



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 21 August 2018

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TUESDAY, 21 AUGUST 2018

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.31 am.



Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Bells in Parliamentary Precinct



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, thank you for all being here promptly. It appears that the bells have forgotten what to do after such a long break.

ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt 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, was assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 18 June 2018

A Bill for An Act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management-Road Rules) Regulation 2009, the Transport Operations (Road Use Management-Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2010 and the Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Regulation 2015 for particular purposes

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

18 June 2018

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 18 June 2018, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 18 June 2018 [\[1121\]](#).

The Honourable C.W. Pitt 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, was assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 21 June 2018

A Bill for an Act to amend the Duties Act 2001, the First Home Owners Grant Act 2000, the Land Tax Act 2010, the Land Tax Regulation 2010, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Taxation Administration Act 2001 and the Taxation Administration Regulation 2012 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to impose a tax on betting operators, and to amend this Act, the Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, the Taxation Administration Act 2001, the Taxation Administration Regulation 2012, the Wagering Act 1998 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 2 for particular purposes

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

21 June 2018

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 21 June 2018, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 21 June 2018 [\[1128\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister, Apology



Hon. KJ JONES (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (9.33 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. I would like to correct the parliamentary record and apologise to the House for the incorrect statements I made during question time on 17 May 2018. During my contribution I alleged that the member for Mermaid Beach had not declared a personal interest in the Springbrook cable car project. It was not my intention to mislead the House or offend the honourable member. I apologise and unconditionally withdraw these comments.

Mr Stevens: Apology accepted.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members. What a great way to start the parliament coming back.

REPORT

Integrity Commissioner



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Integrity Commissioner a report titled *Annual report 2017-18*. I table the report for the information of honourable members.

Tabled paper: Queensland Integrity Commissioner—Annual Report 2017-18 [\[1122\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Parliament House, 150th Anniversary



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, since our last sitting there has been a significant anniversary that I wish to acknowledge. This month Parliament House turned 150 years old. On Saturday, 11 August there was a very successful open day where more than 3,200 Queenslanders attended and explored behind the scenes of this, the people's house. I wish to thank all those who attended, the fantastic school bands and choirs who performed, and all who were involved in the organisation of the event for making it such a great day.

There have been a number of other events to commemorate the sesquicentenary of Parliament House including the presentation of an Edison tubes display to the parliament by the Queensland arm of Engineers Australia's Engineering Heritage group; the sharing of Parliament House birthday cake with members of the public and parliamentary staff; a commemorative dinner and three high tea events in the Strangers' Dining Room; and the launch of our display of the fully restored robes worn by our first Speaker, Gilbert Eliott. I have to say that the member for Moggill has stamped his PH 150 passport, having attended I think every single event that we have put on. He gets a gold star.

Tomorrow at 6 pm in the Members Reading Room we will launch the book *The People's House: Queensland's Parliament House in Pictures*. I encourage all honourable members to attend. The series of events to mark the 150th anniversary of Parliament House will culminate on Saturday with a historical seminar in the former Legislative Council chamber.

Since August 1868, this very room, the Legislative Assembly chamber, has been where Queensland's elected representatives have met to debate and vote on the issues that have shaped our great state. Parliament House is Queensland's most beautiful and culturally significant building. As temporary custodians, members are all keenly aware of our responsibilities to preserve this building so that it can be used and appreciated by future generations of Queenslanders.

The construction of Parliament House in the 1860s was a bold and difficult project. At the time we were a very small and isolated colony with little money or infrastructure. Those who decided that a building of this stature should be attempted believed that Queensland would be judged by its public buildings. They stated—

Wise laws might be passed in a barn; but the outer world—the world beyond the colony—would think but lightly of the civilization of a people content to see their halls of Legislature reflect no efforts of mind greater than those required in buildings for the protection of inanimate matter.

It was a very conscious decision to build an impressive and permanent home for our parliamentary democracy—a house that Queenslanders would be proud of. I commend this important anniversary to the House and thank all honourable members again for their support of the PH 150 events.

PRIVILEGE

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



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 21 May 2018 the member for Mermaid Beach wrote to me to advise that on 17 May 2018 the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games made a statement to the House during an answer to a question without notice which was misleading. The member for Mermaid Beach indicated that the minister had implied that he was dishonestly advocating for a project into a proposed cable car at Springbrook whilst not declaring a personal interest in the project. The member also provided information to show that he had declared his interest in the project.

The minister wrote to me on 22 June 2018. In her letter the minister stated that she wished to withdraw her statement, correct the record and apologise for inadvertently misleading the House. Standing order 269(4) requires that, in considering whether a matter should be referred to the committee, the Speaker shall take into account a number of factors including whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter. I note that the minister has today apologised and corrected the parliamentary record, and I note the response from the member for Mermaid Beach. I have therefore decided that this 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 relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence in relation to allegation by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Ray Stevens MP, that the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Hon. Kate Jones, deliberately mislead the House [\[1123\]](#).

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 22 June 2018, from the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games, Hon. Kate Jones, to the Speaker, Hon. Curtis Pitt, regarding an allegation of deliberately misleading the House [\[1124\]](#).

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Queensland Drought Appeal



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, all members of this House are keenly aware of the crippling six-year drought which has hit more than half of Queensland. The drought has had a devastating effect on our farmers and the rural communities which support them. As Queenslanders, it is incumbent on us to do what we can to help. The Queensland Drought Appeal is an initiative of the Queensland Country Women's Association. The Queensland government has made a \$100,000 contribution to the appeal.

The launch of the Queensland Drought Appeal has seen donations pour in from Queenslanders far and wide, and I know that there are many in this place who have already donated to this worthy cause. All money raised will go to the QCWA to be spent on the ground to assist those who live in drought-stricken communities.

To provide support to the appeal, I have approved a Queensland Drought Appeal collection bucket to be placed in the parliamentary cafeteria and other dining areas to ensure that members and staff have an opportunity to support the appeal. Should members and staff wish to donate to the appeal online, donations can be made at www.qlddroughtappeal.com.au or by texting 'DROUGHT' to 0484200200. Donations can also be made at any local Commonwealth Bank branch by asking to donate to the QCWA Queensland Drought Appeal.

PETITIONS

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

Acquisition of Land Act 1967, Amendment

Hon. Pitt, from 331 petitioners, requesting the House to amend Section 20 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 (Qld) to include solatium in determining the amount of compensation provision for the disadvantage resulting from the relocation [\[1129\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, sponsored by the Clerk—

Woolworths Mission Beach, Operating Hours

From 1,027 petitioners, requesting the House to permit Woolworths in Mission Beach to open on Sundays and public holidays and grant exemption to the present laws of no new applications be granted in country areas until 2022 [\[1130\]](#).

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

Bundaberg Hospital, Pain Management Specialist

Mr Bennett, from 630 petitioners, requesting the House to prioritise funding for the provision of a Pain Management Specialist at the Bundaberg Hospital [\[1131, 1132, 1133\]](#).

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

Southport State School, Proposed Telecommunications Facility

Mr Molhoek, from 124 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the proposed telecommunications facility to be located at Baratta Street, Southport is moved to a more suitable location away from the Southport State School [\[1134\]](#).

Regional Queensland, Youth Crime

Mr Knuth, from 1,705 petitioners, requesting the House to reduce youth crime in regional Queensland within 12 months and adopt Relocation Sentencing incorporating the Petford Program for young offenders [\[1135\]](#).

Suncorp Stadium, Cameron Smith Statue

Hon. Dick, from 90 petitioners, requesting the House to commission and install a statue of Cameron Smith at Suncorp Stadium [\[1136\]](#).

M1 Motorway, Exit 57, Solar Panels

Mr Boothman, from 1,416 petitioners, requesting the House to stop installation of the solar panels at exit 57 of the M1 Pacific Motorway and install a slip lane on this land to ease traffic congestion at the intersection [\[1137\]](#).

Bullying, Public Inquiry

Mr Perrett, from 887 petitioners, requesting the House to establish a public inquiry into the harm and deaths caused by bullying in our schools [\[1138\]](#).

Wildlife Protection, Management Review

Mr Sorensen, from 1,115 petitioners, requesting the House to extend the period of the Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement reviewing the management of protected wildlife (animals) in Queensland under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to allow for adequate consultation with stakeholders [\[1139\]](#).

Parliamentary Material, Use of

Mr Berkman, from 210 petitioners, requesting the House to refer an inquiry to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to consider such amendments to the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the terms and conditions that would relax restrictions around the use of Parliamentary material, publications and broadcasts for satirical purpose [\[1140\]](#).

Warner and Eatons Hill Area, Linkfield/Telegraph Road Overpass Upgrade

Ms Boyd, from 110 petitioners, requesting the House to implement plans for a duplication or upgrade to the Linkfield/Telegraph Road overpass to meet growing population in the Warner/Eatons Hill area [\[1141\]](#).

Baringa State High School, Proposed

Mr McArdle, from 331 petitioners, requesting the House to fast-track the construction and opening of Baringa State High School (Caloundra South High School) for the 2020 school year [\[1142\]](#).

Warrego Highway, Speed Limit

Ms Leahy, from 318 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently reduce the speed limit on the Warrego Highway in the built up area of Yuleba to 60km/h [\[1143\]](#).

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

Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld), Amendment

From 398 petitioners, requesting the House to consider amending the Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld) to include the following offences: cyber-bullying, bullying which results in psychological and self-harm and inciting suicide; and amend the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and the Commonwealth Criminal Code Act 1995 to include bullying as a form of unacceptable behaviour punishable in accordance with the Acts. Such amendments to be known as Breannah's Law [\[1144\]](#).

Voluntary Assisted Dying

From 3,032 petitioners, requesting the House to commence an inquiry by the Health Committee into better end of life choices and voluntary assisted dying no later than October 2018 to allow debate and submissions and tabling of a bill within this term of government [\[1145\]](#).

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—

18 June 2018—

- [917](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 8, 56th Parliament—Auditor-General Report 5: 2017-18 Water: 2016-17 results of financial audits
- [918](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 9, 56th Parliament—Auditor-General Report 9: 2017-18 Energy: 2016-17 results of financial audits
- [919](#) Economic Development Act 2012: Mackay Region Planning Scheme 2017
- [920](#) Economic Development Act 2012: Mackay Waterfront Priority Development Area Interim Land Use Plan
- [921](#) Economic Development Act 2012: Map No: PDA 12—Mackay Waterfront Priority Development Area
- [922](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2874-18) sponsored by Mr Hart, from 1,599 petitioners, requesting the House to direct the feasibility study to investigate alternative routes for the Light Rail to head South and not the Gold Coast Highway route alone
- [923](#) Response from the Minister for Innovation, Minister for Tourism Industry Development, and Minister for the Commonwealth Games (Hon. Jones), to a paper petition (2937-18) presented by Mr Costigan, an ePetition (2887-18) sponsored by Mr Costigan and an ePetition (2907-18) sponsored by Mr Costigan from 146, 19 and 143 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to encourage the NRL and its clubs to bring an annual NRL game to BB Print Stadium in Mackay, commencing from 2019

19 June 2018—

- [924](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal: Minor amendments to the Allowances System 2018, Determination 17/2018, 19 June 2018

21 June 2018—

- [925](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 11, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 7 March 2018 and 20 March 2018
- [926](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 12, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 March 2018 and 1 May 2018
- [927](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 13, 56th Parliament—Oversight of the Office of the Queensland Ombudsman
- [928](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 14, 56th Parliament—Oversight of the Office of the Information Commissioner
- [929](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 15, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 2 May 2018 and 15 May 2018

22 June 2018—

- [930](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Marine Incidents in Queensland 2017, June 2018

26 June 2018—

- [931](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 16: 2017-18—Follow-up of Managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments

27 June 2018—

- [932](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 6, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 25 October 2017 and 6 March 2018

28 June 2018—

- [933](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 17: 2017-18—Managing government rates and charges
- [934](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 7, 56th Parliament—Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2018

29 June 2018—

- [935](#) The Operation of the Queensland Workers' Compensation Scheme—Report of the second five-yearly review of the scheme, 27 May 2018

03 July 2018—

- [936](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), to a paper petition (2954-18) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) from 460 petitioners, requesting the House to maintain the existing possession and size limits for Queensland recreational fishers

04 July 2018—

- [937](#) Response from the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services (Hon. Crawford), to a paper petition (2947-18) presented by Mr Powell, from 306 petitioners, requesting the House to construct a new facility for the Maleny Rural Fire Brigade
- [938](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (2891-18) sponsored by Mr Boothman, from 245 petitioners, requesting the House to ask the Gold Coast City Council to prioritise design works and upgrades which will greatly reduce traffic congestion in the area surrounding Global Plaza

05 July 2018—

- [939](#) Public Trustee Act 1978: Public Trustee (Fees and Charges Notice) (No. 1) 2018
- [940](#) Public Trustee Act 1978: Public Trustee (Fees and Charges Notice) (No. 1) 2018, explanatory notes
- [941](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 9, 56th Parliament—Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018

09 July 2018—

- [942](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 3, 56th Parliament—Plumbing and Drainage Bill 2018, government response
- [943](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 4, 56th Parliament—Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, government response
- [944](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 2, 56th Parliament—The Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, government response
- [945](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on an official visit to the United States of America by the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games (Hon. Jones), 2-10 June 2018

10 July 2018—

- [946](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Hon. Dr Lynham), to an ePetition (2892-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4) from 129 petitioners, requesting the House to amend Section 20 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1967 (Qld) to include solatium in determining the amount of compensation provision for the disadvantage resulting from the relocation
- [947](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 1: 2018-19—Monitoring and managing ICT projects

11 July 2018—

- [948](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan), to a paper petition (2955-18) presented by Mrs Frecklington and an e-Petition (2940-18) sponsored by Mrs Frecklington, from 71 and 784 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to consider strategies to help prevent juvenile offenders from re-offending in the communities of the South Burnett and Cherbourg

12 July 2018—

- [949](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (2909-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4) from 1,096 petitioners, requesting the House to dissolve the Ipswich City Council and appoint an interim administrator to act in place of the councillors until the conclusion of a fresh election of councillors and a forensic accountant appointed to scrutinise all contracts and the finances since 1998
- [950](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to a paper petition (2949-18) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (2927-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4) from 154 and 637 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to ensure that the Ipswich City Council is not put into the hands of administrators
- [951](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan), to a paper petition (2951-18) presented by Mr Last, from 413 petitioners, requesting the House to consider an additional permanent police officer be stationed to service the Collinsville/Scottville area to address the needs of these communities

- [952](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (2946-18) presented by Mrs Frecklington, from 354 petitioners, requesting the House to re-introduce the services of a Community Health Nurse to visit the townships of Kilkivan and Goomeri on a fortnightly or monthly basis
- [953](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2916-18) sponsored by Mr Mander, from 277 petitioners, requesting the House to upgrade the intersection of Eatons Crossing and Lilley Roads, Warner
- [954](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2917-18) sponsored by Dr Rowan, from 41 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately cease construction of a 30 metre phone tower on Grandview Road, Pullenvale, and investigate the approvals provided by Brisbane City Council in collaboration with the Department of Transport and Main Roads
- [955](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (2948-18) presented by Hon. Hinchliffe, from 219 petitioners, requesting the House to require TransLink to alter the route of the 310 bus service to include the Sandgate Hawks AFL Club located on Lemke Road

13 July 2018—

- [956](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), to an ePetition (2924-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4) from 2,156 petitioners, requesting the House to enact a ban on the rodeo event of calf roping in Queensland
- [957](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (2952-18) presented by Mr Last, from 458 petitioners, requesting the House to consider an additional permanent ambulance officer be stationed to service the Collinsville/Scottville area to address the needs of these communities
- [958](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2908-18) sponsored by Ms Bates, from 53 petitioners, requesting the House erect a noise barrier adjacent to 30 Gemvale Road, Reedy Creek, to mitigate the level of noise pollution impacting Royston Heights residents directly caused by traffic on the M1
- [959](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (2953-18) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (2942-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 100 and 548 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to ensure the North Brisbane Bikeway is built as promised

16 July 2018—

- [960](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission Report No. 76: Review of termination of pregnancy laws, June 2018

19 July 2018—

- [961](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on an official visit to Japan and the United States of America by the Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. Palaszczuk), 29 May-8 June 2018
- [962](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 5, 56th Parliament—Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, government response
- [963](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 8, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 7 March 2018 and 1 May 2018
- [964](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 10, 56th Parliament—Consideration of the Auditor-General's Report 16: 2015-16 Flood resilience of river catchments
- [965](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 11, 56th Parliament—Consideration of the Auditor-General's Report 19: 2016-17 Security of critical water infrastructure
- [966](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 6, 56th Parliament—Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Bill 2018, government response

23 July 2018—

- [967](#) Report by McGrathNicol, dated 8 January 2018, titled 'Ipswich City Council—controlled entities, Independent business and accounting review—Critical Matters supplementary report'
- [968](#) Report by McGrathNicol, dated 17 January 2018, titled 'Ipswich City Council—controlled entities, Independent business and accounting review—Critical Matters second supplementary report'
- [969](#) Report by McGrathNicol, dated 7 March 2018, titled 'Ipswich City Council—controlled entities, Independent business and accounting review—Other Matters'

25 July 2018—

- [970](#) Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority—Queensland Rural Debt Survey 2017

26 July 2018—

- [971](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 1: 2018-19—Monitoring and managing ICT projects: Erratum
- [972](#) Education and Care Services National Law: Education and Care Services National Amendment Regulations 2018

30 July 2018—

- [973](#) Mt Gravatt Showgrounds Trust—Annual Report 2017-18
- [974](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt MP, regarding matters of order arising in estimates committees

31 July 2018—

- [975](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 7, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 6 March 2018 and 20 March 2018
- [976](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 16, 56th Parliament—Oversight of the Queensland Family and Child Commission

07 August 2018—

- [977](#) National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2018: Erratum to explanatory notes

08 August 2018—

- [978](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 3, 56th Parliament—Mines Legislation (Resources Safety) Amendment Bill 2018, government response

09 August 2018—

- [979](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 17, 56th Parliament—Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018
- [980](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 8, 56th Parliament—National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2018

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- [981](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on a visit to Wellington, New Zealand by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. Pitt) to attend the 49th Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference, 7-14 July 2018
- [982](#) Crime and Corruption Commission: Culture and corruption risks in local government—Lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council (Operation Windage), August 2018

