality and safeguard framework to ensure the safety and wellbeing of people with a disability right now. As we transition to the NDIS it is crucial that these safeguards are maintained. This bill will make sure that people receiving those supports under the NDIS will have the same level of safeguards as people receiving disability supports funded or directly delivered by the state of Queensland. These safeguards include criminal history screening and access to complaints management processes. Crucially, the Queensland government will continue to maintain its investigative and quality compliance roles through the transition.

The NDIS will increase the range of providers offering services to people with disability. With any major change like this there is always a risk that some shady figures will attempt to enter the market with the aim of making a quick buck. This is unfortunate but it is a real risk. By making sure that safeguards are extended during this transition, and by ensuring that the Queensland government maintains its vital role in quality assurance, we will be working to mitigate those risks.


The NDIS is an important change for my portfolio of housing and public works. With the NDIS people have greater choice and control over where they want to live and who they want to live with. We expect that in Queensland the NDIS will bring with it an increased demand for affordable and appropriate accessible housing. Livability in housing is the key to enabling people to live with dignity. This is true across all parts of the community, but its impact is more acute for the elderly and people with a disability. A good example of livability in action is Youngcare. I was privileged to visit Youngcare and see the great work that they are doing in their facility at Woolloowin. Youngcare caters for young people with disabilities often as a result of an acquired brain or spinal injury who, to our shame, have traditionally found themselves shunted off to the aged-care sector without accounting for their age and certainly not accounting for their needs. Youngcare sets the world-class standard for livability. The design of these facilities focuses on the needs of the people who live there. It is a design centred primarily on human dignity.

A livable home is designed to be easy to enter, easy to exit and easy to move around in. It is capable of easy and cost-effective adaptation. It anticipates and it responds to the changing needs of the people living there. My department is committed to improving livability through universal design. Our Disability Service Plan commits to improving the range and affordability of housing choices available to Queenslanders and to promoting awareness of universal design by aligning design standards for social housing with the Livable Housing Design Guidelines, referencing gold and platinum levels. Gold level dwellings include features such as wider hallways, level thresholds and provision for grab rails. Platinum level dwellings also include additional features such as extra clearance spaces making them suitable for clients who mobilise in wheelchairs. Typically, up to 30 per cent of social housing apartments in any new multiunit project are designed to Livable Housing Design Guidelines platinum level, with some additional requirements, with all remaining ground floor and lift serviced apartments designed to gold level. The minimum standard for detached houses is gold level, with platinum level being applied in response to identified client need.

My department carries out disability modifications to existing dwellings to improve their livability, for example, to cater for people who require accessibility features as a result of ageing or accidents. Between 2010 and 2015 a total of \$57.16 million was expended on government owned social housing dwellings to carry out disability modifications. That is an average of \$11.4 million per year. Those modifications range from grab and handrails to ramps and accessible bathrooms and kitchens.

In the Report on Government Services 2015, 84.7 per cent of public housing tenants who rated modifications for special needs as important reported that those modifications have been met. Similarly, 89.9 per cent of public housing tenants reported that the ease of access and entry met their needs. We will continue to work to raise these standards during the rollout of the NDIS and into the future.

I cannot stress enough what this historic reform will mean to Queenslanders with a disability. Once again I congratulate all of those who have been involved in getting us to this point. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (7.59 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. Queenslanders living with disability, their families and carers are really looking forward to the early transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme later this year. I cannot say how many times this has been raised with me as the member for Ipswich. It is a long awaited national scheme and it is a new way of providing support to people with disability. However, as with all new things, this government understands there will be teething problems.

As Queensland transitions to the NDIS, customers who are registered with the scheme will receive funding directly from the federal National Disability Insurance Agency so that they can purchase services. At the same time, there will be customers who are not registered with the scheme. During this transition period, it is vital that those clients continue to receive care and services through the state operated system. I understand that existing contracts between the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and clients in the disability sector will be phased out as the NDIS rollout proceeds. The loss of this link to the state operated disability provider will remove the Queensland government's influence over service delivery and, with it, any safeguards or protections will be lost.


I do not have to explain to this chamber that clients and their families and carers in the disability sector are particularly vulnerable. It is vital that all Queenslanders receiving disability support under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as those receiving disability support funded by the Queensland government. While the NDIS will bring with it many opportunities for independence and tailor-made service delivery, it may also lead to larger numbers of clients falling through the cracks. A robust, independent and strong legislative framework is essential to ensuring that clients' needs are being met and that the services provided are of the highest quality.

I understand this amendment bill will ensure the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services has the necessary powers to monitor clients of NDIS non-government service providers. These amendments will ensure that we do not find ourselves with a two-tiered disability support system, where safeguards diverge widely as a consequence of the funding arrangements. I commend the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland for the work undertaken in consultation over these changes.

The disability sector is large and diverse. Even in my own electorate there are many different organisations, all with specific views about NDIS and its potential impact. I wish to pay particular attention to one of those organisations in my electorate, CATS or Community Access and Transition Service Inc. It is run by the wonderful and very able Katrina Johnson. It is an Ipswich organisation created by the parents of young people with disabilities. This small group of parents were concerned about the future of their sons and daughters. While at school, those young people receive a great deal of stimulation and opportunities for personal development. However, once the children finish school, as young adults the opportunities for community engagement and participation are not as readily available. The parents rightly were concerned that their sons and daughters would leave school and go on to do nothing, losing acquired skills and stagnating in their own personal development.

In an attempt to halt this progression, CATS Inc. was established. That local Ipswich organisation now provides individual and group support, as well as educational opportunities, life skill courses and resources for carers and families. The spinoff has been the creation of friendships, the sharing of common interests, the creation of hobbies and pastimes and the opportunity for young people with disability to engage actively with their community. I commend CATS Inc. for the work that they do in my electorate as they really are extraordinary. I also commend them for the work that they are doing to get their clients ready for the NDIS.

I do not have time to mention all the disability service providers in my electorate, but two are standouts: Alara and Focal Extended Inc. Organisations such as those have been engaged in the conversation about the NDIS and are providing this government with feedback and advice on how the new system will operate and any pitfalls that we need to be aware of. I am proud to say that this legislation delivers on a promise to ensure that those in the disability sector in Queensland will still be heard long after the NDIS rolls out finally in 2019.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (8.04 pm), in reply: I start by thanking all members of the House for their contributions to the debate on this bill. It is great to see so much passion behind a very deserving sector. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a once-in-a-generation social reform and I am so proud to be the responsible minister overseeing its rollout and implementation in Queensland. The NDIS is a new way of providing supports to people with disability. Choice and control: that is what it is all about. In preparing Queensland for this transformative change, the Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill has brought forth the critical and essential amendments to facilitate Queensland's early transition to the NDIS from 1 April 2016.

The bill has three main purposes. First and foremost, it will ensure Queenslanders who are receiving specialist disability supports funded through their individual packages under the NDIS have the same level of safeguards as Queenslanders who are in receipt of specialist disability supports funded by the Queensland government. This includes extending the quality and safeguards framework contained in the Disability Services Act 2006, as well as key external oversight mechanisms in other legislation.

The bill also provides the necessary powers for authorised officers to monitor the compliance of NDIS non-government service providers to protect NDIS participants receiving disability services. The bill provides the chief executive with the authority to request client information from other Queensland government agencies for the purpose of reconciliation against the National Disability Insurance Agency invoices. The ability to request this information will ensure continuity of funding and service provision for Queenslanders with disability can be effectively managed throughout the transition to the NDIS.

Queensland is committed to extending its quality and safeguards framework from the early launch period of transitioning to the NDIS from 1 April 2016. As a result, the changes in this bill are time limited to the three years of transition to the full NDIS scheme. The monitoring and investigative powers will expire on 30 June 2019 as the NDIS hits its expected full-scheme rollout. By this time, the Disability Services Act 2006 will be reviewed and the amendments made in this bill will be considered to determine whether they are still required. During this time, Queensland will continue to participate in

work being led by the Australian government to design a national quality and safeguards framework for the NDIS. Once the national framework is in place, Queensland's ongoing role in ensuring quality and safeguards are met is expected to reduce.

I would like to address some of the issues raised by members during the debate on the bill. The member for Aspley raised an issue of funding for my department to provide the monitoring, compliance and complaints functions provided for in the bill during the transition period. I thank the member for Aspley for raising this important issue. Queensland is committed to ensuring that the system is appropriately resourced to service the needs of the NDIS participants throughout the transition period. My department has analysed the potential impacts for the department of continuing to perform those important functions.

In relation to the signing of the bilateral agreement, this government was committed to getting the best possible outcome for Queenslanders with disability. It is for that reason that I negotiated with the Australian government for full and fair access to the DisabilityCare Australia Fund, which was rejected. The Premier then completed and signed a second bilateral agreement based on an offer put forward by the Commonwealth, only to have the goalpost changed yet again, linking this particular offer to governance changes. I am hopeful that the bilateral agreement signed by the Premier this morning will be signed by the Prime Minister as soon as possible, but we will not give up governance and allow the Australian government to make changes to access and participation.

The member for Burdekin raised the issue of funding for disability services over previous governments. Between 1998-99 and 2011-12 under Labor governments the compound growth rate in disability state funding was 15.1 per cent. However, the compound growth rate over three years under the previous government was 3.9 per cent, with \$108 million cut from the Disability Services budget in the 2014-15 budget alone.

In conclusion, this bill is an important step in Queensland's transition to the NDIS. It will enable participants to exercise choice and control, confident in the knowledge that throughout the transition to the NDIS providers will be required to maintain the highest standards as part of their compliance with our robust quality and safeguards system. I would like to thank all the stakeholders who made a submission to this report and the committee members for their consideration of this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clause 2—



**Mrs O'ROURKE** (8.10 pm): I move the following amendment—

#### 1 Clause 2 (Commencement)

Page 8, line 7, from 'a day'—

*omit, insert—*

1 April 2016.

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Disability Services and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Coralee O'Rourke's amendments [338].

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 43, as read, agreed to.