16 August 2018—

- [983](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on a Trade and Investment Mission to the United States of America by the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (Hon. Dick), 13—19 July 2018
- [984](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 12, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 February and 1 May 2018
- [985](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 13, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates
- [986](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 13, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates—Additional Information
- [987](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 9, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates
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- [989](#) Royal Australian College of General Practitioners—Standards for general practices, 5th edition
- [990](#) Immunisation Schedule Queensland, July 2018
- [991](#) Extract from Australian Drinking Water Guidelines Version 3.4—Monitoring for Specific Characteristics in Drinking Water
- [992](#) Standard for the Uniform Scheduling of Drugs and Poisons (Poisons Standard), June 2018—Part 2—Control on Medicines and Poisons
- [993](#) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated May 2015)
- [994](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 10, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates—Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2018
- [995](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 11, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates—Appropriation Bill 2018
- [996](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Reports Nos 10 and 11, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates—Additional Information
- [997](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 12, 56th Parliament—Inquiry into the Draft Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018
- [998](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 5, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates
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- [1002](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 9, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates

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[1004](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 5, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates

[1005](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 5, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates—Additional Information

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[1006](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 13, 56th Parliament—2018-19 Budget Estimates—Additional Information: Erratum

[1007](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 13, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 7 March 2018 and 1 May 2018

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Duties Act 2001, Land Tax Act 2010, Mineral Resources Act 1989, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999—

[1008](#) Revenue Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 65

[1009](#) Revenue Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 65, explanatory notes

Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994—

[1010](#) Motor Accident Insurance (Prescribed Amounts) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 66

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[1014](#) Commonwealth Games Arrangements (GOLDOC Dissolution Day) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 68

[1015](#) Commonwealth Games Arrangements (GOLDOC Dissolution Day) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 68, explanatory notes

Criminal Law (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Act 2017—

[1016](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 69

[1017](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 69, explanatory notes

Criminal Law (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Act 2017—

[1018](#) Criminal Law (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Regulation 2018, No. 70

[1019](#) Criminal Law (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Regulation 2018, No. 70, explanatory notes

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[1020](#) Liquor (Identified Organisation—Satudarah) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 71

[1021](#) Liquor (Identified Organisation—Satudarah) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 71, explanatory notes

Agents Financial Administration Act 2014, Appeal Costs Fund Act 1973, Associations Incorporation Act 1981, Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003, Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997, Building Units and Group Titles Act 1980, Casino Control Act 1982, Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Act 1999, Civil Partnerships Act 2011, Collections Act 1966, Cooperatives Act 1997, Coroners Act 2003, Criminal Code Act 1899, Debt Collectors (Field Agents and Collection Agents) Act 2014, Dispute Resolution Centres Act 1990, Electoral Act 1992, Evidence Act 1977, Funeral Benefit Business Act 1982, Gaming Machine Act 1991, Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Act 1998, Introduction Agents Act 2001, Jury Act 1995, Justices Act 1886, Justices of the Peace and Commissioners for Declarations Act 1991, Keno Act 1996, Land Court Act 2000, Legal Profession Act 2007, Liquor Act 1992, Lotteries Act 1997, Motor Dealers and Chattel Auctioneers Act 2014, Partnership Act 1891, Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, Property Law Act 1974, Property Occupations Act 2014, Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, Recording of Evidence Act 1962, Retail Shop Leases Act 1994, Right to Information Act 2009, Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003, Security Providers Act 1993, Status of Children Act 1978, Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991, Tattoo Industry Act 2013, Tourism Services Act 2003, Wagering Act 1998, Wine Industry Act 1994, Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000—

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[1030](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Vehicle Registration) (Heavy Vehicles) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 76

[1031](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Vehicle Registration) (Heavy Vehicles) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 76, explanatory notes

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[1032](#) Biosecurity and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2018, No 77

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[1034](#) Disaster Management (QDMC Membership) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 78

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[1036](#) Fire and Emergency Services Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 79

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[1049](#) State Buildings Protective Security Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 85, explanatory notes

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[1050](#) Weapons and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 86

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[1052](#) Disability Services (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 87

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[1116](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2018, No. 119

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MINISTERIAL PAPERS

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Trad)—

[1157](#) Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Bill 2018—Explanatory notes—Erratum

Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan)—

[1125](#) Queensland Police Service—Annual Report for Assumed Identity Authorisation and Use—2017-2018

MEMBERS' PAPERS

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Glass House (Mr Powell)—

[1126](#) Nonconforming petition regarding resurfacing of the Woodford to Kilcoy section of the D'Aguilar Highway

Member for Hinchinbrook (Mr Dametto)—

[1127](#) Nonconforming petition regarding dredging the channel from the boat ramps at Toomulla and Rollingstone to provide 24 hour accessibility

NOTICE OF MOTION

Immigration



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.43 am): I give notice that I shall move—

That this House:

1. acknowledge the historic action of the Holt government, with bipartisan support from the Australian Labor Party, in initiating the dismantling of the White Australia Policy;
2. recognise that, since 1973, successive Labor and Liberal/National party governments have, with bipartisan support, pursued a racially non-discriminatory immigration policy to the overwhelming national, and international, benefit of Australia; and
3. give its unambiguous and unqualified commitment to the principle that, whatever criteria are applied by Australian governments in exercising their sovereign right to determine the composition of the immigration intake, race, faith or ethnic origin shall never, explicitly or implicitly, be among them.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Drought



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 am): This year's Ekka is one we will long remember. There were the record crowds and the happy reunion of city and bush. I will remember it as the year Queenslanders showed their compassion and generosity, digging deep to support the Queensland drought appeal.


The fact that the majority of New South Wales is in drought has gathered a lot of attention, and that is a good thing. However, we have never forgotten that much of our state has been in this fight for much longer. Since the current drought began in 2013, we have spent more than \$670 million on drought assistance. This financial year the government has committed \$34.6 million through the drought assistance package, which includes subsidies for the transport of fodder and water, funding for emergency water infrastructure and \$4.9 million for rural specific mental health programs.

Last week I announced that there will be \$9 million including \$4 million for the Royal Flying Doctor Service's Drought Wellbeing Service, \$2 million for mental health services, \$2 million in small business assistance and \$1 million for extra fodder and water freight subsidies. We have also allocated \$21 million for the Drought and Climate Adaptation Program to better equip farmers with knowledge and research to predict and prepare for future droughts. As I have travelled around Queensland and met with farmers and communities I have seen firsthand the drought's impact. Later today I will be meeting with drought commissioners Vaughan Johnson and Mark O'Brien, who have agreed to work with us alongside Minister Furner in the bush to make sure everything we are doing is getting where it is needed most.

I was happy to kick off the Queensland Drought Appeal with a \$100,000 donation from the Queensland government. Money raised from the Queensland Drought Appeal will be distributed by the Country Women's Association to provide the basics many families have been forced to go without. Soon members of this House will be able to contribute at a fundraiser to be held at Parliament House. We are working on those details through your office, Mr Speaker, and hopefully through the Leader of the Opposition's office as well.

I want to commend agriculture minister Mark Furner for taking up the cause of our regional communities to give us all the opportunity to show our support for the farmers and their families who are doing it extremely tough. In many ways it can never be enough. Hopefully they can draw strength from knowing that there are so many people who want to help, including kids putting their Ekka pocket money in a tin.

Anzacs


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.47 am): Recently I was honoured to be in Maryborough, alongside the member for Maryborough, to open a new monument to the men and women who served in World War I. The Fraser Coast memorial trail commemorates that part of our history between Gallipoli and armistice including the sacrifice of Queenslander Duncan Chapman, the first man ashore at Gallipoli. My government has proudly contributed to honouring the sacrifices of all those who have served including a \$14.83 million contribution to an upgrade of Anzac Square. That is why, when I became aware that Brisbane's Anzac Day parade needed a bit extra, I ordered that it be provided. Honourable members would be hard-pressed—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—to find a more heartwarming experience than attending any of the many Anzac Day commemorations around our state. The respect that is shown is overwhelming. It is also pleasing to see that the numbers attending continue to grow. At Brisbane's parade people will often see children holding signs that read 'thank you'. Sadly, the numbers of those we count as the greatest generation have dwindled and they have been replaced by those who have served in other conflicts including, most recently, Afghanistan. As Banjo Paterson said, 'The Anzacs are the reason all Australians walk taller.' It is as true today as it was then. My government will continue to support the Anzac parade.

Parliament House, 150th Anniversary


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.48 am): Three months ago we marked a significant milestone in Queensland's growth and progress when our state's population passed the five million mark. This month marks another special milestone that you mentioned, Mr Speaker, the 150th anniversary of the opening of our state parliament on its present site—the 150th anniversary of this building, of this House, of this place, as it is often referred to.

The American novelist Wendell Berry also observed that if you do not know where you are you do not know who you are. He was making the point that places are more than just locations on a map, that the human interactions with a place are what gives it meaning and what invests a location with a sense of place. Our parliament evokes and imparts a powerful sense of place, in both its enduring physical form and location, as well as through the accumulated weight and wealth of human interactions over 150 years. By fixing so strongly in place where we are, our parliament has been and continues to be instrumental in establishing and defining who we are—who we are as a state, who we are as a democracy and who we, the members of parliament, are as representatives of the people of Queensland.

For 150 years our parliament, this place, has served our state in a fundamentally important way as the seat of democracy in Queensland. For its steadfast performance of that role, it deserves our deepest gratitude and our highest accolades. Our parliament has shaped our state in fundamentally important ways—through the laws the Legislative Assembly has passed and through the work of successive governments drawn from its elected members. I congratulate the parliament—both you, Mr Speaker, and the Parliamentary Service—on the series of events and activities that you have organised to mark the occasion of the 150th anniversary.

These occasions have all emphasised the significance of the milestone we are celebrating. By any measure the parliament's 150th anniversary is important historically, culturally and structurally in terms of how our state's system of government was established and operates. You cannot place a value on 150 years of democracy. Our parliament has served Queensland superbly well. May it continue to do that indefinitely into the future for another 150 years and beyond!


Affordable Energy Plan

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.51 am): My government is committed to providing Queenslanders with affordable, reliable power from all forms of energy. We have Australia's youngest and most efficient fleet of coal-fired generators. We are the only state that is opening up more gas reserves for domestic use. We have a growing renewable energy sector that already produces more than 600 megawatts of energy with a pipeline of projects worth \$20 billion.

Before last year's election we clearly laid out our Affordable Energy Plan. That plan is a \$2 billion initiative that reinvests all of the dividends of our publicly owned power assets into making sure Queenslanders pay less for power. This plan includes: rebates of up to \$300 to purchase an energy-efficient fridge, washing machine or air conditioner; an asset ownership dividend of \$50 a year off every household bill; no-interest loans for solar and batteries to support households; annual discounts of \$75 for Ergon regional household customers and \$120 for small businesses that take up regular direct debit payment options; \$200 per year off bills for 4,000 regional households that participate in the expansion of the Energy Savvy program; and 200 additional energy audits for farmers, with the government providing a 50 per cent co-contribution of up to \$20,000 to implement audit recommendations.

These are all direct measures that offer broad assistance to all households as well as targeted measures to help regional customers, farmers and large employers. Because all Queensland retailers have signed up to our Affordable Energy Pledge, customers can be assured that all of the money we put into energy savings is being delivered to Queenslanders—the people who own our power assets. Already this plan is delivering. Queensland is, and will remain, the energy powerhouse of Australia, but first and foremost it will deliver affordable, reliable power to Queenslanders.

Affordable Energy Plan

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (9.52 am): Queensland has the electricity trifecta: the lowest wholesale prices in the country; safe, reliable supply; and a clear path to a renewable future. Our \$2 billion Affordable Energy Plan continues to place downward pressure on power prices. From 1 July major retailers reduced prices by between 1.3 per cent and 3.8 per cent in South-East Queensland and by 1.3 per cent in regional Queensland. Some of the smaller retailers had even higher price reductions, with one retailer offering a 12.8 per cent reduction. This puts us well on track to deliver on our commitment of a two-year cap on electricity price rises to average inflation.

Many Queenslanders have already received their first \$50 annual dividend rebate from the electricity businesses which they own. We are helping Queenslanders drive down their bills by reducing their power usage. More than 54,000 households now have energy-efficient appliances that we helped them buy with our rebates. Replacing an old clunker of an air conditioner with an energy-efficient model can save a household over \$100 per year. More than 17,000 households and small businesses in regional Queensland have registered for Easy Pay Rewards, and that will put \$75 back into household budgets and give small businesses \$120 a year. We are offering interest-free loans to eligible families to install solar, which will reduce their bills and help them make the first step towards a renewable energy future. We are putting solar on public housing in Lockhart River, Cairns, Rockhampton and soon Logan. There are energy audits for farmers and large industrial customers.

Meanwhile, our renewables industry is surging ahead after being almost wiped out by the LNP. We have \$4.3 billion worth of renewable projects either underway or financially committed. In fact, we have more large-scale renewable projects under construction than any other state or territory in this nation. We can achieve this because the people of Queensland own our electricity assets. We have been able to achieve this because we are focused on prices, we are focused on reliability, we are focused on a renewable future and we are focused on reducing pollution. Sadly, our national government is without focus on these issues. Nationally, without an integrated policy to take us forward we are without clear direction on energy and climate change. We have been working hard on a national energy policy for months, and all of that is now wasted!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! I will wait for the House to come to silence.

Dr LYNHAM: Now the focus will always be on Mr Turnbull's numbers, not the numbers on power bills.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Costigan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Whitsunday, you are warned under standing orders. I called the House to order and you continued to loudly interject.

Employment



Hon. JA TRAD (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.56 am): It gives me great pleasure to stand in this House and talk about another set of numbers. I am talking about the 164,500 jobs that have been created in Queensland since the Palaszczuk government came into government in January 2015. Our strong economic plan is delivering jobs for Queenslanders. I am pleased to announce—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Manager of Opposition Business! Minister for Tourism Industry Development! The House will come to order. The Deputy Premier is not being provocative. I am listening carefully to her statement. I ask that members listen to ministerial statements. I call the Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: I am pleased to announce that the latest labour force data released last week once again clearly demonstrates the ongoing success of the Palaszczuk government's strong focus on creating jobs. ABS labour force data for July showed that since this government came to office in January 2015 more than 164,000 jobs have been created in Queensland. That is equivalent to more than 3,900 new jobs in Queensland every month since January 2015. Mr Speaker, compare that to the record of the previous LNP government, which only managed 30,000 jobs in the entire time they were in government. In addition, 4,400 jobs were created in trend terms in July 2018—the 22nd consecutive month of jobs growth in our state. More than 52,000 jobs have been created over the last year, including more than 39,000 full-time jobs; that is, 75 per cent of all the jobs created in this state in the last 12 months have been full-time jobs.

The Palaszczuk government inherited an unemployment rate of 6.6 per cent from those opposite. I am proud to say that under the Palaszczuk government the unemployment rate has been reduced considerably and currently stands at 6.1 per cent, including the trend of increased interstate migration and increased participation rate in our economy. Compare this with the performance of the previous government, which inherited an unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent in 2012 and saw it increase to a peak of 6.7 per cent under their watch in trend terms, but we know that in seasonally adjusted terms it peaked at 7.1 per cent.

The benefits of our economic plan, outlined in the state budget, to drive jobs growth have been felt across the state, with lower unemployment rates in many regional areas over the past year including Fitzroy, Mackay and Townsville. We are delivering strong and stable government and a policy environment that is delivering certainty for private sector investment in our state so that they can create jobs, particularly in industries like renewable energy. Thanks to the policies of the Palaszczuk Labor government, a total of more than \$4.2 billion worth of renewable energy projects are currently either under construction or financially committed, offering a combined employment injection of more than 3,500 construction jobs across regional Queensland and more than 2,000 megawatts of power.

We know that the jobs of the future are in new industries like advanced manufacturing and renewable energy and the recycling and waste industries. That is why our policies are about facilitating those jobs and providing investment certainty to the private sector. What we really need now is a stable and certain policy direction from the federal government so that we can continue to create new jobs.

The Palaszczuk government is proud of its record on jobs, having helped create 164,500 jobs across this state in just over three years, but we are also aware that our work is not done yet. That is why we remain singularly focused on creating jobs for Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government remains committed to its economic plan, as outlined in the state budget—an economic plan that is delivering jobs, infrastructure and investment certainty and front-line services for the growing Queensland population.


While I am on my feet, I would like to express my thanks to the Under Treasurer, Mr Jim Murphy, who will be returning to New South Wales in September. Mr Murphy—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left, I have already given warnings this morning that if statements are not provocative I expect members to listen to the ministerial statement. I will not give any further warnings. There will be direct warnings under the standing orders.

Ms TRAD: Mr Murphy is a very distinguished and respected public servant and has provided outstanding leadership to Queensland Treasury since 2015. Mr Murphy has been an integral part of delivering four successive surplus budgets in Queensland under the Palaszczuk government. I wish to place on record my sincere thanks and gratitude to Mr Murphy and wish him all the best for the future.

Infrastructure

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (10.02 am): It is my pleasure to update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plan for better infrastructure for Queensland. Our \$45.8 billion infrastructure investment over the next four years is the biggest infrastructure spend in our state since the response to the 2011 floods. Queenslanders can also have confidence that our infrastructure investment is carefully targeted. That is why on 23 July I was delighted to release the State Infrastructure Plan Part B annual update and Building Queensland's *Infrastructure pipeline report*.


The plan and the pipeline report show how we are managing a record investment in better schools, hospitals, roads and rail. The annual update of the State Infrastructure Plan outlines our government's \$11.6 billion infrastructure investment in 2018-19 which will support up to 38,000 jobs across the state—programs like the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program, which outlines \$21.7 billion in transport and road infrastructure over the next four years, estimated to support an average of 19,200 direct jobs over its life. We are also unlocking capacity constraints in the transport network by investing in Cross River Rail, the biggest state funded infrastructure commitment in more than a decade.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering the Building Better Hospitals program, which will inject \$679 million into Queensland hospitals and includes upgrades at Logan, Caboolture and Ipswich hospitals along with regional hospitals in Atherton, Blackall and Cairns. Seven new proposals have also been added to Building Queensland's *Infrastructure pipeline report*, including projects like Brisbane Live and Bundaberg Hospital.

Since the 2017 State Infrastructure Plan our government has delivered 405 construction projects which are complete or underway; \$5.4 billion committed to fully fund Cross River Rail; 1,350 local government projects created in regional areas through Works for Queensland; four new schools opened; 576 new social housing dwellings built; over 40 hospitals and health infrastructure projects completed; and 18 venues ready on time for the best Commonwealth Games ever.