Clause 44—

**Mrs O'ROURKE** (8.10 pm): I move the following amendments—

#### 2 Clause 44 (Insertion of new pt 6A)

Page 26, lines 10 to 13—

*omit.*

**3 Clause 44 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 26, lines 20 to 23—

*omit, insert—*

This division applies for the performance of the functions of an authorised officer mentioned in section 200E.

**4 Clause 44 (Insertion of new pt 6A)**

Page 38, line 8, 'Division 4'—

*omit, insert—*

**Subdivision 6**

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 44, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 45 to 62, as read, agreed to.

**Third Reading**

**Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (8.12 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

**Long Title**

**Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (8.12 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

**MINERAL RESOURCES (AURUKUN BAUXITE RESOURCE) AMENDMENT BILL**

Resumed from 16 February (see p. 49).

**Second Reading**

**Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (8.12 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I thank the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee for its consideration of the bill. I note that the committee has made one recommendation to the parliament. That is that the bill be passed. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those who made submissions as part of the bill's consideration.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the special provisions in the Mineral Resources Act 1989 which apply to an Aurukun project. These are known as the Aurukun provisions and they have specific application only to bauxite projects that are located within the declared restricted area No. 315 or, as it is known, RA315.

The Aurukun provisions date back to 2006 when they were enacted to streamline the approval pathway to encourage development of the Aurukun bauxite resource, a resource with substantial physical constraints that had hindered its development in the past. The government recognises that mining developments in very remote or isolated areas can face substantial impediments to their development, and that specific regulatory support can be one way to assist development of important projects such as the Aurukun bauxite project. However, any regulatory mechanisms must be balanced with the community's rights to have their concerns considered in decisions that affect them.

The key amendments contained in the bill will largely reinstate, for an Aurukun project, the notification and objection processes that apply to other resources projects of this type. This will mean that a mining lease application for an Aurukun project will be required to be publicly notified and provided to affected landowners. Any person from the broader community will be able to make an objection to the application for the grant of a mining lease and have that objection heard by the Land Court.

The amendments are complementary to this government's commitment to restore community objection rights for mining projects. They will bring mining lease applications for an Aurukun project in line with the government's policy that communities are given the opportunity to object to resource projects and have the Land Court consider those objections.

We said we would take action to ensure that anyone who has concerns about issues such as water pollution or land degradation would be able to make an objection about a mining project. The amendments will not affect the process for the environmental authority for an Aurukun project. Any member of the community or landowner can already make an objection to the Land Court about matters regulated through the environmental authority. The government is also committed to protecting the interests of owners of land which is subject to resource development. This is a key to achieving genuine coexistence between resource companies and landowners.

The bill amends the Mineral Resources Act so that a mineral development licence for an Aurukun project must be conditioned to require compliance with the mandatory provisions of the land access code, to the extent it applies to the mineral development licence holder. The land access code provides landowners with best practice protection and security in relation to resource company activities. The bill will also allow the holder of a mineral development licence for an Aurukun project to be directed to take a stated action to ease concerns of an owner of land as is the case with mineral development licences for other projects.

This government supports sustainable and appropriate mining developments. The amendments in this bill have been drafted to take account of the significant hurdles for a developer of Aurukun's bauxite resources. This is why the Aurukun provisions in the Mineral Resources Act will continue to contain specific provisions to regulate the application and grant for mineral development licences or mining leases for RA315.

The Aurukun bauxite resource is an important opportunity for Queensland, particularly for the communities of western Cape York, who urgently need projects that generate economic activity and employment opportunities for local residents. RA315 was declared in December 2002 and covers approximately 1,905 square kilometres. It lies about 20 kilometres to the north-east of the township of Aurukun. The bauxite resources at Aurukun are a significant asset, belonging to the people of Queensland. RA315 is estimated to contain up to 480 million tonnes of dry bauxite.

People can see that the potential of Aurukun's bauxite resources is very significant, as long as the right conditions are in place for their development. The amendments in the bill will achieve the appropriate balance between the interests of a developer of an Aurukun project and the community having a say about the development of Queensland's resources.

In early 2015 a development agreement was executed with Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd for the development of an Aurukun project. The development agreement is an Aurukun agreement for the purposes of the Mineral Resources Act. Since the Aurukun agreement was executed there has been a plethora of media coverage about concerns with the process to award Glencore the development rights to RA315. Many of the submissions to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee were from parties requesting that the government consider including additional amendments to terminate any existing Aurukun agreements, such as the development agreement which has been executed with Glencore.

I want to make it very clear, just as I advised the community of Aurukun last year, that the government has heard these concerns. We have obtained independent legal advice on the competitive bid process. The government is satisfied that the competitive bid process was appropriate and was conducted lawfully. On this basis, there is no intention to reopen the competitive bid process.

The government is more interested in ensuring that Glencore deliver on the commitments in the Aurukun agreement and that the project, including the many community benefits that will accrue, are realised in a timely manner. Glencore must meet critical milestones that ensure the timely development of the resource and deliver positive outcomes for the native title parties, the communities in and around Aurukun, and the state.

I would also like to inform the House of my intention to move a small number of amendments to the bill during consideration in detail. This was a complex bill to draft, as it interacts with uncommenced provisions in the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014 and with the Mineral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, which is currently before the House.

Consequently, two technical amendments to the bill are necessary to address minor errors. A further amendment was identified after consideration of the submission to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee from the Ngan Aak-Kunch Aboriginal Corporation. The proposed amendments will improve the operation of the bill by clarifying that the 'relevant Aurukun agreement' for consideration by the Land Court is the agreement for the Aurukun project that is the subject of the mining lease application; removing uncertainty in the operation of the provision that defines the extent to which the Land Court can consider the Aurukun agreement when hearing objections; and revising the terminology in the mining lease application provisions to reflect the current practices related to restricted land. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (8.20 pm): I rise to respond to the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016 on behalf of the LNP opposition. The opposition will not be opposing this bill. The explanatory notes accompanying this bill explain that its purpose is to amend the special provisions in the Mineral Resources Act 1989 that apply to a bauxite project at Aurukun.

Those so-called Aurukun provisions established a special regime for the assessment and granting of mining tenures for a bauxite project at Aurukun. An Aurukun project is a project for the extraction, transportation and processing of bauxite on land that is more or less associated with the land described as restricted area 315 under the Mineral Resources Act 1989.

The Aurukun bauxite resource is a significant, undeveloped resource situated at Aurukun on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula, estimated to contain more than 480 megatons of dry beneficiated bauxite. It is described by the explanatory notes accompanying the bill as one of a limited number of large bauxite deposits in the world currently available for development.

Successive Queensland governments of all political persuasions have recognised that the development of the bauxite resources at Aurukun has the potential to deliver significant economic development and employment opportunities for the communities of Aurukun and the west coast of Cape York Peninsula and Queensland generally. At the time the Aurukun provisions were enacted by the former Beattie Labor government in 2006, it stated that the purpose of the provisions were to facilitate the commercial development of the Aurukun bauxite deposit by providing legislative assurance for a simplified process to achieve certainty of mining tenure for the preferred proponent.

The Aurukun provisions of the Mineral Resources Act 1989 modified the process for granting a mineral development licence or a mining lease for an Aurukun project by restricting who can apply for and hold a mineral development licence or mining lease to only parties who have a development agreement with the state; excluding the right to seek judicial review on decisions of a mineral development licence or mining lease for an Aurukun project; modifying the type of conditions that can be included on the mineral development licence or mining lease for an Aurukun project; and excluding the usual process for the public notification of applications for a mining lease and the right to object to the application and have that objection heard by the Land Court.

The amendments in this bill are intended to reverse the arrangements put in place by the Beattie Labor government in 2006. The amendments in this bill will bring the requirements for mineral development licences or mining lease applications for an Aurukun project in line with such applications associated with resource projects elsewhere in Queensland.

Some of the members who are relatively new to this House may not fully appreciate the irony of this scenario. Some of the dishonest fearmongering undertaken by the former Labor opposition in terms of some of the reforms that I introduced into this parliament when I was the minister for mines in relation to the notification and objections process associated with resource projects seems now to be somewhat hypocritical when one considers the effects of the Aurukun provisions in the Mineral Resources Act 1989.

Whereas the reforms I progressed through this parliament only restricted notification and objection entitlements with respect to mining leases for third parties and always preserved notification and objection rights with respect to mining leases for affected landowners and adjacent landowners, Labor's Aurukun provisions in 2006 removed these rights from all landowners covered by restricted area 315. Now, of course, as the explanatory notes accompanying the bill outline, the government's

policy is to provide communities with an opportunity to object to resource projects and have the Land Court consider those objections and, in particular, to do so with respect to restricted area 315 relevant landholders and the community of Aurukun—which is why we are considering the provisions of this bill.

The proposed amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 apply to restricted area 315 on Cape York Peninsula. The Wik and Wik Way peoples are the native title holders in the restricted area. The NAK Aboriginal Corporation is the prescribed body corporate for the Wik and Wik Way peoples and is the landholder of the majority of the land covered by restricted area 315 for the purposes of the Mineral Resources Act 1989.

In September 2013 approximately 730,000 hectares of land around Aurukun was transferred to the NAK as Aboriginal freehold tenure, including the majority of restricted area 315. The provisions of this bill, which will remove the Aurukun provisions from the Mineral Resources Act 1989, will bestow upon the NAK the right to lodge an objection to the application for an MDL or an ML in respect of a proposed resource project for bauxite within restricted area 315.

As stated in the explanatory notes accompanying the bill, the state of Queensland is a party to a development agreement with Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd with respect to the bauxite deposit at Aurukun covered by restricted area 315. The amendments in this bill will apply to Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd's existing application for a mineral development licence and to any future application for a mining lease for an Aurukun project.

When the Beattie Labor government inserted the Aurukun provisions into the Mineral Resources Act in 2006, some stakeholders argued that they were discriminatory and took away the rights of the Wik and Wik Way peoples to object to an application for an MDL or an ML associated with a resource project on their land—a right enjoyed by other Queenslanders across the state. The Aurukun provisions were certainly unique in terms of the provisions of the Mineral Resources Act 1989.