With 65 per cent of our infrastructure budget allocated outside of the greater Brisbane metropolitan area, the Palaszczuk Labor government is investing in improving livability for communities regardless of location, ensuring access to high-quality health, education, transport and social services for all Queenslanders, no matter where they live.

Towing Regulations

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.04 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring better outcomes for Queensland motorists. For the benefit of the House—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Sorry, Minister, please resume your seat. Minister for Tourism, I have already given you a couple of warnings this morning. You are warned under the standing orders. Member for Glass House, you are a repeat offender. You are warned under the standing orders. You have interjected several times already this morning.

Members, it may be a while since we have sat in this chamber, but I do not want honourable members to forget the very clear ground rules that I have laid as Speaker and that the standing orders will be adhered to.

Mr BAILEY: For the benefit of the House and those motorists listening in, I can clarify that we have not made any changes to trailer towing rules in Queensland. There is no proposal to introduce any new regulation in Queensland that changes or makes it more difficult for four-wheel-drive vehicle owners to tow caravans and trailers or re-rate their vehicles.


Safety, of course, is our priority, but we do not want to see Queensland drivers or our wider state economy disadvantaged. Federal model laws covering safe towing practices provide guidance to all jurisdictions around Australia. Safe towing regulations in Queensland are similar to safety rules that apply to every state in Australia. Jurisdictions are currently in discussions about aligning any variations that exist around Australia. It is the federal government which has released Circular 0-4-6, *Certification of vehicles which have undergone a second-stage-of-manufacture*. I am happy to table a copy of that document, which is clearly marked 'Australian government: Department of Infrastructure Regional Development and Cities'.

Tabled paper: Document, dated June 2018, titled 'Circular 0-4-6, Certification of Vehicles which have Undergone a Second-Stage-of-Manufacture, issued by the Administrator of Vehicle Standards, Australian Motor Vehicle Certification Board' [\[1146\]](#).

Consultation being undertaken by my department related to the potential impacts of implementation of this federal requirement. I am advised that, to date, over 30 industry stakeholder submissions have been received as part of that consultation process. I can confirm that the federal requirements will not be implemented in Queensland in September, as reported in the media today. I will be raising all concerns presented to me by stakeholders with my federal colleagues. I encourage the Leader of the Opposition to do the same.


There is no question of the contribution the caravanning industry and grey nomads make to the Queensland economy. They are an important part of our tourism economy, particularly in rural and regional Queensland, and we certainly welcome and encourage them to keep coming to Queensland, particularly in the winter months, which are popular times to visit by those down south seeking warmer weather. I repeat: the Palaszczuk government will absolutely reject any changes which unnecessarily disadvantage Queensland drivers or our wider state economy.

Socceroos

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (10.08 am): Today I am proud to announce that the Socceroos will go head to head with South Korea in November in what will be a must-see game for Brisbane soccer fans. Off the back of the 2018 FIFA World Cup, now is the perfect time to capitalise on the huge interest in international soccer by bringing these two teams back together and back to Brisbane. This will be the first time the Socceroos have played in Brisbane since 2015. The clash with South Korea is scheduled for 17 November at Suncorp Stadium. This game alone will generate more than \$5.8 million for Queensland's major events industry and is possible because of the great collaboration between Tourism and Events Queensland and Brisbane Marketing. Today's announcement comes after we revealed yesterday that the NFL will hold its inaugural international draft on the Gold Coast in September this year.


Over the past three years we have more than doubled the value of our major events calendar. It is tipped to generate around \$780 million for the Queensland economy this year. In this year's budget we have committed an extra \$36 million towards major events to attract even more blockbusters to Queensland. That is because we know that investing in events helps to grow Queensland's \$25 billion tourism industry, and that means more jobs for Queenslanders.

Immunisation

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.09 am): Immunisation is easily one of the most significant health advances in history. It is an effective way to protect our youngest Australians from some of the worst diseases. High immunisation rates are important to protect the health of the whole community. The Queensland government's target of 95 per cent coverage by 2020 for children at one, two and five years of age is ambitious but well within our reach. Queensland has already achieved high and increasing childhood immunisation rates. In many places it is higher than the national rates. However, these overall high rates can mask smaller pockets with much lower coverage. This not only leaves individual children at risk; it compromises the herd immunity that is needed to protect immunocompromised people and very young children who cannot be vaccinated.

Parts of the Gold Coast have one of the lowest immunisation rates for one-year-olds in the country, with only 86.2 per cent of children up to date with their vaccinations. Similarly, in the Sunshine Coast hinterland its rate is 87.2 per cent. In comparison the Queensland-wide rate for the same period was 94 per cent, and so we need to do more. Queensland Health clinicians have begun contacting the families of around 3,850 children on the Gold Coast and 3,600 on the Sunshine Coast to check vaccination details and plan with them to deliver the best way to get their children's vaccinations up to date. This may include linking them to a local clinic or immunisation provider, providing them the opportunity to discuss their questions or concerns about vaccination or even an in-home visit. The Palaszczuk government will keep delivering strategies to promote vaccination and protect our children from vaccine preventable diseases.

NAPLAN

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.11 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering a world-class education for all Queensland students. NAPLAN results from 2017 confirm our government's long-term commitment to, and investment in, lifting literacy and numeracy outcomes across the state is reaping rewards. Since the NAPLAN tests began in 2008, our schools have shown the greatest improvement of any state or territory. In recent weeks there has been a great deal of speculation about the future of NAPLAN or, more specifically, NAPLAN online. Queensland has always taken a cautious approach towards NAPLAN online in preparation for a full rollout from 2020.


This year 83 Queensland schools participated in NAPLAN online, including 18 state schools. Queensland has continually sought assurances that there would be no difference between the online and the paper based tests, particularly when it came to comparability of data. The federal government and ACARA consistently gave guarantees that there would be no issues. Unfortunately, early assessment by states and territories of the preliminary results demonstrated this is not the case. In particular, the states and territories questioned the comparability of data of all grammar and punctuation tests as well as year 9 numeracy and year 7 reading tests.

The states raised these issues with ACARA and called on the federal government to take urgent action, with Senator Birmingham and ACARA initially ignoring these concerns, but ACARA was working furiously in the background to identify how it might resolve the problem. Senior state and territory education officials were forced to intervene to work with ACARA to fix the issues, with this item urgently placed on the agenda during the meeting of directors-general in Canberra on 8 August. It was only at that point that ACARA finally acknowledged there were issues with the results of the online and paper based tests, particularly in comparability.

ACARA has now applied an equating technique to scale the data which states and territory bodies, including the QCAA, have been asked to review multiple times. It is clear to me confidence in ACARA has been eroded. I am advised ACARA will publish the 2018 NAPLAN results within the coming weeks. Again we have been given assurances the issues have been resolved. However, due to the level of disruption that has occurred with this year's data, we will continue to keep a close eye on the results. It is essential that we maintain the public confidence in the validity of the data. This shows that Queensland's ongoing calls for a comprehensive national review of NAPLAN is warranted and overdue and should now include an evaluation of the online test design, equating methodology and comparability of NAPLAN and paper based tests. Other states and territories support our calls, but unfortunately this push has been ignored by the Turnbull government and Minister Birmingham. In the meantime, we will continue with our state based evaluation of NAPLAN, due to be finalised by the end of October 2018.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (10.15 am): I give notice that I will move—

That the Vegetation Management (Clearing Codes) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2018, subordinate legislation No. 24 of 2018, tabled in the House on 20 March 2018, be disallowed.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.15 am.

Anzac Day, Funding



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (10.15 am): My first question is to the Premier. The Premier and her entourage spent over \$80,000 on Commonwealth Games luxury accommodation while at the same time Labor refused to pay \$35,000 to cover increasing security costs so Queenslanders can honour our veterans on Anzac Day. My question to the Premier is: why did the Premier initially refuse requests for funding to honour veterans on Anzac Day—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I would like to hear the question before taking a point of order, Leader of the House. Can you please continue with the remainder of that question?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Do you want me to start at the beginning?

Mr SPEAKER: No, just the remainder of that question please, Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question to the Premier is: why did the Premier initially refuse requests for funding to honour veterans on Anzac Day and only act after being shamed into it by the media?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. From the outset I have to say that I find some of the comments in her question deliberately misleading. I will write to you about that, Mr Speaker. I have made a ministerial statement on this this morning. The Leader of the Opposition was present in the House at the time of that ministerial statement. She heard what I said in this House and she then got up and deliberately misled the House with her question. As I said very clearly this morning on ABC Radio and in this House, this government will always back the Anzac Day parade. What I might do is put a bit of clarification on the record.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Manager of Opposition Business, you will cease your interjections. Members, I am having difficulty hearing the Premier's answer. I ask that you keep your interjections—

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned under standing orders. I was giving a direction to the House and you interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My understanding is that the committee wrote to the assistant minister. The assistant minister said that we would honour our commitments in relation to the funding and that it would have a small CPI increase. The assistant minister did talk about avenues that from memory the Australian War Memorial has in terms of seeking some co-partners in funding that.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, I am not. This is my understanding of what the Australian War Memorial does. Let me make it very clear that, if there is a shortfall, I am more than prepared to meet that shortfall. I know how hard it is for members of the Anzac Day committee to raise money. The member for Nanango sits on the committee, as I do, as did the member for Clayfield in the past. Its fundraising efforts are getting harder for it.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Premier, please resume your seat.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I will wait for the House to come to order.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, and I clarified it on the record this morning, we will make up any shortfall to ensure that the Anzac parade continues. I also mentioned that the state government is contributing to the refurbishment that we have seen of the Anzac Square memorial, which is very important.

My government committed to the memorial and the trail that we opened in Maryborough honouring the first Anzac ashore, Duncan Chapman. What was important about that was that, by the presence of Brendan Nelson from the War Memorial, they have honoured the fact that the first Anzac ashore was indeed a Queenslanders, was indeed from Maryborough and was indeed Duncan Chapman. The Anzac Day parade that I attend will continue—

(Time expired)

Ipswich City Council

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the Crime and Corruption Commission's damning report into Labor's Ipswich City Council finding that friends of councillors were given preferential treatment for tenders, that councillors received ratepayer funded memberships to exclusive clubs and that councillors abused their positions for personal gain. Were these matters that the member for Bundamba warned the Premier about years ago?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In making reference to a particular political party in that question, certainly the Leader of the Opposition is seeking to make imputations in that question.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the House, I was on my feet. I give you leeway because of the role you play in that parliament. Manager of Opposition Business, what is your point of order?

Mr BLEIJIE: The issue that the Leader of the House has just raised would be an issue had the Premier not on many occasions in this parliament said that Paul Pisasale—

Mr SPEAKER: No, this is not an opportunity to debate. Manager of Opposition Business, please resume your seat.

Mr BLEIJIE: My point of order—

Mr SPEAKER: Please resume your seat. I will rule on the point of order raised by the Leader of the House. I rule that there is no point of order. The Premier will answer the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Today, this parliament will be asked to take a very serious stance and that is to dismiss the Ipswich City Council. This is something that we do not come to lightly. I know that the Minister for Local Government has taken into account the recommendations of the CCC. He will be introducing that legislation later and we will be passing that legislation today.

This month the Crime and Corruption Commission handed down a report titled *Culture and corruption risks in local government: lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council*. The Crime and Corruption Commission has done a thorough job in relation to this. It would be negligent for this parliament not to act.

As I said, this is a serious issue. One of the last things that I would like to see is the dismissal of a council. Some of the serious allegations that were included in that report include the lack of oversight and accountability for expenditure and public resources; inappropriate relationships between the Ipswich City Council and the private sector, particularly property developers and contractors; and the improper use of power and influence for personal benefit. Other contributing factors in that report also include the influence of a very dominating senior figure, small groups of people who had worked together for many years, little regard for—

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Ninderry and member for Buderim, you are both warned under standing orders. I thought I heard you, too, member for Caloundra, but I will give you the benefit of the doubt. Members, the question has been asked. The question has been responded to. If you wish to make a point, ask a question. Otherwise I would like to hear the response.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Other contributing factors include an inability or unwillingness to challenge or report inappropriate conduct and a fear of reprisal that discouraged reporting. The corruption in that council was systemic. It was widespread.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, if you wish to rise to a point of order, rise to a point of order. Apart from that, I believe that the Premier is answering the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am giving a very comprehensive answer, because this is a very serious issue.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Those opposite may laugh—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for Education, you are warned under standing orders. I am sorry, it does not matter if you saw me or not. You need to be paying very close attention. You are warned under standing orders. Members, if you are not going to be listening to the direction that I am giving you, I am going to start to really enforce the standing orders. That is my final warning for today. I want to hear the answer to these questions. I do not believe that, in the answer, there has been an awful lot of provocation. I want to hear the response. I believe that this is a serious matter.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We also know that the CCC is looking at a number of councils—not just one council; a number of councils. I look forward to hearing further public reports from the CCC in relation to other councils that may come to fruition in the future.

Renewable Energy

Mr HARPER: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the growth of renewable energy investment in Queensland and any alternative policy positions?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Thuringowa for that question. Last week, I had the great honour to travel to Townsville where both the member for Thuringowa and the member for Townsville joined me at the Sun Metals factory. At Sun Metals we saw very clearly an investment by a private company into renewable energy: 1.3 million solar panels constructed and over 50 workers employed during that construction. We met with many of the workers on site. They said what was good about the renewable energy project from Sun Metals is that they gained employment, they lived locally and now they are moving on to other renewable energy projects locally in Townsville.

My government is 100 per cent committed to jobs and growing jobs. We are seeing a huge investment from the private sector into renewable energy. The other reason this company is investing in renewable energy is that the solar panels will reduce its electricity costs by 30 per cent.

We know that one minute those opposite are against renewable energy, yet lately they have seen the light and they have come towards renewable energy. When it comes to energy, down in Canberra we are seeing a lack of stability. In fact, I can recall very clearly stating a couple of weeks ago that Malcolm Turnbull needed to get his national energy policy through the party room. Today, some very interesting events have happened in the party room in Canberra. All those weeks ago, who would have known that there was going to be a leadership challenge because of the National Energy Guarantee? A week in politics is a long time. It appears that Queenslander Peter Dutton has resigned his commission and lost that leadership challenge.

My question to the Leader of the Opposition and those opposite is: who do they back? Do they back Queenslander Peter Dutton or do they back Malcolm Turnbull? Who do they back? Who was in parliament yesterday? Gary Spence! He was walking around the corridors trying to press the button on the elevator to get down.

(Time expired)

Ipswich City Council

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the damning Crime and Corruption Commission's report into Labor's Ipswich council. Why did the Premier not take action against Labor's Ipswich council after the first warning from the member for Bundamba years ago?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members. I am taking advice from the table. I ask you to sit in silence. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, speaking with the Clerk, there is a little bit of a concern with the questions that relate to a council which is not run and won under a particular party political banner, unlike a Brisbane City Council arrangement or a Townsville City Council arrangement. I ask you to rephrase your question, please.

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to the damning Crime and Corruption Commission's report into Ipswich council, of which the majority of members are Labor members.

A government member interjected.

Mr MANDER: Why did the Premier not take action against the Ipswich council after the first warning from the member for Bundamba years ago?

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the Premier, I expect that questions will be heard in silence. Any member interrupting a question will be warned under standing orders.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I do not need your guidance, member for Kawana.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let me say very clearly—I have answered this question in the House before—my understanding is that the member for Bundamba went down to the Crime and Corruption Commission herself and personally raised those allegations with the Crime and Corruption Commission.

Secondly, let me say that today we will be dismissing the Ipswich City Council. We are taking this decision because we have seen the report, and I refer to the report that has just been publicly released by the CCC. It is an issue that we have not come to lightly, but today we are asking the parliament to dismiss the council. Those opposite will each have an opportunity to vote on whether or not they think that the council should be dismissed. What we have seen is the CCC investigating a number of councils.

Ms Fentiman: What about Luke Smith?

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. I will take that interjection. I do not see those opposite talking about that. I do not see those opposite talking about him.

Ms Trad: Or the Gold Coast.

Mr Dick: Or the LNP members on the Ipswich council.

Mr Boothman: It's all Labor.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let that be recorded, Mr Speaker. Let that be recorded.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members! Premier, please resume your seat. Members, I will keep pausing question time until these interjections cease. That goes for all members of the House. The question has been asked, the answer is being given. I am listening to the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In a few hours time this parliament will be asked to make a very serious decision and that decision is to sack the members of the Ipswich City Council. As I said, it is not a decision that we have come to lightly. It is one that we have thought about and we have looked at all of the views that have been expressed. Today is a very important day and I hope all members give it due consideration.

Energy Investment

Mr KING: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on energy investment in Queensland and any alternative strategies?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Kurwongbah for that question. I know how committed he is to energy in this state. As I said earlier in my ministerial statement, in Queensland we are providing energy certainty. We have an energy framework. We are the energy powerhouse of the nation, unlike the turmoil that we are seeing down in Canberra, where you do not know from one week to the next what the national energy policy is.

Let us recap that for all members so they have a clear understanding. At the COAG meeting we were told that we had to consider the Finkel review. We went through that. Alan Finkel made a lot of sense in terms of gas was going to be the transition. Then the next thing we saw from Malcolm Turnbull was that no, we were not going to be going down that path, we were going to be considering the NEG. One week ago, in relation to the NEG, Malcolm Turnbull came out and said we have had a good debate in the coalition party room, overwhelming support for the National Energy Guarantee, the object of which is cheaper, cheaper and more reliable energy. What did we see on Sunday? Once again a big change of direction.

Ms Jones: That's right, a U-turn.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, a big U-turn. We are not quite sure where national energy policy is going to be. Even yesterday he said we will not be in a position to take that legislation forward. One minute he is talking to all the states and the states have to come together and support his energy policy. He gets it through the party room and now we see once again complete turmoil in Canberra.

In Queensland we are providing energy certainty. We have the framework. We are putting downward pressure on prices. We have the lowest wholesale prices. We have \$20 billion worth of renewal investment happening. We are opening up more domestic gas reserves—the only state in the nation to do that. We are doing the heavy lifting. We are giving \$50 back to families that we promised as part of our election campaign. We have uncertainty at the federal level. We have instability in their party room.

Mr Mander: And incompetence here.

Ms Trad: In the LNP, yes.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes. In the LNP we never know what is happening, with Gary Spence walking around the corridors trying to press the down button to get out of here as fast as he possibly can.

Mr Dick: Where is a lift when you need one?