In June 2015 the NAK commenced legal proceedings in the High Court of Australia to challenge the Aurukun provisions as not just being unique but, in fact, discriminatory. Those proceedings are listed for a directions hearing before the High Court on or around 23 March this year. These proceedings are the reason why this House is considering this bill today.

The risk of the Beattie Labor government's 2006 Aurukun provisions being found to be discriminatory by the High Court has prompted the Palaszczuk Labor government to introduce this bill, with the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines trying to head off the case at the directions hearing set down for later this month. It is expected that the removal of the Aurukun provisions through the passage of this bill will nullify the grounds for the High Court challenge.

As a result of the amendments in this bill being agreed to, the usual notification and objections processes that apply to other resource projects will apply to an application within restricted area 315. This will mean that an applicant for a mining lease for an Aurukun project will be required to undertake public notification of the application and provide a copy to relevant owners of land which is subject to the application, and any person from the broader community will be able to make an objection to the granting of a mining lease and have that objection heard by the Land Court.

The last matter that I will deal with is the issue raised by a number of submissions to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee, which considered the bill—that being the expression of interest and competitive bid process undertaken by the former LNP government to appoint Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd as the preferred proponent of the Aurukun bauxite deposit within restricted area 315.

As the committee correctly points out in its report to the parliament, the expressions of interest and competitive bid process were conducted to select the preferred proponent of the Aurukun bauxite deposit and was not undertaken with any reference to the Aurukun provisions within the Mineral Resources Act 1989. As such, the process was certainly outside the scope of this amendment bill. That process was undertaken with a view to the government of Queensland entering into a development agreement to finally identify a suitable proponent that would develop the Aurukun bauxite deposit for the benefit of the local community, the western Cape York Peninsula region and Queensland generally.

Unfortunately, numerous false, misleading and politically motivated claims have been made by a range of individuals and groups about the expressions of interest and competitive bid process that was undertaken by the former LNP government including, regrettably, the Labor opposition at the time. It made a commitment to conduct an inquiry into the process and did so when it formed government following the 2015 state election. As stated in the committee report on this bill, the current government




sought independent legal advice on the process and was advised that the competitive bid process for selecting Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd was appropriate and conducted lawfully. The process was overseen by a probity auditor.

The politically motivated accusations thrown around by a range of individuals and organisations, including those opposite, were found to be baseless and without substance. As such, the Palaszczuk government has now indicated that it has no intention of reopening the competitive bid process with respect to the Aurukun bauxite deposit within restricted area 315. There are a number of other examples from the previous parliament where the then Labor opposition made baseless accusations about the former LNP government's handling of resource projects, including New Hope's stage 3 of the Acland coal project. No evidence has ever been provided to substantiate these claims to the ongoing embarrassment of those opposite.

The explanatory notes accompanying the bill acknowledge that there is a degree of retrospectivity associated with the amendments in this bill that impact on Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd as the preferred proponent. For the benefit of the minister I foreshadow an interest in how the Palaszczuk government intends to deal with the impact of the amendments in this bill on the development agreement between the state of Queensland and Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd. I note the amendments circulated by the minister and indicate to the House that I do not foresee any problems with the opposition agreeing to those amendments.

The committee has recommended the bill be passed and, as I indicated earlier, it will do so with the support of the LNP opposition.

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (8.32 pm): I rise to support the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill. I begin by saying that the minister and the member for Hinchinbrook have certainly covered a lot of the issues in the bill. It is only a small bill, so I guess there will be a lot of repetition from speakers on this bill tonight.

The people of Queensland expect their government to be proactive in creating job opportunities and wealth for the state. Working with developers to access the state's resources is a good way for government to be on the front foot, making sure that we are accessing the resources and getting good returns for the people of Queensland.

As the chair of the parliament's Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee, I support this amendment bill now before the House. I believe it to be common knowledge that successive governments have worked to mine the Aurukun bauxite deposit, but a number of things have continued to hold this up including a practice called warehousing, about which I will talk a little bit later.

My recollection of the Aurukun bauxite mine since coming to this place in 1990 is that there was a resource in existence that had the potential for significant direct and indirect benefits to Queenslanders. The Aurukun and cape communities were also well positioned to be major beneficiaries of this resource if it were to start to be mined. As well, there are the royalty contributions to the state and potentially a huge injection of jobs for the region. It was a project that needed to be given consideration, but there were reasons why it did not happen. It goes back to the games that mining companies want to play at times when it suits them.

It was a resource location that sat dormant. In fact, it continues to be a valuable accessible resource that is just sitting there. Throughout 2012-13, with the assistance of a probity auditor, the government conducted a competitive bid process to select a preferred proponent to develop the bauxite project. In August 2014 Glencore was selected as the preferred developer for the project and a development agreement was signed. This process was an issue of some concern for the witness who spoke to the committee. Because of the way it operated, it put some doubt in people's minds about how accountable that process was. In August 2014 Glencore was selected as the preferred developer for the project and a development agreement was agreed.

The majority of submitters argued that the Aurukun provisions were discriminatory and took away the rights of the Wik and Wik Way people. The Aurukun provisions were unique in Queensland and specifically targeted the area's Indigenous landholders, the people who lived in the area. I think it took a long time for people to wake up to the fact that that was not a fair way to proceed. The provisions removed rights normally enjoyed by other Queensland Indigenous and non-Indigenous landholders. Research has shown that delivering Chalco certainty at the expense of Indigenous people was the outcome—an outcome which prevented Indigenous people in the area from being able to object to any planned development. There are plenty of people who have come into this place—and some sit here

today—who would find it unacceptable that people's rights to object are taken away. I have to say that I am one of those. It was a situation that was not acceptable but one that set the standards for other project developments.

After the withdrawal of Chalco from the Aurukun project, the Aurukun provisions were never removed from the legislation. The provisions stripped away the rights of the Wik and Wik Way peoples in relation to the land and provided for a different and lesser treatment of the Wik and Wik Way peoples as owners of the land in comparison with other landholders in Queensland. It clearly discriminated between the Indigenous landholders and other landholders in Queensland. This amendment bill restores the rights of Indigenous people, and I support that 100 per cent. We see the reinstatement of highly valued rights when it comes to the right to object.

I wish to spend a few more minutes of my contribution on what is called warehousing. This is when a project is put on hold. No effort is made to actually move on or do anything with that project. It is like hiding an old car in a warehouse: it sits there and it is valuable, but no-one wants to do anything with it. For 50 years the development of bauxite resources—and too often their nondevelopment in this region—has been dominated by the broader strategies and competitive concerns of multinational mining companies. The real intent of the owner was to deny competitors access to the resource and warehouse it until such time as corporate strategies dictated the exploration and recovery of that resource. I see this as an absolutely brutal way of keeping other proponents out of the game, and every effort should be made to prevent this from ever happening in the future. On this particular matter the Department of State Development said—

... with the development pipeline Glencore are proceeding with, it will be a number of years before they are ready to develop.

It seems ridiculous that this valuable resource has been under the control of companies for so long and no-one has ever been prepared to say, 'You need to start moving with this lease or we will take it off you.' The departmental officer said—

Their work will be ongoing in relation to developing the mining lease. We do not expect this would have any impact in delaying it. Their first step will be to get the mineral development licence, which is usually for five years. They have to go through that exploration and feasibility stage before they are granted a mining lease. The Aurukun agreement does [not] contain milestones around the development of the resource.

In hindsight I think that was not a really good move by the department at that time, but the good thing about it is the amendments today do not impact on their obligations under the mining lease. The departmental officer went on to say—


The bill imposes some additional conditions on the MDL, but not ones that would allow them to delay.

That is a positive thing coming from the department now, and I for one support that approach. As stated in the committee report—

The committee stresses that the Government and the Department of State Development need to be proactive in ensuring that these milestones are met and that the Aurukun bauxite resource is not warehoused.

Through the simple process of stepping, the department will be in a position to make sure that the company keeps moving forward with the development of this lease. I would say that Glencore probably have a lot of good reasons in their mind to take it as slowly as they possibly can and go through the same process that we call warehousing.

I wish the department well. We rely on the department to monitor and keep an eye on these particular companies when they are out there not doing the right thing. Multinationals that come into this state forget that they are being given access to resources that belong to the people of Queensland, and it is about time that there was some pressure put on these companies to remind them of their responsibilities not only in the taking of the resource, but in the way that people and communities are treated when they are given access to that resource. I support the amendment bill before the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (8.44 pm): I too rise to speak briefly about the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016. At the outset I thank the members of the committee for their investigation of this particular bill, and I particularly thank our secretariat staff. While the members spoke to the department and looked at the submissions, it is the secretariat who have gone through and pulled out the important information that was contained in those submissions and answered the questions of members. They pulled the important information out of that and they put together what is a really very comprehensive report.

We only made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. Unfortunately, we had quite a short time frame to look at this particular bill, and that meant that we only had one week for submissions. I think the reasons for that are quite clear. We do have a High Court case pending in the next couple of

weeks, so the time frame was very short. We had a week for submissions. We received nine submissions, and unfortunately most of those were not really relevant to the purpose of the bill. The submissions that we did receive were quite supportive of the outcome of the bill, but they wanted to take the bill one step further. I will talk briefly about that shortly.

I would like to cover some things that are in the committee's report regarding the inquiry process. The report states—

The committee's ability to consider the bill in detail from the submissions received was limited. The committee appreciates that submitters had only one week to prepare submissions. Nevertheless, we were disappointed that the majority of submissions did not review the bill but focused upon issues which were outside the committee's inquiry.

That is basically what I was saying before. It goes on—

The purpose of the bill is to amend the special provisions in the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* that apply to an Aurukun project (the Aurukun provisions) to give communities the opportunity to object to resource projects and have the Land Court consider those objections.

We heard from a number of submitters who did make submissions that the Wik and Wik Way people are the native title holders of the Aurukun area and the prescribed body corporate is the NAK. They felt under certain circumstances that they were missing out on the opportunity to protest about these particular approvals by way of the Land Court.

We have already heard from the minister and the shadow minister that there is a massive resource out there that is available at some stage to mine bauxite. There are 730,000 hectares of land and there is lots of bauxite on those hectares—or, as I like to put it, 'hectares'. There are hectares and hectares of bauxite out there. For 30-odd years this land has been sought to be mined for the benefit of Queensland and the local Indigenous groups. That has not come to fruition yet, but we are hoping that that will shortly happen.

There are a number of things in the Mineral Resources Act that this bill seeks to change. The original act restricts who can apply to hold a mineral development licence or a mining lease to only parties who have a development agreement with the state. That provision stays in place, but the act also excluded the right to seek judicial review on decisions of a mineral development licence or mining lease for an Aurukun project. This bill will reverse that situation. It also sought to modify the type of conditions that could be included on the mineral development licence or mining lease for an Aurukun project. That stays in place, but the act excluded the usual process for public notifications of applications for a mining lease and the right to object to the application and have that objection heard by the Land Court, and that is what we are fixing up now.

We heard the shadow minister tell us that these provisions were put in place in 2006 by a Labor government—a Labor government that has a policy in place now that it will let basically every man and his dog complain about mining leases. People can live 1,000 miles away from a mining lease or a mining tenure and take that particular company to court. That is the policy of the Labor Party. It is not the policy of the LNP, but it is the policy of the Labor Party. However, the policy of the Labor Party in 2006 was to stop the Indigenous owners of this land from taking these decisions to court in any fashion. While I do not support the right of every man and his dog to take these provisions to court, I do however support the local Indigenous groups having that right. They deserve some sort of—

**Mr Rickuss:** What about Broccoli Broccoli? Do you support Broccoli Broccoli?

**Mr HART:** Will we talk about Broccoli Broccoli? I guess we can. That is what happens when you put a petition to a parliament to make some changes and you cannot identify who the people are that are putting in those submissions, but we are not seeing that in this particular area.

There was quite a feeling from the submitters that the Aurukun provisions were discriminatory, and we heard from the Wik and Wik Way peoples via submission and the Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation. It argued that—

The 'Aurukun Provisions' were unique in Queensland—

these are its words—

targeted specifically at the area's Indigenous land holders. The Provisions removed rights normally enjoyed by other Queensland Indigenous and non-Indigenous landholders, delivering Chalco certainty at the expense of the Indigenous owners. After the withdrawal of Chalco from the Aurukun project, the Aurukun Provisions were never removed from the legislation.


We did, however, hear from the department during our briefing that the Aurukun provisions were never intended to have a discriminatory effect and it remains the state's position that these provisions are valid and consistent with the current government's public policy commitments to ensure that the

community has the right to object to the resource projects. The bill will amend the Mineral Resources Act 1989 to include notification and objection rights for the broader community for the Aurukun project. In doing so, the bill will nullify the High Court challenge and make grounds of the High Court challenge fall away. I think that that is the important thing that members here tonight need to understand and that is the reason that this bill is in fact in front of the House at the moment—not because the government really wanted to change this but it is basically being forced to change this in case the High Court rules against it.

As I said before, most of the submissions received were not really relevant to the bill. They actually sought to reopen the whole process of determining the company that has been selected to develop this resource. Even though it is outside the scope of the bill, we did ask the department to give us some feedback on that for our own use. The Department of State Development noted that, while the competitive bid process was conducted to select the preferred developer for the Aurukun project with whom an Aurukun agreement could be agreed, the competitive bid process was not conducted under the Aurukun provisions. The previous government undertook a competitive process to identify a suitable developer for the bauxite resource of Aurukun. The current government sought independent legal advice on the process and was satisfied that the competitive bid process for selecting Glencore was appropriate and conducted lawfully. The process was also overseen by a probity auditor. The Department of State Development noted that on this basis there is no intention to reopen the competitive bid process, and we have already heard that reinforced tonight by the minister.

We also heard that there was some concern that Glencore may endeavour to warehouse the bauxite resource for a future date. In short, we asked the Department of State Development about that also and were told that the development pipeline Glencore is proceeding with will take a number of years before it is ready to develop. Its work will be ongoing in relation to developing the mining lease and the department does not expect that this would have an impact in delaying it. The bill before the House today adds some additional conditions to the MDL but not ones that would allow them to delay activity. Similarly for the mining lease, the bill imposes conditions on the mining lease but not ones that would allow them to delay. The tenure of the amendments could cause delays to Glencore because now it will have to go through the Land Court objection process but, as the department said before, the development agreement with Glencore contains a number of milestones that it just has to meet.

I have said several times tonight that a number of the submissions received were not really targeted at the particular bill and unfortunately we could not consider those any further. I do note that the member for Dalrymple has put in a dissenting report to the committee's report which deals with those irrelevant factors that were brought up in the submissions. It is disappointing to see that that is the case. The committee system, as I have said many times in this place before, is working very well, but as a committee we need to look at the particular bills put in front of us, seek submissions that apply to that particular bill and try to stay relevant to the bill rather than drifting off into a whole lot of other issues. For those reasons that I have outlined, I support this bill.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (8.58 pm): Tonight I rise to speak in support of the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016. I want to take this opportunity while on my feet to speak about the work that the committee that I was previously on did—the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee under the chairmanship of Jim Pearce from Mirani and all of the other members of the committee that I worked with over the first 12 months of my time here.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.


**Mr BUTCHER:** I rise to a point of order. I take offence to that! I do want to thank the committee, and it was a good committee to work with in terms of both sides of the chamber and the crossbench with Shane Knuth as well. It was a good time and we had some good debate, and we dealt with some good bills and provided some good reports.

I have been involved in the alumina industry for 21 years, so I have a very good understanding of the need for quality bauxite for refineries and the quality of these good deposits. Over many years in this industry I have seen the impacts of poor-quality bauxite. That is why the high-quality bauxite that comes out of these tenements that we have in Australia is so important. I want to touch on a few of the impacts that this poor-quality bauxite from other parts of the world can have on a refinery, such as on pipework and pumps, additional scaling in tanks and general wear and tear from the milling of the bauxite itself. All of those issues create additional cost to business. At the moment, with the price of alumina in the world market, any costs that these businesses can save, particularly in commodities such as bauxite, are a much needed saving.

This product is not only important for refineries but also important for those communities that mine it. The Aurukun bauxite resource is located on land that is traditionally owned by the Wik and Wik Way people, one of the most prominent Indigenous communities in Australia. The resource is located south of Weipa and to the east of Aurukun within a designated restricted area that comprises 11 deposits over an area spanning 75 kilometres long and 25 kilometres wide. The Aurukun bauxite resource is a significant, underdeveloped resource estimated to contain, as we have heard tonight, more than a million tonnes of dry beneficiated bauxite. It is one of a limited number of large bauxite deposits in the world that is currently available for development.

The Palaszczuk Labor government recognises that development of this bauxite resource at Aurukun has the potential to deliver very significant economic development and employment opportunities for the communities of Aurukun and the wider western Cape York area. Over many years successive governments have tried to turn this bauxite deposit at Aurukun into a project that will benefit the community and the state. These amendments to the Mineral Resources Act is another step forward to ensuring that the Palaszczuk Labor government is achieving its election commitments. These amendments restore community objection rights relating to mining developments as soon as possible to not only local landholders but also the broader Queensland community. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to delivering resource developments while balancing them with the rights of local communities to object. That right goes back through the ages.

In 2006, provisions relating to Aurukun were included in the Mineral Resources Act to streamline that approval pathway and to encourage the development of the Aurukun bauxite resource without the physical constraints that had hindered its development in the past. The amendments will bring the requirements for mineral development licences, or mining lease applications, for an Aurukun project in line with the government's policy that communities are given the opportunity to object to resource projects and have the Land Court consider those objections. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (9.03 pm): It is a great privilege to speak to the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016. I would also like to thank the committee: the member for Mirani, the member for Burleigh and, of course, the member for Gladstone. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the member for Gladstone all the best in his new role as chairman of the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

**An honourable member:** You'll have a beer with him at the Grand.

**Mr MILLAR:** I will. I take that interjection. I am more than happy to have a beer any time with any member out in Longreach. They are all welcome to come out, spend their money, help us out with the drought and enjoy the great hospitality that we have out in the Gregory electorate.

I would also like to thank the member for Dalrymple, the member for Keppel and also welcome the member for Lytton to the committee. The member for Hinchinbrook, the former minister for natural resources, explained the background to this issue at Aurukun and the amendment bill very well. He has been involved in natural resource management for a long time and has a great understanding of the issue.

This bill gives us an opportunity to look at employment opportunities for the people of the western cape. I have been there a couple of times and I understand some of the difficulties that the people in the western cape face when it comes to employment. There is good cattle country on the western cape, such as Delta Downs and Van Rook, but we also need to look at mining opportunities for the western cape and employment opportunities for our Indigenous communities. I believe that this mineral resources amendment bill gives us an opportunity to move a step closer to making sure that we can utilise the bauxite area at Aurukun to be able to provide an opportunity for employment for not only our Indigenous communities but also the wider communities in the cape, which is much needed. We talk about closing the gap. This is a way that we can close the gap in our Indigenous communities. This bill provides an opportunity for tomorrow's boilermakers, tomorrow's electricians, tomorrow's diesel fitters to come from our Indigenous communities and not only learn the trade at this bauxite deposit at Aurukun but also further their careers along the track. We need to get more of these sorts of opportunities going in the cape.

Royalties are so important for Queensland right now. I come from the Bowen Basin, where we have seen our mining resource towns suffer from a downturn in mining commodity prices. We need to look at every opportunity to increase these sorts of opportunities. Of course, the royalties from this project when it gets going will mean that we will see an increase in infrastructure expenditure and we will see an increase in roads expenditure, which is desperately needed up in the cape, such as on the Hann Highway. We also need to look at increasing services in the cape and, of course, increasing investment in that area.