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. We will continue to provide stability and certainty in Queensland. All we get from the other side is instability and chaos.

Local Government, Integrity

Ms LEAHY: My question is to the Minister for Local Government. On the minister's watch we have had rail fail, the Brisbane racetrack that cannot grow grass, the minister suspending mayors and a councillor before laws were in place and today we will debate the extraordinary legislation to circumvent the Supreme Court. How can local government grow their integrity with this minister's track record?

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister for State Development and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are both warned.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I think I thank the member for Warrego for the question, because I share with her the concern for local government in this state. What I do not share with her is her twisted view of why this is a concern. I do not think we have a problem with local government and local government confidence in this state as a consequence of this government's actions. We have a problem because of the actions of a few—and I reiterate that it is a few—local councillors.

Right across this state, within the 77 councils we have great councillors who are doing good work with their communities, in partnership with the officers of those local governments. Unfortunately, today we are faced with some extraordinary circumstances. We are faced with the extraordinary circumstances of a council that has, through the investigations of the CCC, been identified as having some very poor examples of governance and significant ethical failures. There are matters that are before the courts that I will not canvass today, not in this answer and not in the matters that will be before the parliament later this day. However, I can canvass the great distress, uncertainty and lack of confidence in the Ipswich City Council that exists within the Ipswich community. That is why today, as a parliament, we will take action. I invite those opposite and all members of the parliament to join the government in supporting this action to deliver the certainty that the people of Ipswich need, the businesses and ratepayers of Ipswich need and, in fact, the Ipswich economy needs.

This is not a matter about individual councillors; this is a matter about delivering good governance for the City of Ipswich. That is what we will be debating later today. It is what we will be delivering for the people of Ipswich. I am not concerned about my own position in this. Some people might be focused on those things, but I am concerned about what is good for the people of Ipswich.

Jobs

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's budget and policies are providing businesses with the certainty to create new jobs and is the Deputy Premier aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Mackay for the question and I note that the member for Mackay is from a region in Queensland that can boast the lowest unemployment figure at 3.4 per cent. There is absolutely no doubt that Mackay is the job-generating powerhouse of Queensland. That is

largely because of the confidence that is being imbued in the Queensland economy as a result of the stability of leadership under Annastacia Palaszczuk and Labor. It is clear that in Queensland budget after budget after budget has delivered clear direction to the private sector around emerging new industries and traditional industries. With our eyes firmly on the future, we know that we have to bring traditional industries along and also ensure that we are out there grabbing the new global jobs of the future through our Advance Queensland policy.

I am very pleased to report to the House that confidence continues to grow in Queensland. In fact, the NAB monthly business survey showed that in July in Queensland business conditions were the highest of the mainland states, while trend business confidence remains above the national average. Meanwhile, the latest Westpac-Melbourne Institute consumer sentiment data showed that Queensland's consumer sentiment index rose eight per cent in August to be above the national average. Those improved conditions have also given businesses the confidence to invest, with business investment up almost 10 per cent over the year to the March quarter 2017. That is because in Queensland ours is a united, stable, focused government. When we compare that to the chaos and the dysfunction of the Liberal National Party, both in Queensland and in Canberra, the results speak for the truth and they speak volumes.

What business and the private sector are calling out for is stability in the national energy policy. That is something that the Prime Minister has staked his leadership on and it is something that the Prime Minister could not get through his own party room. One would think that those opposite would come into this House and ask a question about how this seismic, monumental failure in national energy policy has affected Queensland, but we have not yet heard one question from them. That is because they themselves are internally riven. During the state budget, the Leader of the Opposition said, 'We will mandate government owned corporations to invest in renewable energy.' She could not keep that position at the LNP convention only four weeks later. They are hopelessly—

(Time expired)

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Accommodation Expenses

Mr POWELL: My question without notice is to the Premier. Last week, in relation to the Premier and her entourage spending over \$80,000 on two weeks accommodation within commuting distance from home, the Deputy Premier said—

I can understand how Queenslanders doing it tough could see that this was money that could have been spent elsewhere ...

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr POWELL: Will the Premier apologise to Queensland—

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, member. Deputy Premier, you interrupted during the question. You are warned under standing orders. I have asked that questions be heard in silence. Please continue the question, member for Glass House.

Mr POWELL: Will the Premier apologise to Queenslanders for being so out of touch with their needs and their priorities?

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member, in his selective use of the comments, is misleading the House. Mr Speaker, I will write to you about this formally.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: We see those opposite constantly running down the Commonwealth Games. From documents that the Minister for the Commonwealth Games tabled, we know that they did not want the Commonwealth Games. I make it very clear: I am not happy that my budget had to wear the cost of that, either.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms PALASZCZUK: When it came to the Commonwealth Games, we actually listened to what the security experts told us about in terms of where people needed to stay during the games. That world-class event will bring billions of dollars in returns to Queensland through tourism and trade. During the course of the event, I worked from morning until late into the evening. I even conducted a meeting at 11 pm.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, repeated interjections will be met with the discipline of the standing orders. While the Premier was giving her response, I heard interjections from both sides of the House, including from some members who have been warned already under standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I think it is important to get on the public record that the Queensland Police Service obligation at the Games Family Hotel included jurisdictional security planning, public order and safety, instant response, bomb search and response, dignitary protection and intelligence gathering. In fact, all of the dignitaries were asked to stay at that hotel. I saw the federal LNP Minister for Sport, the Governor-General—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, my understanding is that only the dignitaries were staying at that hotel. Further, the Police Commissioner said—

To have them scattered any further across the coast would have cost the community not just thousands of dollars but hundreds of thousands of dollars.

He also said—

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Do you want to hear the answer or not?

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Premier, please put your comments through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: He also stated—


What would have been different for us and cost the Queensland public a lot more is if they had been dotted in single hotels right across the coast. That would have been a nightmare.

The Minister for the Commonwealth Games and I took advice. As we know, all of the security was based around that particular venue to minimise further costs to taxpayers. Let me say in closing that the games were a huge success. I still meet the volunteers and thank them for the work they did in bringing the Gold Coast the best Commonwealth Games ever.

(Time expired)

Interruption.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I want to acknowledge Mr Higuchi, Chairman of the Prefectural Assembly of Fukuoka, and the delegation of assembly members accompanying him who are with us in the gallery this morning. The delegates are representatives from the special committee for the promotion of international relations. I welcome them to Queensland Parliament House.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Resumed.

Energy Policy

 **Ms HOWARD:** My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister please explain to the House why certainty in energy policy is important to Queensland businesses and is the minister aware of any other approaches?

Mrs Frecklington: You should ask about Anzac Day.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders. I have warned a member on this side of the House for a similar interruption. The question was heard in silence. There should be silence until the minister rises to their feet.

Mr DICK: I thank the member for her question. I am happy to take the interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. She talks about funding for the Anzac Day parade, but she said nothing when her government cut funding to organisations that support families dealing with stillbirth. She said nothing about those cuts. In relation to the member for Ipswich—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, it would be helpful if you could maintain some degree of decorum this morning. I have given repeated rulings that I will not be putting up with a disorderly House. It would give me no pleasure to remove any member from the House this morning, particularly when we have a visiting delegation observing the operations of the Queensland parliament.

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Ipswich for her question and for her strong support for the Palaszczuk government's energy policies which have done many things, including keeping electricity assets in public hands and keeping power prices low.

There is an old saying that goes that those who do not learn from history repeat it, 'first as tragedy, then as farce' or, in the case of LNP, both at the same time. We have always known that the 'L' in the LNP has never stood for loyalty, but the chaos that has descended on the ramshackled group that call themselves a federal government is astonishing, even by their own low standards.

Last week I described the national energy policy as a circus, as the whole process slipped from confusion to debacle. Now the entire state LNP has joined them in the big top following the extraordinary direction from their state president that they are to back Dutton and to sack Turnbull. That is the direction that he gave to them. There is Gary Spence in the LNP donkey suit. He is up the front. There is the member for Kawana holding on for dear life, with the Frank Underwood cufflinks, at the back. Look up, there is the member for Nanango on the highwire. Look down, there is the member for Broadwater taking away the safety net. There is the member for Surfers Paradise launching himself out of the cannon, through the tent and into the paddock next door, overshooting his leadership ambitions again. Of course, there is the member for Glass House being himself.

What a laughing stock they have become. They are a cross between the *Keystone Cops* and the *House of Cards*. If they are not tripping over themselves they are intriguing and plotting against each other. Queensland deserves an opposition with a capacity to deliver on the policy debate and to make a meaningful contribution. Instead we have the Nanango circus, with all the gravitas of the side show alley. They have looked to Labor's outstanding result in Longman. They are hoping for 'Dutton dressed as Lamb', but all we get is a federal freak show. That is all we have. Queensland and Australia deserve better than the LNP.

Mr Langbroek: Pantomime man. You goose.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Surfers Paradise, I find those remarks unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr LANGBROEK: I withdraw.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I can wait all day, members.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Travel

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Premier. I table documents showing that the Premier used a taxpayer funded go card for an \$8.38 fare for a train ride on top of claiming over \$1,400 for travel entitlements.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 10 April 2018, titled 'Department of Premier and Cabinet, Ministerial Offices Expenditure Approval' [[1147](#)].

When so many Queenslanders are struggling to pay their bills, why is the Premier slugging taxpayers for her travel?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will have to look at this in more detail. It says 'ministerial office'. I will have to find that out. Did I travel on the train? Yes, I did. I do not make any apologies for doing that. Our light rail was working. I travelled on the light rail a number of times. I will just have to—

Mr Bleijie: And the chauffeur is driving next to the light rail.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Have you been on the light rail, member for Kawana? I think you should travel more on the light rail. I want more members of the public to see you, member for Kawana. I want as many Queenslanders as possible to see the member for Kawana—and wear those little cufflinks that you like so much as well. How obscene is that!

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana. Premier, under standing order 247 can you please direct your comments through the chair. Member for Kawana, you are not helping matters.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I think the member for Surfers Paradise actually charged taxpayers for staying in a hotel close to his home. My understanding from this report is that it was \$800 and he was only minutes from his home. As I said previously, we took security advice in relation to where we stayed during the Commonwealth Games. I make no apologies for travelling on public transport when I can.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. My point of order is with respect to relevance. This was about a train ride and an \$8.38 fare charged to taxpayers and not the \$80,000 she spent on luxury accommodation. That was the last question.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, the point of order raised relates to relevance. Under standing order 118(b) I ask you to ensure that you remain relevant when answering the question. Premier, have you finished your contribution?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I have.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Mr Speaker—

Mr STEWART: Mr Speaker—

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member who sought the call. I call the member for Broadwater.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Expenses

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. I refer to revelations that you took an entourage of a dozen personal staff to the Commonwealth Games—

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: I rule that question out of order. You have used the word 'you'. You are directing the question to the Premier.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right.

National Energy Guarantee

Mr STEWART: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Will the minister clarify what the proposed National Energy Guarantee includes?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Townsville for the question. I would love to be able to advise honourable members about what the latest version of the National Energy Guarantee includes. Sadly, all I have is a Sky News media conference that suggests that the National Energy Guarantee is dead. It appears that Mr Turnbull and his colleagues have walked away from the integrated climate change and energy policy that we have been working on for months. We saw this happen with the Chief Scientist's recommendations and we are seeing it happen again now. Queensland has been campaigning for months, saying that the 26 per cent emissions reduction target is too low. Now we do not have one at all. It is just chaos and confusion in Canberra—chaos and confusion over national energy policy.

Last week, Mr Turnbull said he had overwhelming support for the National Energy Guarantee. This week he says he cannot put that to parliament because it will be defeated. Flip-flopping comes so easily to them. In 2009, Mr Turnbull wrote that his party had no climate change policy and therefore no integrity. He also said, 'We have given our opponents the irrefutable, undeniable evidence that we cannot be trusted.' He said this in 2009. Here we have it again: we have no energy policy. Therefore, as Mr Turnbull said himself, they cannot be trusted.

We have seen this behaviour from those opposite. Who can forget budget week? The member for Nanango told parliament that the LNP now support renewable energy. They had an epiphany: they now support renewable energy. It would even require government owned generators to support renewable energy. The trouble was that the member for Nanango could not even get her deputy leader to support her on this. In fact, within 27 days she was forced to backflip on her commitments. What we are seeing in Canberra today we will soon be seeing here in Brisbane. Malcolm Turnbull got one thing right: the LNP cannot be trusted and, most of all, the LNP cannot be trusted on energy policy.

Innovation, Jobs

Ms LINARD: My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games. Will the minister please update the House on the government's commitment to support innovators to create jobs in regional Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I have not called you yet, Minister. I call the Minister for Tourism.

Ms JONES: I was just so keen to go because I thought it would be the opposition asking a question, but clearly they missed the jump! Are you asleep over there? Wake up—it's question time! They have the member for Broadwater, who wants to be the leader of the opposition, who cannot even get a question right and then it is their call after us and they still missed the question. Wake up, Australia!

We do know that Australia is in deep, deep water today. What was the final vote? It was 48 to 35. Malcolm Turnbull better be watching his back. We know that Abbott is already out there briefing. This is stage 1. This is the first roll of the dice, but we know that the Prime Minister is a walking duck in this country this morning. They are out to get him. What we can say about those opposite is that we know they backed the loser. They backed the loser.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, the volume is getting quite high in the chamber. I am having difficulty, believe it or not, hearing the minister's contribution.

A government member: Lame duck.

Ms JONES: He is still walking because he has not been killed today, but he will be! We know that every single one of those opposite backed the loser. They backed Peter Dutton. They backed the man who has failed Queensland on so many fronts. Quite frankly, if I were Peter Dutton, I would be more worried about my own backyard and the two per cent margin by which he is hanging there.

I was going to talk about innovation today. Quite frankly, I think the feds need a bit of innovation because at the moment they are doing the same old tricks—the same old tricks that those opposite lined up in this parliament saying, 'Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard—chaos.' Why are they letting history repeat itself? What we have seen today is that the LNP are deeply divided. Whether it is the Queensland branch of the Liberal Party, with Spence walking the corridors yesterday calling on them to back their Queenslander Peter Dutton—all it has delivered is more instability for our country.

It is about time the conservative parties in our country started standing up for ordinary Queenslanders. They are so obsessed about doing each other in, stabbing each other in the back, at the cost of ordinary Australians who are paying more tax and losing their jobs at a rate higher than ever before. The Malcolm Turnbull government, the Liberal Party government—it does not matter who the leader is—still means cuts to schools, cuts to hospitals and cuts to front-line services. The only way that we can get decent leadership in this country is to vote for Bill Shorten at the next federal election. We have had a gutful of the LNP's deep and divided affront to the states.

(Time expired)

Racing Industry

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Minister, given how important country racing is to regional and remote communities and the Queensland racing industry, will the government ensure the future of country racing by committing funds from the forecast \$70 million in revenue they will gain from the new point-of-consumption tax?

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I have ruled a question out of order today already which related to asking the question directly of the minister. You have asked that question directly of the minister, not through the chair. I rule the question out of order. I have listened carefully to your closing remarks, Minister for Tourism. I found that the last remarks may be considered to be unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms JONES: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Pine Rivers Electorate, Health Care

Ms BOYD: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Residents of my electorate are finding it increasingly hard to find an affordable GP. Will the minister outline the implications of a change in federal policy direction and leadership for the state of health care in my electorate?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Pine Rivers for what is a very important question. Both of our electorates are struggling. Members of our community are struggling under the cuts that the Turnbull government has made to health care. I think all members in this House know how those cuts are affecting their communities. They have cut funding to hospitals. They have underfunded aged care. They have constrained resources to general practice and primary care, making them inaccessible and unaffordable to many Queenslanders. They have cut a third of the funding for public dental care, not to mention the hundreds of millions of dollars of activity funding withheld from our hospitals.

Mr Speaker, you could be confused for thinking that there could be nothing worse for health care in Queensland than a Turnbull government. Unfortunately, you would be wrong. While the LNP in Canberra argue over who should be Prime Minister, I can advise the House that there is just one thing that would be worse than the Turnbull government for health care in Queensland, and that is a Dutton government. Dutton was health minister for just over one year, but he was voted the worst health minister in 35 years, not by me but by doctors right across the country. What is astounding about that is that they voted that he was a worse health minister than Tony Abbott—worse than Tony Abbott! In fact, the doctors said, 'He will be remembered as the dullest, least innovative and most gullible health minister in living memory.' Of course, this is after he tried to introduce a \$7 co-payment just to visit the doctor after he tried to cut rebates to general practitioners by \$5. In fact, the entire crisis in general practice can be traced back to Peter Dutton's just 12 months as health minister.

Now the plot thickens. Now we learn that the second worst health minister in history wanted to be his deputy. It was a Dutton-Hunt ticket wanting to run this country. We all know how blindly loyal those opposite have been to Malcolm Turnbull. Imagine how loyal they would be if Peter Dutton were the Prime Minister—the bloke put there by the bloke who actually runs that show over there, Gary Spence. They cannot stand up to Turnbull; they would never be able to stand up to Dutton. While Turnbull might have lived to fight another day, the threat of Peter Dutton still hangs over us all.

(Time expired)

Seniors, Electricity Prices

Ms PEASE: My question is to the Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors. Will the minister please explain how the Queensland government supports our seniors to pay their energy bills?

Mrs O'ROURKE: I thank the member for the question. This question is particularly important this week, because this week is Seniors Week. Unfortunately, a power bill coming in every quarter can cause many seniors across Queenslanders some anxiety and uncertainty. It is a shameful lack of leadership by the Prime Minister and his failing government that makes uncertainty for our seniors even worse. I think the Prime Minister needs to take some time out to speak to some of our wonderful Queensland seniors to hear from them firsthand the impact of putting his job before good electricity policy. I can assure the member and everyone in this House that the Palaszczuk Labor government has listened, and we are providing concessions and certainty around electricity bills for seniors across the state.

The Queensland government electricity rebate provides \$330 worth of assistance per year towards electricity bills. I know what this means for our seniors and am pleased that they are able to put this money to use elsewhere. Of the concessions budget, \$384 million has been provided to deliver a range of energy, rates and water concessions and rebates for eligible Queenslanders. This is almost a \$17.5 million increase from the estimated actual spending in the 2017-18 financial year. In 2018-19, \$195.5 million has been allocated for the electricity rebate scheme to cover anticipated growth in eligible recipient numbers.