The most important issue for Queenslanders is jobs, which is something that we have been speaking about this week. When we see projects like Adani continue to be held up, continue to be put on the backburner, I get really concerned. The Adani coalmine will mean so much for Central Queensland. I am talking about thousands of jobs and opportunities for young people in regional Queensland.

**Mr Cripps:** Two hours and 40 minutes so far.

**Mr MILLAR:** Two hours and 40 minutes. I am looking forward to seeing that mine approved as soon as possible. The Adani project means jobs for Queensland. That is why I support the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill. For the people in the western cape, this bill is important. We need to get those jobs going. I would like to thank all the other committee members. Finally, I would like to pay my respects to our committee staff who do such a great job. As a member of the committee I look forward to working with them over the next 12 months. I certainly commend this bill to the House.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! Before I call the member for Pumicestone, could I ask the Minister for Employment and the member for Hinchinbrook to direct any conversations through the chair.



**Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.08 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016. The Aurukun area comprises 1,900 square metres, or 730,000 hectares. This area is located on the western side of Cape York Peninsula but, more importantly, it is the home of the very proud traditional owners of the land, the Wik and Wik Way people. The Aurukun mine area is in restricted area 315 under the Mineral Resources Act 1989. It is said to contain 480 million tonnes of dry beneficiated bauxite.

Several attempts to start the mining process on this site have been made over many years resulting in defunct mining leases frustrating the traditional owners, bearing in mind that a mineral development licence existed on this site from 1972 until it became defunct in 2003-04 when it was surrendered as unviable. Glencore is the current holder of the mineral development licence and advise that there would be 400 construction jobs and 200 permanent jobs on an ongoing basis involved in the extraction, transportation and processing of bauxite.

The Aboriginal owners, the Wik and Wik Way people, have a freehold tenure over this land and the Ngan Aak-Kunch Aboriginal Corporation, NAK, are the body corporate that acts on their behalf. The Wik and Wik Way people have been disenfranchised resulting in costly challenges these people can least afford. Those opposite had three years to change this and did nothing.

**Mr Rickuss:** You had 20.

**Mr WILLIAMS:** You had three years to change it and did absolutely nothing. This amendment empowers the proud people with protection through legislative assurance. These amendments bring the requirements for a mineral development licence or mining lease applications under tighter scrutiny of government policy. The community are again given the opportunity to object to a project and the Land Court will hear and consider their objections. I am happy to say that there will be limited implementation costs as a result of the government's bill. Glencore are happy with the changes as well. This bill does not adversely affect the rights and liberties or impose obligations on any of the stakeholders.

I must point out the terms under the Aurukun mineral development licence were peculiar to that licence only and the treatment of the Wik and Wik Way people. The mineral development licence is a confidential agreement between Glencore and the government. Not knowing the contents of this agreement places the Wik and Wik Way people in distress. There are milestones built into the agreement and they do not know what they are. Their concern is that Glencore will warehouse this project or land bank it without any tangible developments at the expense of the traditional owners. Compounding this is the department's practice of extending MDLs once they reach the five-year point instead of transitioning to a mining lease. The Wik and Wik Way people have concerns in relation to this. The Office of Best Practice Regulation was consulted and confirmed that the amendments are excluded from further analysis under the regulatory impact statement system. The Palaszczuk government is looking after Queenslanders again, and I commend this bill to the House.




**Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (9.13 pm): Tonight I will make a brief contribution in support of the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016. In doing so I will state the obvious—it has been noted already in this debate here tonight—and that is that this bill restores the rights of Indigenous people and I am sure it is appreciated by the Wik and the Wik Way people but also

the wider Cape community. I can remember some time ago in a previous life in the previous parliament as a member of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee under the chairmanship of the member for Lockyer going to the Western Cape. I remember kicking a football around under the mango trees at Napranum and I was thinking, 'I wonder where some of these kids will work one day.' There is no doubt that the bauxite deposit that is at Aurukun is substantial: 480 million tonnes of dry beneficiated bauxite in terms of a deposit that is ready for development. Internationally, from what I can gather, it is as good as it gets. It will provide enormous job opportunities for kids on the Western Cape—not just at Aurukun, but in neighbouring communities such as Napranum and Weipa. I am sure that that is not lost on the Aurukun Shire Council and Mayor Derek Walpo and his colleagues in local government and neighbouring local governments in the Western Cape region. There is no doubt that royalties will benefit the state of Queensland. There is no doubt also that my region has suffered many blows in terms of the economic downturn in the resources sector, but like a lot of people, including people in this place, I believe that good times will come again.

Whilst I am no expert on bauxite, I have no doubt that the vision of Matthew Flinders and the early European explorers who spotted those red cliffs coming into the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria will be realised. It is quite remarkable to think that the first mining took place five years after Henry Evans, the iconic geologist, saw the deposit in 1955 when we have the clock ticking on the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines in relation to the opening up of the Galilee Basin and the opening of the Carmichael coalmine.

**Dr Lynham** interjected.

**Mr COSTIGAN:** He can ramble on as much as he wants, but the clock is ticking on the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge his predecessor restoring notification and objection rights to the people who counted the most and that is people who are going to be affected by resources developments. In summary, this is going to be good for Glencore, good for the state of Queensland and good for the community in general and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.17 pm), in reply: I thank the honourable members for their contributions to the debate this evening. In particular I thank the members of the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee for their contributions to the debate and once again for their consideration of this bill. This bill is another step forward in achieving this government's election commitment to restore community objection rights relating to mine developments to the broader Queensland community. The main effect of the amendments is to reinstate for an Aurukun project the usual notification and objection processes that apply to other resource projects of this type. This means that an applicant for a mining lease for an Aurukun project will be required to undertake public notification of the application and provide a copy to relevant owners of land which is subject to the application. Any person from the broader community will be able to make an objection to the granting of the mining lease and have that objection heard by the Land Court.

Glencore's Aurukun bauxite project is a significant commercial development for Queensland and will provide long-term economic, social and financial benefits for the state and for the communities of Cape York. The potential employment and local economic and social benefits that this project could bring to the Aurukun community cannot be understated. Last year I had the opportunity to attend a community meeting at Aurukun to talk about this project. I really valued this opportunity as I was able to hear directly from the community and to assure them face-to-face that the government wants to see them gain immediate and continuing benefit from the development of Aurukun's bauxite resource. This project has the potential to provide very significant direct and indirect benefits to Aurukun and Cape communities as well as royalty contributions to the state over the life of the mine.

Glencore intends to assess the feasibility of a bauxite mine producing six million tonnes per year over a 20-year mine life as its first stage. Development of the mine will generate much needed economic activity and jobs for Aurukun and will also provide new opportunities for local Aurukun businesses. Working with the community and other stakeholders to identify local opportunities for participation will be a key focus for Glencore in the early stages of the project while undertaking the detailed feasibility, mine planning and development assessment typical of a project of this type. Over the past 12 months, Glencore has already made contributions to community programs and has provided much needed support to the PCYC and the Royal Flying Doctor Service programs in Aurukun. Based on the approach taken by Glencore to date, I am confident that it will approach engagement and consultation with the traditional owners and the Aurukun community in an inclusive and respectful way that will lay the foundations for a mutually beneficial long-term relationship with the Wik and Wik Way peoples.

Queensland stands to gain hundreds of construction jobs and hundreds of long-term jobs for regional Queenslanders. The project will result in considerable economic activity in and around Cape York. Subject to Glencore obtaining all the necessary approvals, the current project concept envisages up to 250 job opportunities during the operation of the mine and up to 400 jobs during the 18 to 24 months construction stage. While some of those positions are likely to be filled with experienced mine staff, significant opportunities for employment will occur. Glencore has assured the government that its immediate focus will be on identifying opportunities for local workers and developing training programs for local workers. I thank the member for Gregory for his speech, in which he stated that the Aurukun project will support employment opportunities for the cape and also for Indigenous communities. I thank him for recognising that and for his valuable support of the bill.

I turn to other specific issues raised by members during the debate. The member for Hinchinbrook stated that the government was told that the legislation was discriminatory at the time it was passed and removed the rights of the traditional owners. For the member's benefit, I clarify that the Ngan Aak-Kunch became owners of the land in only 2013. Therefore, the land was held by the Aurukun Shire Council under a town lease and, as such, they were the owners for the purposes of the Mineral Resources Act. I reiterate that the amendments are being made because of the government's policy to reinstate the community's right to object to mining projects of this type.

Glencore has a legal development agreement with the state that will proceed subject to meeting the milestones set out in that agreement. Those milestones stipulate that at a certain date Glencore must meet those hurdles and will prevent banking of the specific resource. The milestones and milestone dates were negotiated with Glencore to make sure this project does proceed in a timely way through a stepped process of establishing feasibility, obtaining approvals construction and operation phases that are normal in this type of resource development. The development agreement with Glencore is a confidential document that was entered into as a result of a competitive bid process. The development agreement contains confidentiality obligations on both Glencore and the state. Specific details about the terms of the agreement, including the milestone dates, cannot be publicly disclosed. I reassure members of the House who said that Glencore would land bank, or something to that effect, that milestone agreements have been entered into with Glencore.

I note specific statements made by the member for Hinchinbrook. I reassure him that this government will continue to engage with Glencore within the parameters of the development agreement to facilitate development of the resource. We understand there are some affects with Glencore and we intend to negotiate in good faith. Glencore has advised me that it remains totally committed to this project and will proceed with its feasibility studies on the resource once it has obtained the necessary approvals.

I refer to the member for Dalrymple's statement of reservation to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee. Some of those issues were also raised in the debate this evening. In his statement the member said that native title holders are given limited ability to participate in decision making regarding the resource. The government and Glencore recognise that participation by and involvement of the traditional owners and the community of Aurukun is vital to the project's success. The Aurukun provisions do not affect the rights of the Wik and the Wik Way peoples under the Native Title Act 1993 and the NAK is currently exercising those rights under the Native Title Act in the Native Title Tribunal.