The Palaszczuk Labor government further helps seniors with energy costs through the \$50 electricity asset ownership dividend being provided to Queensland households in 2017-18 and 2018-19. I am also proud that we provide those needing assistance with electricity for medical reasons. In fact, \$2.3 million for the electricity life support scheme and \$10 million for the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme has been allocated for this year.

These concessions for electricity are in stark contrast to the plan of those opposite to slash concessions for seniors. I urge those opposite, especially the opposition leader, to urge their colleagues in Canberra to stop making their government about them and start concentrating on getting electricity pricing right. I encourage everyone in this House and across Queensland to appreciate our Queensland seniors each and every week but particularly during Seniors Week because we have them to thank for building the Queensland that we live in today.

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, Expenses

Mr MINNIKIN: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I table documents from a recent right to information request showing two of the ministers' staffers were based on the Gold Coast during the Commonwealth Games, but there are no documents proving where the minister stayed for these two weeks.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 12 April 2018, titled 'Department of Premier and Cabinet, Ministerial Service, Domestic Travel Claim—Expenditure Approval' [\[1148\]](#).

Did the minister commute back to Brisbane each night, and why did he not encourage the Premier to do the same?

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you have two minutes to respond.

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. I have no claims because I did not stay in paid accommodation throughout the games. I stayed on the Gold Coast from the Saturday of Easter to see through the dress rehearsals as well as the games proper where I spent a lot of time at the traffic coordination centre in Nerang and also at the TMR offices where I had a temporary office throughout the games. My duties were, indeed, very different and focused on the traffic task at hand. I chose, for those reasons, not to stay in paid accommodation and so my claim will be zero.

Great Barrier Reef

Ms RICHARDS: My question is to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts. Can the minister please advise of any issues currently affecting programs for the Great Barrier Reef?

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Unfortunately, the leadership dysfunction we have seen from the federal LNP this week is flowing over to one of our most important assets, the Great Barrier Reef. Yesterday we saw the Prime Minister walk away from a commitment to serious emissions reductions in this country—the biggest lever to tackle climate change which we all know is the most serious threat to the health of the reef.

I am sorry to inform the House that, just as the current Prime Minister is in turmoil, he has projected the same uncertainty on to the Great Barrier Reef response effort. Like everyone, I was very surprised when earlier this year the Turnbull government announced that it would provide \$444 million in funding to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation without tender, consultation or discussion. While this funding is welcome, there are structures in place. If the federal government had thought this through, it could have found some other ways to do this. With the federal government walking away from emissions targets—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, before moving to the next order of the day I wish to remind members who have been given warnings under the standing orders that those warnings will apply until the lunch adjournment. They are the member for Whitsunday, the Minister for Tourism, the member for Glass House, the member for Toowoomba South, the member for Ninderry, the member for Buderim, the Minister for Education, the Minister for State Development, the deputy opposition leader, the Deputy Premier and the Leader of the Opposition.

Honourable members, it is clear that you have been saving this up for several weeks. It is surprising that some usual offenders are not on the list today. The standing orders are clear. The Deputy Speaker, the panel of Temporary Speakers and I will be enforcing those standing orders.

Whilst I have the attention of honourable members, I wish to advise that students from Chatswood Hills State School in the electorate of Springwood are in the gallery today. Welcome to the Queensland parliament.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISSOLUTION OF IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL) BILL

Message from Deputy Governor



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.17 am): I present a message from the Deputy Governor.

Mr SPEAKER: The message from the Deputy Governor recommends the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISSOLUTION OF IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL) BILL 2018

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, WALTER SOFRONOFF, Deputy Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act to dissolve the Ipswich City Council and provide for the appointment of an interim administrator to act in place of the councillors of the Ipswich City Council and for related purposes

(sgd)

DEPUTY GOVERNOR

Date: 21 August 2018

Tabled paper: Message, dated 21 August 2018, from the Deputy Governor recommending the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018 [\[1120\]](#).

Introduction



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.18 am): I present a bill for an act to dissolve the Ipswich City Council and provide for the appointment of an interim administrator to act in place of the councillors of the Ipswich City Council and for related purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018 [\[1118\]](#).

Tabled paper: Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018, explanatory notes [\[1119\]](#).

It is the constitutional responsibility of this parliament to ‘make laws for the peace, welfare and good government’ of this state, and that is what we are here to do today. It is our collective responsibility to restore good government—good local government—to the community of Ipswich. In doing that, we will have delivered certainty.

Certainty is what has been absent over the past 14 months as Ipswich city councillors, council employees and contractors have been charged one after the other with a variety of misconduct and corruption charges. Approximately 15 people, including seven current or former councillors or council employees, are facing almost 90 charges. In my capacity as Minister for Local Government, I have been assailed by phone calls, emails, letters, documents and reports of investigations into various aspects of the operation of the Ipswich City Council.

The Ipswich City Council has faced investigation by the CCC, by the Queensland Audit Office and by my department. There have been many findings, some of them deeply disturbing. These reports and other missives and exchanges are redolent with words such as ‘fraud’, ‘keep your head down’, ‘do not talk to them’, ‘watch out’, ‘corrupt’, ‘stress’, ‘mental health’, ‘theft’, ‘crime’, ‘entrenched corruption’, ‘secrets’, the ‘in-crowd’ and ‘look the other way’.

When documents came into my possession recently via an investigation by the director-general of the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs, I became gravely concerned at not only the operations of the Ipswich City Council but also the operation of council’s controlled entities. I tabled documents in this House that revealed unbridled expenditure of the ratepayer dollar for very little return. These documents, authored by advisory firm McGrathNicol, indicated a disturbing lack of probity and a lack of respect for the trust with which ratepayers had endowed their elected representatives. It is this trust that allows those same elected representatives to make decisions in their ratepayers’ interests, to spend their money in a way that will, ideally, benefit their community.

As local government minister, I am responsible for the framework within which councils operate. As local government minister, I am a major 'check' or 'balance', if you like, on any bad behaviour of those working within the system. However, under our constitutional arrangements, it is the parliament itself that has the ultimate responsibility. Where there are problems, it is our job to step in—to have regard for the ratepayer, for the broader community and, as I see it, for the health and welfare of the staff of councils. There are no circumstances in which I could stand by, knowing what I know, hearing what I hear, reading the allegations that I do, and do nothing. Like other local government ministers before me, I have powers under the Local Government Act to remove or suspend councils, mayors or councillors. I have accessed those powers. I did so because that is how the system works. I did so because I had formed the view that those in charge—the councillors of the Ipswich City Council—were either unable or unwilling to provide the certainty so needed by the people of Ipswich—certainty that should be theirs by right.

I want to talk a little bit about rights. After having received not one but two show-cause notices from me, Ipswich city councillors chose to pursue the matter of their dismissal in the Supreme Court. While I know that is their right, it was not in the best interests of the people of Ipswich. Councillors' moves to legally challenge my show-cause notice showed a clear determination to defend this matter until the very end, through all of the avenues for appeal, until they were exhausted. We were on a course that provided anything but certainty as a consequence. That is why this parliament must now fulfil its constitutional duty and vote for this bill to dissolve the Ipswich City Council. Putting this bill before the House today has not been an easy decision. However, there is no doubt in my mind that these are extraordinary circumstances and these extraordinary circumstances warrant what is unquestionably an extraordinary step. In taking this step, we will correct the failures of governance; we will ensure proper practices and procedures are put in place.

The CCC report *Culture and corruption risks in local government: lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council (Operation Windage)* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 14 August 2018. Suspected official corruption, improper use of power and influence for personal benefit and a lack of accountability for public resources were just some of its findings. I am convinced that these significant failures would not have occurred in an environment in which the values of transparency, accountability and good governance were paramount, but they were not. Therefore, the policy objectives of the bill are to resolve these concerns promptly and to provide the Ipswich community with certainty—certainty that will come from the appointment of an interim administrator to act in the place of the councillors until the conclusion of the quadrennial election for the Ipswich local government area to be held in 2020. Accordingly, the bill expires on 30 June 2020.

On 17 July 2018, in accordance with section 92(1)(d) of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001, the Economics and Governance Committee resolved to conduct an inquiry into a draft version of the bill that I have introduced to the House. Given the government's intention to seek passage of the bill this week, it is important that the parliament was able to make an informed decision about passage, or otherwise, of the bill. The committee's report, tabled on 17 August 2018, will assist the House in this regard. Shortly I will table the government's response. I express my thanks to the committee for its timely and thorough consideration of the draft bill. I want to thank in particular all of the members of the committee. Because of the timing of the reference to them, it took time away from other committee activities that they may have had planned.

On 30 July 2018, the committee held public hearings in both Ipswich and Brisbane. The Ipswich public hearing was attended by Acting Mayor Wayne Wendt and seven councillors. The Brisbane public hearing was attended by representatives of the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Queensland Local Government Reform Alliance, the Queensland Law Society, the Crime and Corruption Commission and two individual submitters. I thank all stakeholders who made submissions and appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. In reference to the committee's report, I table the government's response.

Tabled paper: Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 12, 56th Parliament—Inquiry into the Draft Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018, government response [\[1149\]](#).

The committee made three recommendations. The committee's recommendation 1, on the basis that the draft bill was to be introduced, is that the Legislative Assembly pass the bill. Of course, the government supports this recommendation in principle. Having had the benefit of access to transcripts of the committee's public hearings and various submissions, the government is introducing an amended bill—a bill different to the draft bill that was sent to the committee—that accommodates and reflects many of the committee's concerns and recommendations.

Two key differences between the draft bill and the one we have before us today include: immunity from civil liability for the interim management committee under section 235 of the Local Government Act 2009 for all acts and omissions done honestly and without negligence; and removing the prohibition upon individual Ipswich city councillors from being a candidate in a by-election, or fresh election, held in any local government area between the bill's commencement and the 2020 quadrennial election. The bill, if passed, will see the Ipswich City Council dissolved and each Ipswich city councillor's term ended.

The bill also provides that the Governor in Council must appoint an interim administrator to act in place of the councillors for the interim period. The interim period is defined as the period starting when the interim administrator is appointed and ending at the conclusion of the quadrennial election of councillors for the Ipswich local government area to be held in 2020. The interim administrator will have all the responsibilities and powers of the Ipswich City Council and the mayor.

I turn now to the committee's recommendation 2, that the draft bill be amended to allow for the minister to appoint an acting interim administrator in circumstances of short-term absences of the interim administrator. The government supports this recommendation. Indeed, the bill already provides that if there is a vacancy in the office of the interim administrator, or the interim administrator is absent or cannot perform the duties of interim administrator, including short-term absences, the minister may appoint a person to act as interim administrator until the Governor in Council appoints a new interim administrator. If the interim administrator is ill and cannot perform the functions of the role for a short period, I may appoint a person to act as interim administrator during that period.

The committee's recommendation 3 is that the draft bill be amended to clarify that an Ipswich city councillor can be nominated as a candidate, or for appointment as a councillor, for any local government election in 2020. The public hearings and submissions to the committee raised concerns about the fairness of the consequences of the dissolution, particularly in relation to those members of the council against whom no allegations or charges have been made. The government supports this recommendation in principle. Further, the government proposes to allow Ipswich city councillors to nominate as a candidate for appointment as a councillor for any local government by-election in any local government area other than Ipswich in the period before March 2020. The explanatory notes clearly outline this change.

The Local Government Act and other acts apply to the interim administrator with all necessary changes and any changes prescribed under a regulation as if the interim administrator were the Ipswich City Council. This is now expressly stated in the bill rather than prescribed as a relevant Local Government Act provision. The interim administrator is protected from civil liability for an act done under the Local Government Act or the Local Government Electoral Act or an omission made under those acts honestly and without negligence under section 235 of the Local Government Act. The bill provides that the minister may appoint an interim management committee to help the interim administrator perform the administrator's responsibilities. Under section 124(6) of the relevant LGA provision, the Governor in Council may direct the Ipswich City Council to pay the costs and expenses of the interim administrator. The bill provides that this includes the costs and expenses of an interim management committee.

The bill provides that, unless the Supreme Court decides that a decision of the Governor in Council or minister in relation to the appointment of the interim administrator is affected by a jurisdictional error, that decision is final and conclusive and cannot be challenged, appealed against, reviewed, quashed, set aside or called into question in any other way under the Judicial Review Act 1991 or otherwise; and it is not subject to any declaratory, injunctive or other order of the Supreme Court, another court, a tribunal, or another entity on any ground. Concerns were raised relating to whether the draft bill has sufficient regard to the institution of parliament, whether it interferes with the independence or institutional integrity of the judiciary and whether the draft bill interferes with the institutional integrity of the Supreme Court by removing review rights.

As we in this House know, it is the responsibility of the parliament to make laws for the peace, welfare and good governance of the state. The enactment of this bill will be an exercise of the parliament's power to make these laws for Ipswich. Under our state's constitution, local government is a creation of the state government. It is beyond doubt that the parliament has the power to validly enact laws which adversely affect the interests and rights of persons, whether prospectively or with retrospective effect. In this particular instance, the government firmly believes that the right of Queensland citizens to have trust in their local government institutions outweighs the rights of the individual. In essence, in this case the rights of the Ipswich community must outweigh those of individual councillors.

In response to concerns about the bill's interference with the independence of the judiciary and restriction on review rights, the bill does not interfere with the judicial process but merely effects a change in the law. As mentioned previously, the bill expressly preserves review rights on the grounds of jurisdictional error, which has been held by the High Court to be a defining characteristic of the court. The bill commences by proclamation to ensure that the dissolution of the council and the end of each Ipswich city councillor's term aligns with the appointment of the interim administrator by the Governor in Council. Subject to the passage of the bill I will provide details of the proposed appointees.

Before concluding, I would like to reassure the staff of the Ipswich City Council that their needs are very much at the heart of the action we are taking today. I am sure that I am not alone in being shocked at the findings detailed in the CCC's report of its investigation into the Ipswich City Council, Operation Windage. The report states—

Further, it was identified that there was no way for employees to raise their concerns as they feared that these would not be kept confidential. Enquiries uncovered allegations of councillors harassing staff and making threats against them to ruin their career. In particular, several staff were fearful that it would be discovered that they had made a complaint and they would lose their jobs as a result.

I can advise the House that both my office and I have received many formal and informal approaches from council staff or their relatives, some of them anonymously. One Ipswich resident sent me a handmade 'get well soon, Ipswich City Council' card which, when opened, revealed what my correspondent called a 'prescription' for addressing the problems identified at Ipswich City Council: (1) minister sacks council; (2) accountability; (3) proper processes; and (4) stop councillors' greed. While this resident's effort at communicating her very clear view was perhaps an attempt to appear amusing, many approaches to me have been anything but. Indeed, they have been deeply distressing. Last week while attending a seniors event in my electorate an elderly woman came up to me and held my hand. She said that I was doing the right thing in dissolving the council. She then spoke of her son—a man with significant responsibilities in his role as a senior employee of the Ipswich City Council—who would ring her and cry while telling her about his experiences, what he saw and what he endured in his day-to-day working life. He spoke to her of a colleague whose mental health was so damaged that he feared for him. That woman's son has since left the employ of the council. He was no longer able to withstand the pressures of this moribund organisation, yet his colleague remains. One anonymous letter to my office from a young woman spoke of bullying, favouritism, sexism, inappropriate expenditure, inappropriate language and poor treatment of staff. This conduct went unchecked because this young woman said there was no-one she could complain to. As the CCC reported, there is something very wrong with the culture within the Ipswich City Council.

This council was once touted throughout the state as the very model of efficiency and modern practice, yet this council has overseen terrible failures of governance. This council openly set up special entities such as Ipswich City Properties to knowingly avoid public scrutiny and spend millions of ratepayers' dollars for little public outcome. I do not believe this council had anywhere near the regard it should have for the wellbeing of its staff. Staff who tried to challenge what was clearly unacceptable behaviour were bullied and intimidated just for doing their jobs. The people of Ipswich deserve better, and they will get much better under the arrangements we are putting in place and the path forward. Our job here today as a parliament, as outlined so clearly in the Constitution of Queensland, is to address the litany of serious governance and integrity failures that make for such shocking reading.

I thank the people of Ipswich for their patience, their resilience and, in many cases, their support. I would like to reassure them that the urgent measures we are taking today are aimed squarely at restoring stability, certainty and confidence to their community and economy. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.37 am): 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.

Declared Urgent; Allocation of Time Limit Order



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.37 am), by leave, without notice, I move—

That, under the provisions of standing order 137, the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill be declared an urgent bill, be considered immediately and the following time limits apply to allow all remaining stages of the bill to be completed by 5.55 pm at this day's sitting including:

- (a) second reading by 5.49 pm;
- (b) consideration in detail to be completed by 5.51 pm;
- (c) question on third reading to be put by 5.53 pm; and
- (d) question on long title to be put by 5.55 pm.

At the time so specified, Mr Speaker shall put all remaining questions necessary to complete consideration of the bill, including clauses en bloc and any amendments to be moved by the minister in charge of the bill en bloc, without further amendment or debate.

I ask the House to support the motion not only to deliver on the commitment that has been made around urgency but also to ensure the timeliness of this bill being passed in order to facilitate the important measures to put the administrator in place.

As has been the subject of discussion with representatives of the opposition, this matter needs to be dealt with quickly. We need to have the administrator put in place in an efficient way. Arrangements have been made with Government House in order to have the assent, proclamation and further actions, including the Governor in Council meeting to appoint the interim administrator, take place tomorrow morning.

The times outlined in my motion are aimed at ensuring the delivery of the essence of this motion. They are aimed at ensuring that this matter is dealt with in a timely way that delivers the certainty that the people of Ipswich deserve and that I believe the vast majority of this House wants to see put in place. Considering public statements made on many occasions by the Leader of the Opposition that this matter should have been dealt with months ago, I suspect that everyone in the House will be behind making sure this matter is dealt with as quickly as possible. The provisions in the motion I have moved not only provide for the urgent nature of this matter but also provide for this to be done in a timely way.



Mr BLEIJIE (Kawana—LNP) (11.40 am): The opposition will support the motion moved by the minister. However, I note what the minister just said, that this could have been done months earlier. It could have. The reality is that we are debating this urgency motion and this bill because the government failed to act. It failed to act on the issues at the Ipswich council for years. The majority of councillors of Ipswich City Council were card-carrying members of the Labor Party. They went to branch meetings. They were in the leadership teams of the Labor Party. The Labor Party knew about the allegations involving Ipswich and it failed to act on them. Now the minister stands in this place and moves an urgency motion.

We have had this debate four times already. We have already debated the Ipswich City Council. During the last sittings or the sittings before, the minister came into the chamber and said that the answer to fixing the issues at Labor's Ipswich City Council was the process he put in place last time. Here we are again believing the minister that this will fix the issues in Ipswich. If we are to believe it now, we should have believed it four sittings ago when these issues were meant to be resolved.

As I said, we support the intention behind the passing of this motion, because we do not believe that the dodgy council at Ipswich should be there either. That debate will ensue. My concern in relation to the urgency motion is that the Liberal National Party has 21 speakers on its list. If the time limit for debate is 5.30, I doubt that all of the LNP members who want to speak will have sufficient opportunity to do so. I am not sure how many government members are on the list to speak. I am advised that it could be as few as five.

Mr Crisafulli: They should all want to speak on it.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection of the member for Broadwater: they should all want to speak, but I can understand why they do not want to. It is their Labor mates at Ipswich they are talking about sacking today. It is the cause of the corruption concerns at Ipswich. I am concerned. There are 21 members of the Liberal National Party who want to speak to the bill.

In terms of the reasons for the urgency motion, I understand that those opposite have organised the Acting Governor to attend Governor in Council tomorrow to ensure the advisory council can be set up, but this is just a theme developing with this lazy Labor government. Every week we are seeing

debate of bills guillotined, debate of motions guillotined, closure motions and motions that members be not further heard. I am waiting for the Leader of the House to stand up and move that I be not further heard. It is about to happen. Every week in this parliament this year we have been debating urgency motions.

I am not disregarding the importance of this—this is the type of bill in respect of which you do have an urgency motion—but this Labor government is moving urgency motions and guillotining every sort of bill before the House. We know that the Leader of the House has another plan to make sure members do not get an opportunity to speak on behalf of their constituents. Later this week, or today, she will move a motion to curtail not only the hours of parliament but also the speaking opportunities given to members who represent approximately 40,000 people in this place. This urgency motion is on top of other motions against democracy, against the people's house. Last night at the Q150 event the Premier spoke for minutes about how great this is because this is the people's house and the people will have a say through their members of parliament. That is rubbish, because every time members want to get up and have a say on behalf of their constituents they are closed down, debate is finished, urgency motions are moved. It will get to the point that there will be no debate in this place because the government just wants to rush through its agenda with its majority.


The Liberal National Party will not oppose the urgency motion. I am expressing concern that the LNP has 21 members who want to speak to the bill. I hope they will get the opportunity to speak but, on the basis of what we have seen in previous sittings this year, I highly doubt that will be the case because the government cannot manage its own agenda and cannot sort out these issues.

I hope that this is the last time we debate Ipswich City Council, because this is the fourth attempt, of some sort of urgency motion in this parliament, to fix Labor's issue at Ipswich City Council. In debate of the bill the shadow minister will lead the charge in reminding the Labor Party that this is their fault and their council. The majority of Labor Ipswich city councillors are card-carrying members of the Labor Party.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Second Reading

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.46 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.46 am): I rise to contribute to the debate of the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. Today is a sad day for local government in Queensland. However, when it comes before the opposition to comment on the identified and significant governance failures and cultural issues within the Ipswich City Council, it is clear that this case just does not pass the pub test. The LNP has judged this case and we have found it to be more than disappointing. We have not been sitting on our hands; we called for an administrator to be appointed some three months ago, when the second member of the Labor Party, who was also a Labor mayor, was charged.

What we have seen at Ipswich City Council are issues that should not have occurred within an environment where transparency, accountability and good governance are paramount. The way in which this Labor state government has handled this issue with Ipswich is unfortunately casting a shadow on the integrity of all hardworking councillors and councils across the state. This is a very disappointing circumstance. I applaud the work of local government representatives right across this state. We in the LNP opposition know how hard they all work every day for their communities. We thank them for their efforts. We also note that there are some 40,000 staff who work in the local government sector across Queensland. We also thank them for the work they do every day to make sure that essential services, like water and sewerage, continue to operate—and for the many other tasks and activities they are involved in.

We also know that from time to time things do go off the rails. To make sure that local governments' good work is not under a cloud, sometimes we have to lance the boil. In this case, the boil is very red—red just like the Labor Party activities that have perpetuated this problem.

Only 0.6 per cent of councillors are actually in trouble. That represents a very small number of councillors across Queensland. The rest of the 550-odd councillors and mayors are doing their job for Queensland communities. Unfortunately, Ipswich is a case on its own.

It was clear some months ago—and some will say years—that the long-term protection racket within the Labor Party was starting to unravel in Ipswich. There is an old saying that has been circulated in local government, and that saying is ‘no tales past Gales’. What this saying means for members of the House is that what happens on tour stays on tour. For years it has been a direct reference to the Labor Party activities and the behaviour at Ipswich—the disappointing behaviour at Ipswich. I have no doubt from reading the number of blacked out pages in the submissions to the parliamentary committee that there are probably still some attempts to run a protection racket and to keep those tales out past Gales.

Members of this House should be reminded that parts of the Ipswich City Council are in the Premier’s electorate of Inala. What did the Premier know about the corruption in the Labor Party from the people of her own electorate? We know that the member for Bundamba raised concerns. We know that the member for Bundamba raised concerns with the Premier. Why did it take this government so long to act? Why did it take this Premier so long to act and what did the two former ministers for local government know? What did the Deputy Premier know? What did the member for Ferny Grove know?

It should also be noted that in the past some of these Ipswich councillors have been travelling with the minister on conferences in the minister’s former role as the planning minister. They stated this in their submissions to the committee. There are all sorts of allegations about who works for whom. There is a web of Labor Party connections and we know that there is an unhealthy culture of secrecy and deceit. This is a real cesspool of Labor Party activity unfortunately at its worst, and we should question further because this bill circumvents the Supreme Court action.

The public—the people of Ipswich—should have an ironclad guarantee from this government that this government is not running a protection racket for anyone in Peel Street, for any member of the Labor Party or for any members or any former members in this House. It would be remiss of the LNP opposition to not ask this question. The public expects us to be thorough and we request this guarantee from the government and from this minister that there is no protection racket for anyone in Peel Street, any member of the Labor Party or any members or former members of this House.

It would have been far better to deal with this Labor Party poor behaviour and deceit back in May rather than have the litany of stuff-ups that we have seen over the last three months from this government. Maybe a few reminders about what members opposite said back in May about the empowerment that was given to the local government minister through the public interest amendments might help those members reflect on the monumental stuff-up that this government has perpetuated and which has unfortunately placed a cloud over local government in Queensland. The member for Bulimba said—

The local government minister will be empowered to dismiss a council if he or she has a reasonable belief that it is in the public interest to do so. This will give the local government minister the ability to act immediately in the interests of the community.

That is what the member for Bulimba said back in May—‘act immediately’. Here we are in August. That ‘acting immediately’ went really well, didn’t it? The Premier said in relation to the public interest amendments—

The other amendments to be made relate to the ability of the minister to remove a council or councillor when it is in the public interest to do so.

I repeat: ‘to remove a council or councillor when it is in the public interest’. Well, that was not good enough once the challenge was on in the Supreme Court and now we are here today in this parliament debating council-specific legislation. The member for Waterford said—

If the Minister for Local Government is of the view that local government principles are being breached or councillors or council are incapable of performing their duties, we will intervene in the public interest.

I think the important part there is ‘we will intervene in the public interest’. We had legislation passed by this House back in May enabling the minister to intervene in that public interest and we have seen numerous reports and further reports from the CCC in relation to the situation at Ipswich. Here we are again with specific legislation to dissolve the Ipswich council. That intervention in the public interest worked really well, didn’t it? This Labor government found its public interest amendments were not going to work as it had hoped, and that is why we are back here again doing Ipswich-specific legislation to dissolve the Ipswich City Council. What has happened is that there is a bad situation, and it has been made even worse for local governments in Queensland. The stuff-ups from this Labor government have contributed unfortunately for the last three months to that cloud which is now over all of those hardworking local government representatives in Queensland who do so much for our communities.

Let us go through what has happened with this Labor government. It has announced the suspension of four mayors and a councillor under new laws that were not actually in place at the time. It was this Labor government that issued two failed show-cause notices to Ipswich City Council, at the time costing the ratepayers and the taxpayers of Queensland and we still do not know what those full costs are. It was this Labor government which is now curtailing the Supreme Court to fix the mess that was meant to be fixed back in May with 40 pages of amendments. Those amendments did not follow due process and perhaps if they did we might have seen a better outcome. Those amendments did not go through the committee process. They were slapped on the table in the House.

I note that we have had a considerable change of tact this time. Because the parliament was not sitting, that is why there was a draft bill put forward to the committee so the committee could do a self-initiated inquiry. That is quite interesting. At least perhaps this government might have learnt something from the errors of its ways. It is this government that has brought this legislation into the parliament that breaches just about every fundamental legislative principle in the book. This legislation abrogates the rights and liberties of the individual. It breaches the principle of the presumption of innocence. It excludes judicial review and appeal contrary to fundamental legislative principles and the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry. But wait, there's more. We have a minister here who is in charge of a racetrack and it cannot grow grass.

It is also important to note that, although there have been investigations by the CCC and a recent report from the CCC, it needs to be made very clear to this House what the CCC actually recommended. The CCC did not recommend this legislation. The decision to remove the council and the legal processes for this to occur are matters for the government, not the CCC, and the CCC on more than one occasion has made it very clear that it did not recommend this particular legislation.

I refer to the Johnstone shire. That is one of the most recent councils that has been dismissed in Queensland. There have been others and there have been others that have had an administrator—that is, the Burke shire and, some years ago, the Gold Coast—but Johnstone is probably one of the most recent in the last 10 years. The Johnstone shire had a fairer hearing from the most hated local government minister in Queensland in recent times—Andrew Fraser—during the Bligh government.

He is probably one of the most despised local government ministers because he presided over the forced council amalgamations. The Ipswich City Council has received a lesser hearing from the Palaszczuk Labor government than the Johnstone shire council received from Andrew Fraser. The Johnstone shire council had two investigations commissioned by the state government and the councillors were not dismissed until after the Supreme Court challenge had been heard and finalised.


That is a far cry from how this Palaszczuk Labor government has handled the Ipswich City Council issue and the circumvention of the Supreme Court process. Maybe the Labor government did not want the Supreme Court involved in any of its investigation or the disclosure of activities in its patch. Members of local government will draw their own conclusions about how the Ipswich City Council has been handled in comparison to how that detested minister in the Bligh government handled the Johnstone shire council issues.

I think the government should outline some of the projected costs so far in relation to the two failed show-cause notice processes and the taxpayer funds that have already been expended in the Supreme Court. I am advised that the ratepayers of Ipswich have already footed a bill of more than \$150,000 for the defence of Ipswich City Council. No doubt, that bill has increased. It is incumbent on the government to outline the cost estimates so far for the ratepayers and what will be the cost estimates to the taxpayers, because I am sure that defence in the Supreme Court does not come cheap.

The ratepayers of Ipswich should also be able to be given some indication by this House of the costs going forward in relation to the appointment of the administrator. Let us keep in mind that that administrator may not be one individual; it may be a corporation. At this stage, we still do not know who that administrator will be. We look forward to the announcement of the administrator. We hope that that person has absolutely no connections whatsoever with the Labor Party. This parliament is making a decision. The onus is on the government to tell the ratepayers what the government expects the costs will be to them. I hope that the minister will provide some of those estimates in his summing-up later.

I turn now to the recommendations of the Economics and Governance Committee. I would like to thank the committee for its self-initiated inquiry and for travelling to Ipswich to listen to the people of Ipswich. That gave those people the opportunity to at least have a hearing with the committee, because they are certainly not getting that opportunity in the Supreme Court. On this occasion, it is good to see that the government did not circumvent the committee process with this legislation, as it did with its 40 pages of amendments in relation to the public interest that we saw back in May.

The committee made three recommendations. Both recommendation 2 and recommendation 3 are sensible. I understand that the government will move some amendments to follow through with those committee recommendations. This is a very sad day for local government in Queensland. However, there is a need to deal with this situation. It would have been better if it had been dealt with by specific legislation back in May. However, this is the situation that we find ourselves in. We know that what is going on there at Ipswich—the ‘no tales past Gaius’—just does not pass the pub test.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (12.03 pm): Before this House is a bill that will dismiss the Ipswich City Council and appoint an administrator in its place. This is not a decision that we in this House should take lightly. This place is tasked with making difficult decisions. Indeed, this bill is one of them. We all feel deeply for those councillors who thought that they were making their best effort. Indeed, at a local level—in their division—they may well have done that.

The local government minister wrote to the Economics and Governance Committee, of which I am the chair, asking the committee, in accordance with section 92(1)(d) of the Parliament of Queensland Act, to initiate an inquiry into a draft of the bill. That inquiry held briefings and hearings and tabled a report on 17 August, with the recommendation that the Legislative Assembly pass the bill.

During the hearings, the Economics and Governance Committee heard from some residents of Ipswich who supported the good work of their local councillors. When we held a hearing on the draft bill in Ipswich, we heard directly from many of the councillors. The councillors were proud of their local work and very proud of their city. They felt that, since the emerging scandals, they had made changes to the governance of their city. However, this parliament has also read and heard disturbing accounts of culture and governance problems at the council both from locals and from the Crime and Corruption Commission both in the hearings and through the official Crime and Corruption Commission report titled *Culture and corruption risks in local government: lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council*.

It is worth members understanding that the action of dismissing the council and appointing an administrator is not unique to this bill. Indeed, on election to a council, councillors understand that their council is a product of the Local Government Act and that, under section 123 of that act, this parliament had previously foreseen circumstances where a council should be dismissed and an administrator appointed. Further, that legislation, which was passed by this parliament, intended to give significant powers to the minister. Section 120(2)(c) of that act states that the minister does not even have to give notice to the council of the exercise of those powers if it served no useful purpose.

The parliament also made it clear that it intended that this section not be able to be appealed against under the Judicial Review Act. I understand that precedent means that this intention of the act is not clear cut in practice. However, for any councillor reading the act, the statement of intent of the parliament is clear. It is clear that councils and councillors need to do more than provide good local services to their constituents. As the Local Government Act states, they ‘must serve the overall public interest of the whole local government area’. It is clear that one of the primary interests of the whole local government area is the good governance of council and the creation of a culture among councillors of accountability.

Like so many in this place, I was disturbed to hear of the investigation into the governance of the Ipswich City Council and charges laid against councillors. So far, 15 people have been charged and over 80 charges have been laid. I can only imagine how saddened and disgusted many of the councillors were when they first heard the news. These are extremely serious accusations, but we retain the presumption of innocence for those who have been charged.

We have also seen the report of Operation Windage, titled *Culture and corruption risks in local government: lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council*. This report contains very concerning information about the failure of the council to build and reinforce a culture of transparency and accountability. In its report, the CCC emphasised the important role that councillors play in this process of ensuring that the standards of the council flow from the top down. It raises significant concerns about the failure of governance structures and the cultural failures that led to concerns raised about the Ipswich City Council.

Given this deeply concerning information, what would we in this place say if the minister were not taking action, or if this parliament took no action? If even under these circumstances this parliament took no action, what signal would that send to other councils? The provisions of the Local Government Act—both those that set standards for councillors and those that give powers to dismiss a council—must have meaning and must not be simply ignored.

I know more than most in this place how hard this situation is for the councillors. As part of the committee’s hearing on the draft bill, I listened to all but one of the councillors face to face. Their love for their city and love for the people they represent was palpable. Many felt that the dismissal of the

council was in some way an implication of individual guilt. That is not the case under the existing act and it is not what we are finding by supporting this bill today. Mr MacSporran, who led the investigation, also made this clear when he said that although—

... there has been a collapse of public confidence in that council and those councillors ... It is not about them individually being guilty of misconduct or otherwise. It is about systemic failures collectively of good governance, and a lack of transparency and accountability across-the-board.

Individual councillors may well be right to defend their local representation and work. They may even have made efforts individually to try to correct the governance issues of the council. However, collectively, over time the results are still a grave concern.

I put it to councillors to look at the signal this parliament would send if it did not act to use similar powers in section 123 of the Local Government Act. What would Queenslanders think if we simply turned a blind eye to governance and cultural problems at the council? I think Ipswich city is a great place with a storied history and an exciting future. We best support Ipswich by supporting this bill—going through this difficult period and coming out the other side better for it with public confidence restored. I know that Ipswich councillors may still not agree with this proposition, but I hope they understand that this parliament takes this serious step to restore confidence in the Ipswich City Council and to set a high standard of transparency, accountability and governance in every council across Queensland.

I wish to make some reference to the contribution of the member for Warrego. It is disappointing that the member for Warrego seeks to lecture this House on ethics, especially given her history in this place in the last parliament. It is an unfortunate attempt to play politics with this difficult issue where we are setting standards for our local government areas. When the member for Warrego talks of protection rackets, she does not mention the hearings where we heard a member criticise the actions that we were taking, a member who said that only two of the councillors out of the 10 had been found guilty so how could we proceed with this action, we should further delay. Who was that member? It was none other than the member for Scenic Rim from the LNP who raised this legitimate, but I think ill-placed, concern. We also saw the member for Scenic Rim asking about more local representation through the councillors—that is, another argument not to have them sacked.

The LNP says one thing locally and then slurs and makes accusations. It is deeply disappointing that they seek to play politics when we are dealing with these councillors. I noticed that those who are LNP supporters and made submissions to the committee did not make any reference to a protection racket being run by anyone. Instead, they argued that there should not be any proceeding with sacking the council.

Mr HART: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Can the member assure the House that he is not, in fact, releasing private information from the committee discussions?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Thank you for your point of order, member for Burleigh. We will now hear from the member for Logan. Member for Logan, can you address the concerns raised?

Mr POWER: I was quoting directly from the papers of the public hearing where the member for Scenic Rim, who is not a member of the committee, sought special leave to ask these questions at the committee. It is deeply disappointing, on this tough issue for the councillors and where we are doing the right thing in setting standards for councils across the state, that the LNP plays politics with it, that the LNP attempts to make this into a partisan divide with its own members saying that it should be further delayed. Members of the committee did not take this approach and have much higher standards.

Ms LEAHY: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think the member for Logan needs to be very careful about misleading the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?


Ms LEAHY: The member for Scenic Rim called for specific legislation to remove these councils back in May. I think the member should be very careful about misleading the House.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In relation to the member for Warrego, she is not putting a point of order; she is seeking to debate the issue. She should put a point of order if she has one.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. There is no point of order. I would ask the member for Logan to please resume his contribution.