The member for Dalrymple also stated that the government has failed to comprehensively address the issues by not revisiting decisions made in collaboration with the Aurukun provisions. Of course, he is referring to the competitive bid process. I make it clear that the Aurukun provisions set out the process for applying for a mineral development licence and mining lease for an Aurukun project and not the process for entering into an Aurukun agreement. The highest priority for the government in relation to this development is to ensure that positive outcomes for the community of Aurukun and other Cape York communities are realised in a timely manner. For the benefit of the House, I restate that the bill does not relate to the selection of the proponent for the Aurukun project or the competitive bid process that was undertaken.

A number of members have also alluded to the current High Court challenge by the Ngan Aak-Kunch Aboriginal Corporation that questions the validity of a number of Aurukun specific provisions in the Mineral Resources Act. For the benefit of the House I take this opportunity to reiterate that the Aurukun provisions were never intended to have a discriminatory effect and it remains the state's position that the provisions were valid. While I can confirm that the bill will amend the Aurukun specific provisions of the Mineral Resources Act and remove provisions that the Ngan Aak-Kunch Aboriginal Corporation claims are discriminatory, I am unable to comment further on the current High Court proceedings.



The Palaszczuk government remains committed to delivering resource developments while balancing them with the rights of the community. We are pleased to be one step closer to delivering those rights for the community of Aurukun and for all Queenslanders through this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail

Clause 1—



**Mr CRIPPS** (9.32 pm): I have risen to speak to the short title of the bill, and that is usually an unusual circumstance. The question I want to ask the minister follows on from some remarks that he made in his speech summing-up the debate in respect of the Aurukun agreement between the state of Queensland and Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd.

The minister did address to a degree the question that I asked during my second reading contribution to the debate in relation to how the retrospectivity in the bill will impact on the agreement between the state of Queensland and the preferred proponent. He did say words to the effect that the government is committed to continuing to engage with Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd and negotiate in good faith in relation to any details or the contents of that agreement that may be impacted upon by the retrospectivity contained within the amendments in the bill before the House.

While that is okay to say, what I am seeking from the minister is an undertaking that, notwithstanding the fact that the contents of the agreement are commercial in confidence, the renegotiation in good faith will address the extent of the impact of the retrospectivity on that agreement. It is not fair for Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd to have its rights and liberties impacted upon as a result of these amendments being passed.

I can see the Leader of the House looking confused and concerned. It is acknowledged in the explanatory notes accompanying the bill that the company will be impacted on as a result of the passage of the amendments in this bill. I am at a disadvantage and the House is at a disadvantage because the content of the agreement is commercial in confidence. That is not necessarily unusual, but it would be remiss of me not to press the minister to give an undertaking and commitment to the House that an agreement between the state of Queensland and the preferred proponent will be renegotiated such that that proponent is not adversely impacted upon as a result of the passage of these amendments.

I think that the House, in being asked to vote on a bill that has retrospectivity, should be provided with that comfort that the state of Queensland will do that. I do not think that is unreasonable.

**Ms Trad:** I think he has provided it.

**Mr CRIPPS:** It has been provided to an extent. There are some amendments, which I have indicated I will support later on, to try to do that. I would seek that comfort from the minister.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I note that, whilst I believe there is bipartisan support for the bill, member for Hinchinbrook you have not really stuck to the requirements that you need to speak to the clauses before us. Minister, do you have anything you wish to add?

**Dr LYNHAM:** Our policy regarding all mineral development in this state has been very clear. Consultations have been taking place with Glencore in very good faith. I have already stated that there are specific confidentiality agreements that I cannot enter into discussion about. They are commercial in confidence between Glencore and the state of Queensland. Glencore have stated that they will continue this project through its feasibility stage. We will be endeavouring to reach all milestones.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 7—



**Mr KNUTH** (9.37 pm): I have a question to the minister regarding the tender process with regard to this bill. We acknowledge that the bill proposes to give objection rights to Indigenous people. Whilst we have given these objection rights to Indigenous people, Indigenous people are more concerned about the transparency of the tender process. They are more concerned about the transparency of the tender process rather than the objection rights because the horse has more or less bolted.

When we look at the Aurukun provisions and the Aurukun bauxite there is nowhere else to develop. Indigenous people are going to object to no further development because there will not be any further developments. It is the integrity of the tender process that they are more concerned about. If that is the case, are we not going to see with these objection rights more challenges in the Land Court with regard to that tender process? Then the development of bauxite in this region is going to go on for years and years.

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for Dalrymple for his concerns. These concerns have been previously raised with me. This bill does not address those specific issues relating to the preferred bidder for the Aurukun bauxite deposit. This bill simply addresses the removal of the perceived discrimination of the Aurukun bauxite agreement.

Clauses 2 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—



**Dr LYNHAM** (9.40 pm): I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 8 (Amendment of s 318AAD (Application for grant of mining lease (245)))**

Page 6, lines 19 to 21—

*omit, insert—*

- (bc) identify, in the way prescribed by regulation, the boundaries of any restricted land within the boundaries identified in paragraph (c); and

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016, explanatory notes to Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments [\[339\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9—

**Dr LYNHAM** (9.41 pm): I move the following amendments—

**2 Clause 9 (Replacement of s 318AAE (Additional matters for application (252)))**

Page 7, line 13, 'relevant Aurukun agreement'—

*omit, insert—*

Aurukun agreement for the Aurukun project the subject of the application

**3 Clause 9 (Replacement of s 318AAE (Additional matters for application (252)))**

Page 7, line 18, 'relevant'—

*omit.*

**4 Clause 9 (Replacement of s 318AAE (Additional matters for application (252)))**

Page 7, after line 20—

*insert—*

- (4) Subsection (3) applies even if the Land Court considers the Aurukun agreement under subsection (2).

**Mr Seeney:** What do they say?

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 12, as read, agreed to.

### Third Reading

**Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.42 pm): I am very happy to talk about the amendments if the member for Callide wishes. I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.


### Long Title

**Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.42 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (9.42 pm): I thank the minister for his limited response to my earlier question to clause 1 of the bill, but he really did not answer it and he really did not clearly give an undertaking that the state of Queensland will enter into good faith negotiations with Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd to the extent that the company will not be disadvantaged as a result of the passage of amendments in this bill that create a retrospective impact for that company. I think that it is perfectly in order for the House to press the minister, given the fact that the development agreement is separate and distinct from the bill but is impacted by the bill, to seek an undertaking from him that a company investing in the state of Queensland, having entered into an agreement with the government, will not be adversely impacted as a result of the passage of the legislation.


The retrospectivity is recognised in the explanatory notes accompanying the bill. That agreement has been entered into in good faith. To try to protect the reputation of the state of Queensland in that regard the opposition is supporting the legislation, recognising that the risk associated with a successful challenge in the High Court would be greater than the risk associated with the amendments in this bill. The opposition has indicated support for this bill in the House. It is not unreasonable to seek these assurances from the minister that the government will enter into good faith negotiations and address the extent of the impact of the retrospectivity on the development agreement between the government and Glencore Bauxite Resources Pty Ltd. It is a perfectly reasonable requirement. Quite frankly, it is the responsibility of the House to press the minister in this regard.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (9.45 pm), in reply: Those processes of consultation have been undertaken as is normal process for a bill of this nature.

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


Motion agreed to.

### ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.45 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### Currumbin Electorate

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (9.46 pm): A popular entertainment precinct Timezone opened its doors on 27 February in the newly refurbished Strand shopping precinct at Coolangatta. I took part in the opening ceremony, beginning with a 'carnivale' themed parade, with founder Malcolm Steinberg, owner Juan Uribe, Timezone mascot 'POWiE', balloon artists, dancers and other entertainers.

Hundreds of people joined in the festivities, weaving our way along the Coolangatta foreshore through Queen Elizabeth Park and then into the shopping centre to the brand-new Timezone shopfront. The facility will provide additional jobs for the southern Gold Coast and will be a fantastic drawcard for us, complementing our existing world-class tourism offerings. I commend Juan and his team's commitment to the Gold Coast and look forward to seeing the replication of Surfers Paradise Timezone's success here at Coolangatta.

Congratulations are in order to Currumbin butcher Keith Johnson for his commitment to quality and service. Keith has won three years in a row the prestigious title of 'best of the best' beef jerky in Australia, and we are proud to claim him in Currumbin. His friendly service and quality meats draw people from near and far.

A new change room and training room—the Murray Felstead Room—was officially opened tonight at the Alleygators Palm Beach Currumbin Rugby Union Club. The majority of funds for this were secured through the LNP's highly successful Get in the Game initiative. Family and colleagues came from New Zealand and interstate to join in the celebrations. Murray, a much loved club manager, passed away five years ago, and this new facility is a fitting reminder of his years of service to the club.

Council elections are heating up in Currumbin, with faces of unknown hopefuls creating visual pollution on trees, power poles, median strips and fences. Corflutes line every corner of most streets and major roads. Most candidates are playing fair. However, it has been brought to my attention that some are playing dirty and even acting outside the law.

Division 14 Labor aligned candidate Natalie Wain has been trying to secure votes by promoting herself as 'Councillor Wain' and offering a free movie night. Many residents found this offensive and accused Ms Wain of buying votes. I table her invitation.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Natalie Wain presents Monsters, Inc.' [336].

Candidate debates have turned ugly as her supporters clash with other candidates. It was also brought to my attention that this candidate and her husband parked in a disabled parking spot as they campaigned at the state election last year. This is unacceptable behaviour from someone wishing—

**Mr Bleijie:** Are you tabling this?


**Mrs STUCKEY:** I table this photo.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph, undated, of a vehicle parked in a disabled parking space [337].

This is unacceptable behaviour from someone wishing to hold public office. As I have said in this House before, it is unfortunate when this behaviour mars otherwise decent elections.