Mr POWER: If the member for Warrego had simply read the transcript of the proceedings she would see the course of questions that the member for Scenic Rim proceeded with. It is disappointing she has not read the transcript of the briefing from the department. This is a serious issue. I hope that

other members of the House respect the role that councillors have across our state and recognise that section 123 and this bill are very tough decisions that we have to make and we do so with a heavy heart. We do it to make Queensland local government a stronger, more transparent and better place. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.14 pm): I rise to speak to the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. This is a very, very sad and disappointing day for this parliament: for the government in dealing with this matter and putting this legislation into the history of this parliament and for the LNP opposition in agreeing with the government on this bill to deal with a very unfortunate situation that has occurred in local government in Queensland.

There may be some who are unaware that I was in local government. If that is the case, I am about to edify them on that. Once upon a time in the fairyland of local government, back in 1994, there was a council called Albert shire council. In the triennium election of March 1994 there was a very popular mayor elected to that council with a vast majority at that poll. Within 12 months that mayor was sacked by the local government minister, Mr Terry Mackenroth. I am a sacked councillor here in this parliament today. The reasons given back in those days were 'for the betterment of local government'. We had just had a local government triennium election and before the year had passed the local government minister had decided to immediately sack three lots of councils across Queensland: Mulgrave, Cairns; Albert shire, Gold Coast; and, believe it or not, Moreton and Ipswich.

As a result of the following election in March 1995, in what they called the doughnut rings around the city, the Albert shire mayor was elected to the Gold Coast as Gold Coast mayor; the Mulgrave mayor, councillor Tom Pyne, was elected to be mayor of Cairns city; and a good mayor of Moreton shire, councillor John Nugent, was elected as mayor of Ipswich city when it was acting honestly, professionally and in the right perspectives of local government as we all like to see it throughout this state. It went downhill after that period. Ipswich City Council Mayor Nugent was lucky enough to get five years of service as per the legislation that was originally introduced to sack all those mayors at the time. I was unfortunate enough to undergo another sacking by an LNP Premier in another 12 months. I have been sacked by a lot of people. I am here today to prove that you can just keep coming back.

Mr Boothman: Bring back Ray!

Mr STEVENS: I love that chant! I am back! Knock me down and I keep springing back up, just like the sideshow alley game Whack-a-mole.

I speak with a great deal of experience and I have a great deal of respect for local government. It is probably the most important level of government for our communities, as it is the level of government that is closest to the people. I see Jimmy Madden, who is from the Ipswich area, nodding. Communities deal with their local council members a lot more than they do their state government members, and we would not have a clue about the federal members because we never see them. They are like dodo birds.

It is a very sad day when the minister has to bring into this House legislation to sack the Ipswich City Council. From our perspective, it is even sadder that, basically, the opposition has to support the government in that. These events unfolded through a Crime and Corruption investigation that was instigated by the sniffer dog who is well known to us all and who did a great job of chasing down corruption in the Ipswich City Council, as was reported on the television. We thank that sniffer dog for its wonderful work. That started the ball rolling on a matter that had been brought to the attention of this House over many years by the member for Bundamba. Unfortunately, the matters that the member for Bundamba repeatedly brought to this House were left unprosecuted.

This morning we were told by the Premier that the member for Bundamba was asked to take her allegations to the CCC, which she did. I was a member of the committee that held hearings with the CCC. The chairman of the CCC explained to us that it was very difficult to launch an investigation to respond to hearsay allegations. As the shadow minister pointed out earlier today, it was well known to the member for Bundamba in particular, as well as to other members in local government, that something was rotten not in Denmark but in Ipswich. Unfortunately, it has taken the sniffer dog to bring this legislation to a head for the betterment of the people of Ipswich city.

If we had continued with the same regime of council leaders in Ipswich, there is no doubt that we would have ended up with the same outcome. There is a fairly famous saying, which is also fairly true, and we see evidence of it from the state Labor government today, that absolute power corrupts absolutely. As I understand it, the mayor of the Ipswich City Council was one of the most popular mayors in Australia. That moniker gave him a fair bit of absolute power in the Ipswich city region, leading to the

situation where the CCC has supported the government in relation to the actions that it is taking here today. That brings a bad smell to all local governments, even those that should have no bad smell associated with them.

I feel sorry for those Ipswich city councillors who are absolutely clean in this matter. I am not sure who they are, because there are ongoing investigations and others have not been identified at this point in time. However, the reality is that there were some squeaky clean councillors in that council. One of the Ipswich councillors once sat in this House. I think we all had a high regard for ex-councillor Wayne Wendt. I know Wayne personally. I believe that good people have been affected by some bad people who have brought about this situation. I am aware that ex-councillor Tully was a councillor for many years and was well and truly associated with the Labor Party, as I recall. On the Gold Coast we had some issues with nightclubs and ex-councillor Tully, and I am stretching my memory back a fair way. Ex-councillor Tully is another person who will probably see the end of his career as a result of the legislation that is before us today. However, it is in the interests of local government to clear out the deadwood and, in this particular region, a lot of deadwood has been identified.

This announcement is a real shame for local government. There are 77 local governments in Queensland and a couple of them have been named. Whenever an inquiry is announced, people say, 'The Gold Coast city has to be corrupt. It has to be a sunny place for shady people, so we'll have an inquiry down there.' As I understand it, the CCC has announced that it is looking into matters at the Gold Coast City Council. That will be the third inquiry. I have been involved in a couple of inquiries as a witness. In my view, this will be another witch-hunt for the Gold Coast City Council. It is not just the Labor dominated Ipswich City Council that is rotten to the core; we will be looking for other areas to match it.

I know from my contacts at the Gold Coast City Council, and it amazes me, that at this point in time there has been little or no investigation or questioning of members. While the secret service of the CCC may well be listening in and doing all the things that they do, one would expect that also questions would be asked and interviews would be held to further the investigation. It has been a good six months at least, and possibly more, since the inquiry was first announced. There is nothing to be gained from pointing the figure at different local governments without getting on with the job of investigating and either clearing names or bringing prosecutions. We do not want mud hanging around local government, because it is a very important and valuable part of the governance of our communities. At the moment, there are all these shady curtains hanging over local government not only on the Gold Coast but also in the north.

If the CCC has something to prove, do or charge, I urge it to release that information. It has stated that it is conducting an investigation, so if there are matters that bring the council into disrepute then the CCC needs to make them public. We need to know why it is investigating the Gold Coast City Council, rather than being told, 'Yes, we're going to investigate the council because the Gold Coast has the moniker of a shady place,' which is a load of rubbish. The reality is that, as I go around my community, people are already saying, 'The council is corrupt,' but that may not be the case. In fact, I am sure it is not the case. I will hang my hat up here at this point in time, because I am sure it is not the case. If I am proved wrong, I would be happy to jump up in the House and say so. However, if any matters of corruption are found on the Gold Coast, I can tell the House that it would be absolute kindergarten stuff compared to what has gone on in the Labor dominated Ipswich City Council.

Unfortunately, as the member for Bundamba has correctly said, this matter should have been addressed a long time ago. Let us not forget that Ipswich had a Labor dominated council or all of the 'property developer donations' that came to the 'Labor Party' over those years. Why would we have investigated a Labor dominated council that was so successful in development? The Ipswich City Council had a wonderful thriving period of development while Jim was a councillor.

Mr Madden: I was on the Somerset council.

Mr STEVENS: I am sorry; it is just up the road. It is in the same area. I retract that and I apologise to the member who was with the Somerset council. The reality is that there were plenty of developer donations flowing into the Ipswich region. Unfortunately, because we did not want to ruin the little land bank of money that for many years we had out at Ipswich, we have reached a point where now there is a general slur over local government in Queensland. We will be supporting this legislation to address the concerns of the Ipswich community. However, I feel very sorry and ashamed for local government. I hope that we can remove this cancerous activity in the Ipswich City Council—and I hear that Jude Munro might be sent along to fix the problem, which would be a great move and I make that recommendation to the minister—so that local government can get back to doing what it does best.



Mr O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP) (12.29 pm): As part of the committee looking into this bill, I would like to thank my fellow members, including the member for Logan, the illustrious member for Mermaid Beach, who was the only mayor of the Albert shire—

Mr Stevens: First and last.

Mr O'CONNOR: He was the first, last and only and, therefore, best mayor of Albert shire. I thank the committee staff as well. Trudy has now left the Parliamentary Service. We thank her for her time with the committee.

This was certainly one of our more interesting inquiries, particularly because the rushed nature of the government's action meant that we had a shortened time frame and were looking into a bill that had not yet been introduced into this place. We have an extraordinary bill before us. It is not every day the parliament is asked to sack a local government. It is certainly not every day the parliament sits. It has been so long since we have been here that I had to remind myself what this place looks like. In fact, this has never happened through specific legislation.

This is not some small regional council either. We are talking about the sixth largest council in Queensland, with over 200,000 residents. The LNP will not be opposing this bill because it finally achieves an outcome we have been calling for for months. The real shame of all of this is that Labor has taken each and every one of those residents for granted. A number of these councillors are members of the Labor Party. Every state seat in this area is Labor, by a significant margin, as well as every federal seat.

We have seen some of the most extraordinary abuses of power coming out of the investigation into this council, with 15 people charged with over 85 offences including against two mayors. Today we have seen even further reports that former mayor Pisasale pressured a junior council employee to take the points for a speeding fine incurred by a local business person the former mayor had gone on a weekend getaway with.

The mismanagement of this Labor council is evident across the city. The main street and CBD have claimed too many local businesses. Tumbleweeds fly through the council owned Ipswich mall. The Riverlink Shopping Centre across the Bremer sucked the life out of that part of town over a decade ago. Many plans for the revitalisation have been revealed—always with great fanfare and never with follow-up. This is despite the council being the largest property owner, wasting tens of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money and doing everything possible to avoid accountability and transparency while they did it.

Residents in the older part of town feel neglected. They are sick of smelling rubbish from the council approved superdumps. They are seeing their rates used to not improve their areas, but instead go towards providing shiny new infrastructure for the big developments in the south of the city.

I have spoken in this chamber before of how proud I am to have grown up in Ipswich. On the wall in my office is a how-to-vote card featuring my great-grandfather when he ran for this council as an alderman in the late 1940s. Back then it was all about service to the community. The only discernible perk I can see from his time in council was to have some input into naming two streets in Raceview, which remain so to this day, after my great-grandmother—that is, Dulcie and Gwendoline streets. How things have changed.

It is unfortunate that Labor has taken so long to resolve this crisis. I think this will be the third attempt to resolve the governance woes for the people of Ipswich. We have seen two show-cause notices issued to the council—something which incurred significant legal fees for both the ratepayers of Ipswich and the taxpayers of Queensland. Lawyers have been one of the big winners from this situation, with over \$80,000 spent on legal fees by the council to fight a right to information request about an off-the-books private jet jaunt across the United States.

Back in May the minister added over 40 pages of amendments to the other local government legislation. It took the minister over a month, until 20 June, to use some of these powers and issue a fresh show-cause notice. Those amendments did not make it to our committee for us to properly assess them, which is a great shame. We should have been allowed to do our job and properly look over these extra powers. We even had the minister announce the suspension of four mayors and a councillor under the new laws without even checking if they had been given assent by the Governor.

We have to wonder why we are in this position. Why has it taken so long to sort this out? I think we are in this position not only due to the government's incompetence but also because it must be difficult for Labor to sack their mates. At their final meeting yesterday we had a councillor despair that, had the LNP been in government, they believe Labor would have been out there barracking for them.


From what I have seen, Labor has been barracking for them. How could they not have known about these systemic issues? The member for Bundamba has stood up for her city and has raised a number of these issues over the years. Surely, other members of the government had some idea.

Through our committee's inquiry several councillors raised the issue of compensation. The department has made it clear that there is no requirement to provide this and I do not think that would pass the pub test in Ipswich or anywhere else. The most staggering, although unsurprising, call for compensation came from councillor Paul Tully. His novel suggestion was that councillors should be paid two weeks for every year of continuous completed service to local government. This is from a bloke who has been in local government for nearly four decades. This is the definition of self-interest. His other option was that councillors be paid in full until March 2020. He wanted councillors to be paid well over \$100,000 a year to do nothing.

The money saved from not paying the wages of councillors will be appropriately redirected to properly fund an independent administrator. That independence is the most important part of ensuring Ipswich gets a proper clean-out. To make sure these systemic governance issues are resolved they need to have an administrator able to come in to restore proper, accountable governance.

This bill has a number of issues, including the very necessity for its introduction as there is an existing provision for the sacking of a council through the Local Government Act. We see in it breaches of just about every fundamental legislative principle. The bill abrogates the rights and liberties of the individual, disregards the presumption of innocence and excludes judicial review and appeal, contrary to the fundamental legislative principles and the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry.

Today is a difficult day for local government. I have some great councillors in my area—people who want to make it a better place. I work closely with them to get things done for our community. It is a great shame that a small number of elected members have unfortunately tainted the many hundreds of good, hardworking local councillors across Queensland. It is even more disappointing that this government has made such a shambles of the process to resolve these issues.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (12.36 pm): From the outset, I say that I too will not be opposing the bill. I would like to make a contribution and am most grateful the minister is here. The first reason I will not be opposing the bill is that the intent is correct. The minister is trying to solve a problem that is real and needs solving. The community needs certainty to be able to get on after a very chequered period. The other reason I will not be opposing it is that this is now the third iteration in one form or another to try to get certainty. To oppose this would only prolong the issues that I have already outlined. In bringing this legislation to this place I would have hoped that this was taken care of earlier, but we move on.

I will not be opposing the bill because there also is a crooked culture at this specific council that needs to be fixed. We heard contributions and barbs during question time today about it not being a Labor council. I am sorry, but I suggest that the Labor Party's DNA runs through this council. I suggest that the community feels very taken for granted by what it has seen. The community deserves a fresh start.

I want to make a contribution about local government as a whole. The member for Mermaid Beach spoke about his experience in local government and I will talk briefly about mine. We are seeing a handful of bad apples. The handful of bad apples may stretch across a few councils and if they do we must absolutely make sure that they feel the full weight of the law. I do not want to see what we have seen in this council and the allegations that have been levelled at other councils used as a stalking horse to remove power for local decision-makers. In this chamber on both sides are people who have served in local government. There are good people on both sides of this House who have served in local governments and made good contributions.

We must every day give the right for somebody to put their hand up and to serve under the terms that their community gives them. There are times that they will make honest mistakes. If they make honest mistakes, the electorate will judge them accordingly. If they are dishonest and the minister has suggestions for where legislation needs to be toughened to go after those handful of bad apples—we have previously seen legislation in this House that, for example, increased the penalties for those using inside information while on a council—the minister should bring those suggestions forward, but please do not use this to centralise control of councils and do not use this to usurp local decision-making.

As much as I believe the minister acts in good faith, faced with the choice of a decision for the Boulia Shire Council by Rick Britton or Stirling Hinchliffe, I will take Rick Britton, elected by the local community. Faced with the choice of a decision in the Cairns community by Councillor Manning or a local government minister, I will always take the mayor. Again, if the mayor makes the wrong decision,

that mayor should be accountable for his or her actions. If the mayor is one of those bad apples then legislation needs to be in place to ensure that that mayor is dealt with. That does not give the right of those in this place to remove the ability for local people to make decisions for their local community.

We are talking about councils in some parts of this state that only have several hundred constituents and we are talking about the largest council in the nation. Those councils are all here in this state, but we must give the ability for those local decision-makers to make decisions. If it requires tougher legislation to clamp down on those bad apples, fine, but, if it goes back to the bad old days of central control and command, the quality of people attracted to local government will not be there.

The member for Mermaid Beach shared his memory of the amalgamations of the Mulgrave and Albert and Moreton council. I will take members back to a period when I served in council when the amalgamations were far more savage, far more widespread and, indeed, were greeted with a far greater level of anger from the community—and that was in 2007. I was part of one of those councils that was amalgamated. I was someone who believed that my council should have been amalgamated because I thought there were some similarities. There were other councils where that should not have occurred.


Mr Power interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: The member's seat is over there, so I will not take the interjection. There will always be a case where local communities are passionate about their council and they want local representation. The level of anger that was felt during those forced amalgamations was simply because the communities rallied because they wanted local decision-making. The same anger will be felt if the trend of centralised decision-making in Brisbane over the regions is fulfilled. I ask the minister to give serious consideration, as I do, to the amendment put forward by my friend the shadow minister. It is a good amendment, and it is that the names of those appointed to the advisory committee be published in the *Government Gazette*.

For the people of Ipswich to have faith not just in the interim administrator, not just in the person who might act in that capacity but, indeed, in the advisory board, those names must be published because those names deserve to be scrutinised. Those people must be people who are of the highest integrity, not carrying political baggage. They must be people who understand what good government is. They must understand local government. They must understand community, because the interim administrator, when he or she is appointed, becomes the council. They become the mayor and the councillors. They usurp the authority of a lot of elected officials. They go into that role not having to be accountable to the community but, indeed, having to be accountable to the minister.

Quite rightly, the minister will gazette that person's name. That person will also take advice and guidance from that advisory committee, so it is fair and reasonable that those names are put forward. It is fair and reasonable that those people form a role as a good council would to that mayor, where the mayor is the first amongst equals, where the mayor has a large say in the direction of the city but where those councillors are able to assist the mayor in all sorts of things like preparations of budgets. That advisory committee has to act in that capacity with the interim administrator.

I come back to where I started, and that is to say that we will not be opposing the bill. It is the third crack we get at this. The people of Ipswich do deserve certainty. This council is one that has quite rightly come under the microscope. It is one that has let down its political branding, and that political branding is the Labor Party whether those opposite like it or not. In getting this bill through, in cleaning up the mess of previous legislative attempts in this place, in cleaning up the mess of a council that has not acted according to the wishes of its electorate, I do not seek to have the system of governance in this state trashed and the roles of the other representatives of councils who are not found to be doing the wrong thing consigned to the dustbin of a centralised governing system of history.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (12.46 pm): I rise to speak to the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill and give my support to this bill. The matters that have given rise to this bill are extraordinarily serious and have had the effect of greatly undermining public confidence in the Ipswich City Council. The CCC's investigation has led to 15 people being charged with 86 criminal offences, and seven of the 15 people charged have been either current or former council staff members or councillors.