*(Time expired)*

### Recreational Boating


 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (9.49 pm): I am delighted to talk today about the inaugural boaties barbecue which I recently hosted at Manly boat ramp on the magnificent Moreton Bay. Recreational boating in Queensland continues to grow in popularity, with one in every 19 Queenslanders owning a boat. The bayside is very popular and a great spot to enjoy recreational boating or fishing. I myself am a keen angler. However, I would argue that my efforts are more casting practice than fishing. The bayside is alive with locals and visitors each and every day of the week taking to the water on boats or kayaks or to windsurf, engage in the latest new trend—stand up paddle boarding—or fish from the rock wall or off Wynnum Jetty.

It always brings a smile to my face to see the local kids rushing home from school to ride their bikes down to the foreshore with their fishing rods on their back to do a bit of fishing when the fish are running. It is great that we baysiders have such freedoms and opportunities. It is even better that the Palaszczuk government's \$30 million investment in marine infrastructure ensures that these opportunities will continue into the future.

On a windy Saturday morning at the end of February, I hosted the inaugural boaties barbecue. I would like to thank the Hon. Mark Bailey, who attended the barbecue. It was a great opportunity for members of the boating community to meet with the minister and for them to hear firsthand about the Palaszczuk government's \$30 million investment in vital infrastructure upgrades under the Marine Infrastructure Fund. It also gave those who use the local boat ramps and other marine infrastructure the chance to provide feedback about current and future boating infrastructure. It was also an opportunity to talk face to face with officers from Maritime Safety, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Moreton Bay Marine Park rangers and the Queensland Water Police. These officers do an outstanding job each and every day, and I was delighted that they came along to talk to members of the local boating community. They provided important safety information, talked about pollution reduction in our waterways and discussed our local marine infrastructure and safety on the water, making sure that boaties are aware of their responsibilities. I thank those officers for attending the barbecue and for their dedication and commitment to ensuring the safety of those who use the beautiful Moreton Bay.

Our local community groups were also well represented, with members from the Volunteer Coast Guard and Marine Radio Manly. These two vital services provide protection and surety for boaties. I congratulate these volunteer organisations that do such important work on the bayside. Our wonderful groups of Sailability Bayside, Manly dragon boats and Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron also attended as did the 18 Footers Sailing Club. It was a great event and I am looking forward to hosting my next boaties barbecue. I thank the Palaszczuk government for its investment of \$30 million in marine infrastructure and for the ongoing support of the bayside.

### Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (9.52 pm): I rise tonight to speak about a 4.8-kilometre stretch of Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road, a section of road that has claimed lives in recent years. On the section of road in question there have been 45 traffic accidents, two fatal collisions resulting in three deaths, 26 injurious collisions resulting in 39 injuries and 17 non-injurious collisions. The section of Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road between Stanmore Road, Wolffdene and Shaws Pocket Road, Luscombe is one of the most precarious sections of road in South-East Queensland.

**Mr Crandon:** Especially at night.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Especially at night; I certainly take the interjection from the member for Coomera. The road allows little or no room for error. It is a windy, hilly road with multiple crests with next to no shoulders for motorists. Furthermore, there are large gum trees within close proximity to the road meaning there is no room for error. To make matters worse, there are blind crests with corners that can be deceiving and have caused many motorists to shoot off the road. This is one of the most picturesque tourist routes in South-East Queensland. It is certainly a gateway to the Scenic Rim and Tamborine Mountain for both Brisbane and Logan commuters. The road weaves its way through the rolling hills and properties as it snakes its way along the Albert River.


**Mr Rickuss:** Across the Luscombe bridge.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Yes, across the Luscombe bridge. It is a picturesque place. There are beautiful sloping hills and there are lovely little valleys in there.

Unfortunately, when it comes down to it, a lot of heavy trucks use this road as they are utilised by the local quarries. That adds another element to the urgent need for this road to be looked at and fixed. Most dangerous of all is the fact that a lot of bicycle riders have been using this road in recent times to get up to Mount Tamborine. When heavy vehicles are travelling down roads which have very small shoulders and blind bends, it is a recipe for disaster for those individuals. As the police informed me, recently a bicycle rider suffered serious injuries to his legs from an accident with a heavy vehicle.

I will be writing to the Minister for Main Roads requesting that this road be put on the Safer Roads Sooner list to seek priority funding because it is claiming lives. It is a very serious situation in my electorate.

### Queensland Women's Week

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (9.55 pm): This evening I rise in the House to talk to the recent Queensland inaugural Women's Week and the tremendous work that one community organisation is doing not only in my electorate of Mundingburra but also in Townsville and surrounding areas. Women's Week has been a long time coming.

As a female, a mother, a daughter and also a minister in the first Queensland government cabinet to have 50 per cent women, I am incredibly proud that the Palaszczuk government's women are finally being given the recognition that we deserve. We are a government that is strongly committed to gender equality and to promoting and protecting women's rights, interests and wellbeing. We are committed to tackling the life-threatening issue of domestic and family violence by adopting all 140 recommendations of the landmark *Not now, not ever* report.

In Townsville we provided the necessary funding for a new women's shelter to provide relief to the already strained services. Further to this, we are developing a whole-of-government Queensland women's strategy and also taking action to increase the number of women in leadership positions, specifically on Queensland government bodies, and we are working in partnership with the private sector.


This government believes in effecting change not only in our legislation but also at a grassroots level through supporting community organisations that are doing marvellous work in assisting some of the most vulnerable women in our society. The women's centre in my electorate of Mundingburra does just that. The women's centre is a women's services hub run by women for women, incorporating a sexual assault support service, a specialist homelessness service and a women's health service. Although this organisation's main role is in finding accommodation for women and children who are homeless, they largely assist women dealing with issues of domestic violence.

Last week I was honoured to attend their international Women's Week celebrations at which women who use their services as well as other related organisations attended. Together, we shared information about each other's talents and what makes us happy, and we created a hall of fame. This

was more than just a simple exercise. It was about promoting and building each other's confidence. For some women, this was the first time that they had been made to feel good about themselves for quite some time. I visited the women's centre quite a few times and I can see why so many women and their children flock to their services. They are a refuge and a safe haven for individuals with not only economic needs but also suffering personal impacts from devastating situations.

I will continue to work closely with the women's centre as well as my cabinet colleague the Hon. Shannon Fentiman, the Minister for Women, towards providing the essential assistance that this excellent community organisation needs. The women's centre is a sanctuary for a lot of women and children in Townsville. I would like to commend the terrific work that Cathy and her team are doing.

### Mount Lindesay Highway


 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (9.58 pm): The State Infrastructure Plan released on the weekend can only be described as a failure of this government for the people of my electorate and the people of Beaudesert and Jimboomba in particular. Not only is the Mount Lindesay Highway barely mentioned in the Infrastructure Plan; it actually includes a reference to the 'Beaudesert town centre bypass' which was announced by the former deputy premier, the member for Callide, in October 2014 as one of the projects that was being funded. It was reannounced by the Deputy Premier in April last year and, again, we see it included in yet another plan released by this government. Not only that, they did not even get their reference right. It was referred to as a 'Beaudesert Road bypass in Beaudesert'. We see from this plan that not only do they not actually have any new plans for infrastructure in our region but they cannot even describe correctly what has already been done.

In Beaudesert, Jimboomba and the region I think people are going to be disappointed with the Infrastructure Plan because it does not mention any plans at all for the future upgrade of the Mount Lindesay Highway, particularly between Jimboomba, Park Ridge and Browns Plains. This is an area where there is a lot of extra traffic coming in due to growth in places like Yarrabilba, Flagstone and Beaudesert itself. We know that there is a lot of growth in those areas. We heard earlier this evening at another function in this place that there are two Catholic schools being built in my electorate at Beaudesert and Yarrabilba. It shows that there is growth coming and people are moving in, and yet there is still no plan for infrastructure in this main roads region. The Infrastructure Plan is just an unfunded wish list, and all of the members over there in the government may as well package it up in an envelope and send it off to Santa Claus because without a plan to fund it that is about as much of a chance as one will have of getting all of these things delivered.

They have a budget that is in deficit—or it will be—and an \$80 billion debt, and all of the infrastructure plans that they have will be very difficult to fund without a plan for the future. Even without funding available now, my community expects the government to have a plan for the future upgrade of this road. I have heard about people being stuck on the North McLean Bridge at 4.15 in the afternoon with traffic banked back all the way from Jimboomba. That is a result of all of the growth in the region, and something needs to be done about it.

Two thousand people live at Yarrabilba now, and a couple of years ago it was a paddock. We think that it is one of the fastest growing centres in the country, and that requires investment in the Mount Lindesay Highway. There are other roads that also need attention: the Beaudesert-Nerang Road heading out to Biddaddaba; the Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road, which the member for Albert mentioned; parts of Tamborine Mountain Road; the Boonah-Rathdowney Road between Rathdowney and Maroon; and the Lamington National Park Road needs work as well. We need funding and we need a plan to fund these improvements in the future.

### Queensland Nickel

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (10.01 pm): The name Clive Palmer is a name taken in vain in Townsville at the moment. Locals sometimes use a colourful expletive before mumbling the name through gritted teeth. Every member of this House will be very aware of the Queensland Nickel situation, as we heard from the Treasurer this morning when he outlined the time line of this unfortunate event.


On 15 February, 237 workers were sacked, plunging those workers and their families into a world of hurt. Townsville received a body blow that it was not ready for, but within six days the Palaszczuk government had announced its accelerated works program worth \$187 million, creating 430 jobs. Following a jobs workshop with affected workers, the Defence Force and Queensland Police Service commented that their jobs applications had never seen such a good response with several applicants

progressing on to the next step, which is a positive. Blindsiding the government and the administrators, Clive Palmer announced that Queensland Nickel Sales would take ownership of the Yabulu refinery effective Monday, 7 March. By Friday of the same week the remaining 550 workers were sacked, effectively crippling approximately 1,200 direct and indirect jobs in Townsville. Once again rapid response teams from state and federal agencies swung into operation on the day the workers were sacked and again offered them a raft of services. Mr Palmer is now saying that the plants could be closed for as long as four months.