I commend the Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, and the Minister for Local Government, Stirling Hinchliffe, for making the decision to introduce this bill proposing to dissolve the Ipswich City Council and appoint an interim administrator. I thank the Economic and Governance Committee for its thorough and thoughtful consideration of the draft bill. It was not a decision that was made lightly, as we heard earlier; it is not about punishing individuals, it is about addressing a systemic failure.

The bill's objective is to restore community confidence in local government after the turmoil Ipswich has endured over the last several months with revelations made public by the CCC investigation. I believe that it is the right decision to take so that stability, certainty and good governance can be restored for the benefit of our economy, Ipswich ratepayers and business owners. The interim administrator will have the responsibilities and powers of the council and the mayor, and they will be assisted by the advisory panel. The interim administrator will have the responsibility of resolving concerns relating to the Ipswich City Council, as well as providing certainty and good governance to the Ipswich community.

Over the past several months, I have been approached by Ipswich ratepayers and business owners who have told me that they have lost faith, trust and confidence in the Ipswich City Council. Ipswich cannot keep going like it is with the ongoing state of crisis it constantly finds itself in, lurching from one scandal to the next. The general mood in Ipswich is one of confusion, frustration and sometimes anger. The volatility and turmoil has caused a great deal of divisiveness in the community and the debate has been emotionally charged. I want to acknowledge that there are some familiar faces from the Ipswich community here in the gallery watching, which is an indication of the importance of this bill.

Failures of governance in the Ipswich City Council have caused the Ipswich CBD redevelopment to virtually come to a standstill, and the uncertainty of when this project will be finished has negatively impacted local CBD businesses resulting in some of those businesses being forced to close. It would be an injustice to the Ipswich people to keep delaying a decision on dismissing the council or for the council to delay dismissal by going to the Supreme Court. It would also be an injustice to the people of Ipswich to not address the multitude of governance shortcomings uncovered by the CCC.

The recently released CCC report found that the Ipswich City Council had a firmly embedded culture riddled with corruption risks resulting from a number of factors—namely, a lack of oversight and accountability for expenditure on public resources; the use of mechanisms such as private email accounts to avoid scrutiny of actions and requests for information under the Right to Information Act 2009; inappropriate relationships between the council and the private sector, in particular, property developers and contractors; and improper use of power and influence for personal benefit.


I support this bill and the dissolution of the Ipswich City Council because, in the words of Alan MacSporran QC at the public hearing held by the Economics and Governance Committee in Ipswich, 'there has been a collapse of public confidence in that council' and 'they stand or fall, as they must, under the Local Government Act and the Constitution of Queensland as the body, the entity, collectively responsible for the good governance of that community'.

The Ipswich local government area, as I say frequently in this House, has been identified as the fastest growing in Queensland. The Ipswich community wants to be confident that their councillors and mayor will serve in the community's best interests, not their own self-interest. A root-and-branch review of the entire council is necessary in this respect and is firmly in the public interest. Our elected local councillors are collectively accountable to the Ipswich community for ensuring good governance, and that includes upholding transparent and effective processes, making decisions that are in the public interest, the appropriate management of assets and infrastructure, the effective delivery of services, and abiding by principles of ethical and legal behaviour. They are also collectively accountable for calling out unethical and illegal behaviour when they see it.

On 3 May this year the Minister for Local Government asked the Ipswich City Council to show cause as to why they should not be dismissed. From that moment I have been contacted by a number of people—members of the community, business owners and also council staff. I was surprised and saddened to learn from these staff members that not only had a culture of questionable ethical behaviour developed in council but also bullying by one or two of the longer serving councillors, and a distinct culture of fear pervaded as a result. This is unacceptable. I want to reassure council staff that those days are behind them and that their work is appreciated and supported by this government. I want to make very clear that these bullying allegations were directed at only one or two councillors.

I want to extend my sympathy and empathy to some of the councillors. As I said earlier, this is not about punishing individuals even though it may feel that way. It is about righting a systemic wrong. I believe that the people of Ipswich are fighters and will bounce back from this upheaval. However, it is not fair to keep the City of Ipswich in a prolonged state of crisis. We cannot drag this out any longer. The people of Ipswich want a council that they can trust and one that is untarnished by the stain of corruption.

If this bill is passed, the Ipswich City Council will be dissolved and an interim administrator will be appointed until the next quadrennial elections held in 2020, as we have heard from the minister. I commend the minister for introducing legislation that will provide certainty to the Ipswich community. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.54 pm): I too rise to address the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. As many others have already said and as I suspect many will continue to say during this debate, today is a very challenging day. This is a very challenging piece of legislation for this House to be considering. It is one that none of us should be taking lightly. It is one that all of us should be thinking through the ramifications of and making sure that we put sufficient boundaries around it so that it is not done *carte blanche* to a whole range of other local government authorities around the state.

I believe there are significant boundaries in place in the legislation to ensure that, but sacking an entire council is a significant step. We must remember that there are over 500 mayors and councillors around this state. There are 77 local government authorities. The vast majority—more than 99 per cent of them—have not had any issue of complaint or any allegation of corruption or misconduct raised against them. We applaud them for the work they do. Many of them are at the coalface of political interaction with the communities. They are the people dealing with potholes out the front of people's houses. They make sure that the rubbish gets collected. They make sure our kids have libraries to go to and parks to play in. They provide an extraordinary service to our state and should be commended for it. However, like all industries and all professions, there are a number who do the wrong thing. When that number is significantly large in one particular organisation—the Ipswich City Council—steps like this that we are discussing today need to be taken.

I want to reflect on the contribution of the previous speaker who used words like 'festering' and 'systemic issues'. Something does not fester unless it is allowed to remain in a state for a long period of time. Something does not become systemic unless it has had an opportunity over many, many years to ripple all the way through an organisation. The question then is why have successive Labor governments allowed what is occurring in Ipswich City Council to have occurred? Clearly, the Labor Party has been protecting Labor's own. Even when one of its own raised significant concerns about what was going on in the Ipswich council—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr POWELL: I take the interjection from the member for Burnett. One has to question whether all along there has been a cover-up. I feel for every single ratepayer of the City of Ipswich. They do not deserve what is occurring now. They need certainty. They need clarification so they can move forward, get projects going and have their rates spent appropriately, consistently and responsibly. We need to take this step, but it should never have come to this.

Even when issues were raised, it has taken three attempts to get this right. The Labor government announced the suspension of four mayors and a councillor under new laws that were not in place at the time. They then issued two failed show-cause notices to the Ipswich City Council that have cost ratepayers and Queensland taxpayers significantly. Now we are curtailing the Supreme Court so that we can fix this mess—a mess that should have been fixed when we passed legislation back in May.

I briefly want to touch on the amendments to be moved by the shadow minister. Firstly, let us not forget what I have just said. This is Labor's mess. We are cleaning up a situation in a Labor run council and so the amendment to change the long title is extremely appropriate in this instance. The second one of having the interim advisory committee members gazetted is equally important. It is one thing to know who the interim administrator is, but it is also fundamentally important for the public's benefit to know who the advisory committee is. Let us face it: the administrator and the advisory committee have one of the most important jobs to do in the state of Queensland at the moment, and that is to restore the faith of the people of Ipswich in their elected officials and in their council offices.

That is going to take significant effort. It is going to take a significant community engagement approach to regain that confidence that the ratepayers of Ipswich want and rightly should be able to place in their council, in their councillors and, ultimately, in their mayor. For the benefit of the Ipswich City Council and for the broader state, it would be good to know who the advisory committee members are. They have a significant task—a very important task—ahead of them. It is one that I think both sides of politics happily wish them all the best in. We want to see the matters rectified in Ipswich. Come the 2020 elections for local government, we want a council and a mayor elected who all of Ipswich can rejoice in and who know they have certainty and support for that coming four-year term.

I finish by noting that we should not be getting to this point in future. We have legislation in this state that has successfully allowed state governments to remove councils in the past with review by the Supreme Court if necessary. When warnings such as those given by the member for Bundamba are made, they must be taken seriously, they must be acted on and we should not have to get to this point ever again.

Debate, on motion of Mr Powell, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



Mrs FRECKLINGTON (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): I rise today as Queensland's debt soars towards \$83 billion and say that I believe that politicians should be careful with public money. We must never forget that each and every dollar the government spends comes from taxpayers: mums and dads, people who live in Queensland. Every dollar that is frittered away is a dollar that does not go into our schools, our hospitals, our roads, our police or drought relief.

The words that came out of the Premier's mouth this morning were, 'I am angry it came out of my budget.' When she was talking about the wasteful spending at the Sheraton Mirage during the Commonwealth Games for herself, her 12 staffers and a couple of other ministers, which equated to just over \$81,000, the Premier's comment was, 'I am angry it came out of my budget.' Whose budget did the Premier think it would come out of? It is the taxpayers of Queensland whose money she frittered away and spent—and for what? Did the Premier even stay in that accommodation for \$700-odd per night each and every night? When the Premier was in Bundaberg, for example, with Prince Charles enjoying a splash of Bundy rum, did the Premier stay in that accommodation down the Gold Coast that cost Queenslanders over \$700 a night? I think not.

Between them, the Premier and the games minister racked up a luxury hotel bill of just over \$20,000—that was just for them personally. How many Queenslanders could afford to spend \$20,000 on two weeks accommodation—just on their hotel bill—not even starting to talk about their expenses or having to buy their own go card? Other Queenslanders needs to put that on the bill. Most people would only dream of staying at the Sheraton for two weeks, but for the Labor ministers and the Labor Premier it is simply another perk.

I note the Police Commissioner has defended using the accommodation for security reasons. However, police orders do not explain the remaining \$60,000 bill that other ministers and staff incurred. On top of the accommodation—just the Premier's accommodation, which was over \$10,000, and the games minister's accommodation, which was over \$10,000—the Premier of this state also claimed \$1,400 in expenses and allowances, and I have already touched on the go card or the rail fare for \$8. It beggars belief that this Premier is that out of touch and that arrogant that she allows this to go through and uses the excuse that it was 'for security reasons'. When the Premier does not believe that her expenses should be in question it is a real concern. It is a concern when this sort of money simply escapes her attention as waste.

Mr Hunt: She's out of touch.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection from the member for Nicklin. The Premier is out of touch because what Queenslanders can afford to spend over \$20,000 on two weeks accommodation? This is the state that has racked up \$83 billion in debt because of incompetent successive Labor governments. It is no wonder the Premier is so flippant with taxpayers' money.

Labor's spending spree is sickening to the Gold Coast businesses whose Easter takings were wiped out by the Palaszczuk government's 'stay away from the coast' campaign. That was a smart one! Not only did the Premier have to take her two chauffeurs to the Gold Coast to make sure that when she was staying in her luxury accommodation she could be driven from the car park to the corner store—she had two chauffeurs to do it for her—or the train, she and her government also told everyone to stay off the M1, because her two chauffeurs wanted to drive flat out when they went out. That is right, she was catching the train; she did not need two chauffeurs. Never mind the fact she lives only 60 minutes from the Gold Coast. They had the 'stay away' campaign and the 'stay off the M1' campaign. Currently four restaurants and cafes are failing every week on the Gold Coast, although I note that the Sheraton Mirage certainly has not been affected by that downturn during those two weeks.

It is not only the Gold Coast that is struggling. It is unfortunate that the Labor government is so out of touch that it only worked out or remembered after relentless pushing from those on this side of the House and by the media that there is a drought in Queensland. The drought has been going on in some places for close to seven years and, in other places, around five years. We have seen tragic fires and bushfires over the last couple of weeks that have taken out any feed that some of these places had left. It is incredible to think that the Palaszczuk government only just jumped on this. What did they do? They donated \$100,000 of taxpayers' money towards a drought fund, remembering that is only \$20,000 more than what the Premier spent on her two-week Gold Coast experience. How do they think a struggling farmer feels about that one? It is an absolute shame.

Mr Mander: They've all gone silent now.


Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, they have their heads down because they know that they have missed the point on this one. It is waste, it is arrogance and it is cover-up and secrecy by this government.

Those out west and across regional Queensland have shown incredible resilience, but they are desperate for help. I welcome the announcements made by the federal government in recent weeks. I have been touched by the generosity that Queenslanders everywhere have shown towards the Queensland Drought Appeal. The people of our cities stand behind our farmers and I thank them for it. It is a shame that the Palaszczuk government sowed the seeds of division when it passed its antifarmer laws earlier this year. It is these laws that are hurting our farmers who are simply trying to use the scrub that regrows when it is cut down—some people call it a weed; it is called a mulga, a woody weed—to feed their droughted stock.

Unfortunately, the Premier and her side are completely out of touch. The great divide that has been created by those opposite between Brisbane and the rest of Queensland is growing year on year. One need only look at the slashing of maternity centres in regional Queensland under successive Labor governments. Rural members know that the guts have been ripped out of maternity services in the bush over the last 20 years. Labor has closed 26 maternity services in communities since 2000, but it was the LNP that worked to reopen them. We also worked to ensure that we have rural generalist surgeons in hospitals such as Kingaroy, where we placed two rural generalist surgeons so that mums could be protected while they were having their babies. We put in place the maternity rejuvenation project, which was straightaway cut by the Palaszczuk government as soon as they got in, leaving mums and bubs in danger when mums wanted to have their babies in regional areas. It is only the LNP—

(Time expired)

Infrastructure

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.11 pm): Today I want to talk about the infrastructure rollout that is happening in Queensland delivering jobs and economic confidence for Queensland businesses. The latest state budget outlined a four-year total of \$45.8 billion in infrastructure, which is an increase of \$3 billion from last year. I want to congratulate the Minister for State Development on his great work in guiding our infrastructure rollout through initiatives such as the State Infrastructure Plan, the SIP, which outlines Queensland infrastructure priorities to support economic growth and jobs. Through the SIP we are ensuring the right infrastructure is delivered at the right time and in the right place for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

The SIP has two parts: part A is the strategy and part B is the program. The 2018 update to part B shows how we will deliver certainty for jobs and businesses over the next four years. The update outlines the Queensland government's \$11.6 billion infrastructure investment in 2018-19, which will support up to 38,000 jobs. The SIP is tied closely to the work of Building Queensland, which is the independent authority that provides independent expert advice to Queensland government agencies on infrastructure. The SIP part B update incorporates Building Queensland's seven new priority proposals, with the Queensland government committing funds for a further nine projects. These include upgrades to the Gold Coast Light Rail and Centenary Motorway along with the Gold Coast Light Rail extension to Burleigh Heads.

Supporting the State Infrastructure Plan and Building Queensland is the \$2.2 billion State Infrastructure Fund. Allocations under this fund include: the delivery of Cross River Rail; upgrading the Pacific Motorway between Mudgeeraba and Varsity Lakes; and future-proofing the Bruce Highway. One part of the fund is the Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program, which is \$30 million to enable projects to be matured from ideas into solid proposals. This fund has also contributed to the \$600 million Works for Queensland program. Under this program we have delivered 1,350 vital infrastructure

projects led by regional councils, and I can tell members that local governments love the Works for Queensland program. It supports local governments to undertake job-creating maintenance and minor infrastructure projects.

Across the first two rounds of Works for Queensland councils estimate that the works will support, sustain or create more than 12,000 jobs in Queensland. It gets even better, because this fund has also allocated funds to the \$180 million Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects Program. This program delivers essential infrastructure in key regional centres, provides economic opportunities and supports 600 jobs. The infrastructure rollout keeps coming under the Palaszczuk government. Our government is also delivering the Building Better Hospitals program, which will inject \$679 million into hospitals. It includes upgrades at Logan, Caboolture and Ipswich along with regional hospitals in Atherton, Blackall and Cairns.

Other infrastructure is also being rolled out; for example, Economic Development Queensland undertook \$54.7 million in capital works. They are also preparing for the delivery of the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct and Griffith University's Advanced Design and Prototype Technologies Institute within the precinct. The list goes on, and I would certainly encourage the opposition to listen carefully because this is happening in their areas as well. I would also remind them that EDQ is also driving the further development of Queensland's largest waterfront urban renewal project at Northshore Hamilton and completed significant road and civil works at the Yeerongpilly Green development.

To those Queensland businesses and jobs that rely on the rollout of infrastructure, I tell them that the scope of work coming up in Queensland is enormous. We have the population growth to drive economic growth. Queensland's population passed five million in May and is on target to grow to more than seven million by 2040, but we are not simply relying on population growth to deliver jobs. We are a government with the foresight, determination and plans to build the infrastructure and economic growth we need. We have a government that is delivering infrastructure work and construction, and this all delivers confidence in Queensland. That is something that the LNP could never do in their last term in government. They undermined confidence in the Queensland economy. Confidence is crucial to our economy and the 2.2 million Queensland jobs that are—

(Time expired)

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Everton, I would like to acknowledge the students from Toowoomba North State School who have joined us in the gallery today from the electorate of Toowoomba North.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



Mr MANDER (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.16 pm): This government has now been elected for its second term. We are now eight months into that second term, with the Treasury being under the control of the Deputy Premier and member for South Brisbane. This morning we heard the Deputy Premier wax lyrical once again about the state of the economy according to her, but Jackie Trad has more spin than Nathan Lyon. Let us look at some of the economic credentials of this particular government, which really are an embarrassment when we consider where Queensland should be at the moment.

The current unemployment rate in this state is 6.1 per cent. For 39 of the 41 months that this government has been in power, the unemployment rate has not dipped below six per cent, which is the second worst in the nation. Even the powerhouse economy of Tasmania has a better unemployment rate than Queensland, and this flies in the face of the Premier's objective. The Premier has constantly stated that she wants the unemployment rate in Queensland to begin with a five, and that is what we want as well. We want the unemployment rate down, and the policies of this state government show that we are entrenched with an unemployment rate of six per cent. It does not look like it will go below that.

The opposition leader spoke about the \$83 billion worth of debt that we are heading towards. Is it any wonder when we have a look at some of the figures that relate to the Queensland state Public Service? Since June 2015, private sector wage growth has averaged about 1.87 per cent.

An opposition member: What about the public sector?

Mr MANDER: I am glad the member asked that question. Public sector wage growth has averaged an increase of 2.48 per cent. That is 42.6 per cent greater than what is happening in the private sector.

Mr Dick: You do not want workers in the private sector; you want wage suppression. That is what you want: you want wage suppression.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Woodridge. What it says is that this government knows how to spend money. This government knows how to waste money. This is why we have \$83 billion worth of debt. Let us look at the numbers. The Public Service has grown by 26,401 full-time-equivalent employees under this government and the Public Service bill is now \$27.36 billion. That is over \$1 billion more than last year in