It seems that this man has been obsessed with the drama series *Game of Thrones* and is playing with the very lives of the people of Townsville like a modern-day Joffrey Baratheon. Not only will this decision have a huge impact on the many small and medium sized businesses in the city; the impact on the environment this closure could have is immeasurable at this stage. I therefore congratulate the Hon. Steven Miles, Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection, for the introduction of the Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill, which will actively enhance environmental protection for sites and avoid the state bearing the cost for managing and rehabilitating sites in financial difficulties.

Finally, the *Townsville Bulletin* has invited Mr Clive Palmer to fly to Townsville at the newspaper's expense to address the sacked workers. I support this call from the newspaper and demand that Mr Palmer come to Townsville, face his sacked workers and their families, and explain what and why he has done what he was done with their lives.

### Infrastructure Investment, Coomera Electorate


 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (10.04 pm): I am pleased to be here tonight to give an adjournment speech. I think the opposition whips have something to do with that, and I appreciate the effort that they put in to make sure I was on the list tonight.

Infrastructure investment is the topic of conversation from this side, and of course the biggest issue in the Coomera electorate is infrastructure investment. We have seen massive growth in the Coomera electorate over the years since I have been the member there, and the evidence of that is seven new schools in six years. From 2009 to 2015, seven schools in six years, and some are up to their fourth and fifth stages. Now we are nearing capacity again, which is evidenced by the plan for an eighth new school to open in 2018 just one kilometre away from two other brand new schools. We do have a major issue there. By the way, of those schools five are state schools—two high schools and three primary schools—and three are private schools, prep to 12.

I put all of this forward to members as evidence that we have an issue around infrastructure, and particularly bus and public transport infrastructure. Further evidence of this growth that we see is that when I came into office in March 2009 I had 28,764 electors. In January 2016 I had 40,849 electors, which is a 42 per cent increase over the seven years that I have been in this place. Further evidence is that in the last 12 months alone from 31 January 2015 to 29 January 2016 there has been further growth of 4.5 per cent. It has been massive, so as I said we need infrastructure. We need buses, bus routes and extra buses on bus routes.

I thank the minister for taking the time to listen to me. Each time I come to see him or he sees me in the hallway, he does not go off in this or that direction—he definitely comes over and lets me have a bit of a chat, and we are getting somewhere on some of these things. Minister, I must implore you to realise that the massive growth we are talking about is in the centre of the electorate. We are talking about overcrowding on buses in the north of the electorate in Eagleby, in Ormeau, Pimpama, Helensvale and the Hope Island area. We have massive issues with bus transport in the area. We want people to get on the buses. We want people to stop driving their cars. We have an M1 that is getting overcrowded. Please, Minister, let us focus more and more on those buses for the Coomera electorate.

### Greenfield Mowers

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (10.07 pm): At a time when manufacturing in Australia is struggling, based in Acacia Ridge in my Sunnybank electorate is the highly regarded ride-on lawnmower manufacturing business of Greenfield Mowers. Many a Greenfield ride-on mower has been bought and used in rural Queensland. Greenfield Mowers is a family business founded by Mr Theo Reinhold in 1966 and this year will celebrate its 50th year. Mr Reinhold designed and patented the very popular auto clutch heel and toe drive ride-on tractor style mower that is a high-end premium product and the mower of choice for many rural Australian communities. If Greenfield made one mistake, it is that they have made their ride-on mowers too well. They are made to last.

**Mr Bleijie:** I am a Rover man.

**Mr RUSSO:** These patents remain competitive advantages of Greenfield Mowers in today's market. Greenfield Mowers are able to compete with cheaper foreign imports such as Rover.

Sadly, Mr Theo Reinhold passed away in 2014. Theo's son Lewis now runs the business. Mr Theo Reinhold had established Greenfield Mowers as a market leader and it employs a direct labour force of approximately 45 employees and at times is required to run multiple shifts in order to meet customer demand and time lines.


Lewis has carried on the tradition established by his late father. He has been a part of the Greenfield business for much of his working life, alongside his father, and has invaluable knowledge of the product, the market and the supply chain. He is very passionate about Greenfield Mowers and its place as an iconic Queensland product.

I recently had the opportunity to visit Greenfield's premises and meet with Lewis and the staff and witness his pride in the product he stands behind. Proudly on display in the foyer is the second mower ever manufactured by Greenfield. On this visit I learned about the importance of this product not only to the end user in rural Australia but also to small businesses across Queensland and in the Brisbane area due to the supplied components that are used in manufacture such as aluminium casting wheels from a local Bulimba manufacturer.

As I said earlier, Greenfield Mowers creates more than 45 direct jobs in its own factory. Many more than that are involved in the supply chain of approximately 1,500 components that are sourced locally. Greenfield Mowers is an iconic product on the rural landscape.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Warrego, can I also say that we have a Greenfield and I am proud of it. It has a diff lock, too!

### Vegetation Management

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (10.10 pm): Like my colleague from Coomera, I wish to thank the whips for the opportunity to speak tonight! I rise to speak on the thickening of vegetation in Queensland—something that is well known and readily observed by landholders in the Warrego electorate and also across regional Queensland. There seems to be a perception, possibly a long-held incorrect belief, by some that there is a loss of native vegetation in Queensland and that this is a major threat to biodiversity. The science and landholders, however, tell a very different story, particularly the science from Mr Bill Burrows, who has a Master of Agricultural Science from the University of Queensland and a PhD from the department of environmental biology in the research school of biological sciences from the Australian National University. He has had some 40 years researching the ecology and management of Queensland's grazed woodlands and authored over 100 research and technical papers published in national and international scientific literature.

Vegetation thickening is the increase in stem density, stem size/basal area and/or the canopy cover compared with the assumed original pre-European condition. The thickening of native vegetation—the increasing of tree cover—is occurring on a much greater scale than native vegetation 'loss', or the removal of trees or regrowth.

I have been interested to read some of the research by Dr Bill Burrows, who outlines that there have been claims that tree clearing led to the equivalent of 360,000 Rugby League football fields being cleared in the past year. He also says that, in comparison, the equivalent of at least 60 million Rugby League football fields were therefore maintained in fact with thickening forest and woodland on Queensland grazing lands over the same time frame. A large portion of the area cleared would have been reclearing of land previously opened up for grazing and cropping as well as clearing on non-agricultural land, and the real clearing trend of in-tact vegetation on rural landscapes would have been much lower than that implied by the headline-chasing statement about numbers of Rugby League football fields.

This view is also supported by reports following a study of the Queensland state government's own Statewide Landcover and Trees Study, which indicates that, while clearing rates increased to 269,000 hectares in 2013-14, the amount of tree coverage still increased by some 337,000 hectares. The SLATS data is further reported to show that vegetation coverage increased in 51 of the 77 local government areas of the state. The science and government data both support that vegetation is increasing and thickening at a greater rate than it is being managed. This is a situation well known by landholders and should be recognised by the members opposite.



**Shamsalilpoor, Ms M**

**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (10.13 pm): As I speak here tonight, a courageous young woman, a constituent from my electorate of Yeerongpilly, Ms Mojgan Shamsalilpoor, is sitting imprisoned in a detention centre in Darwin. Mojgan has done nothing wrong. In fact, she has done quite the opposite. She has shown great courage and tenacity over many years given the hand she was dealt in life, yet she is a prisoner with no prospect of release. Why is she in prison? Mojgan is a refugee who fled Iran under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. While I do not intend to detail here the specifics, I can assure the parliament that Mojgan is not an economic refugee. Mojgan fled because her basic human rights were violated and she cannot go back to Iran. No compassionate country or person should make her do that.

She arrived by boat in 2012 and applied for a bridging visa in early 2013. Her application was rejected and she was placed in community detention in 2014. Mojgan enrolled at Yeronga State High School in 2015 and, despite initial language difficulties, progressed so quickly that she graduated in less than 12 months, at the end of last year. This is despite her being removed forcibly from the school 12 weeks before the end of semester, in August 2015, to Darwin, where she continued her studies in detention, supported by the teachers of the Yeronga State High School community who visited her in detention with materials and kept teaching her. Mojgan is respected and loved by her school community, who have embraced her and supported her all the way, publicly and practically. Her fellow students, her teachers and the school community have rallied behind her, wanting her to be allowed to stay permanently in Australia as they know who she is.

She has married a permanent Australian resident, Milad Jaffari, who also arrived by boat and was allowed to stay. He will be eligible to apply for Australian citizenship in July this year. Mojgan applied to the federal government to be allowed to stay in Australia. Her application for a partnership visa has been rejected, leaving her two options: to stay here imprisoned indefinitely or to return to Iran, where her safety cannot be guaranteed. Mojgan has no choice. She cannot return to Iran. Milad cannot return to Iran either, due to his safety not being guaranteed. She now faces indefinite incarceration in Australia, a country we revere for freedom and liberty. Why? Because she stood up for herself. She fled oppression. She risked everything to escape people who did not respect her basic human rights.

As Mojgan's state member of parliament I appeal to the federal minister for immigration, Peter Dutton, to review her case and for him to establish a way to grant her permission to stay permanently in Australia. Mojgan's case is unresolved and will remain unresolved unless the minister can look at the matter in detail. I sincerely appeal to Minister Dutton to look into this case and to grant justice to Mojgan.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mojgan is suffering in detention. She is a young woman who has been imprisoned for seven months and is stuck with no way of returning to freedom, with no prospect of release. I understand that the federal government has just met with the Iranian foreign minister and agreed for Iranian refugees to not have to return to Iran.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** This is the time for the minister to review Mojgan's case and to free her and grant her permanent residency in Australia, to reunite her with her husband, to reunite her with her friends, to reunite her with her tremendous community, who will not give up—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister.

**Mr BAILEY:** They will not give up, Mr Speaker, until justice is done.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** You shut up! You just shut up!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I have given you a reasonable degree of latitude.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The minister just told me to shut up. I am personally offended. I ask him to withdraw those comments.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I ask you to withdraw, please.

**Mr BAILEY:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker. Shame on you!

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, you have been here for some time. You know the requirement. If you are going to interject, interject from your assigned seat. Let us not be too precious.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 10.18 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seeney, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams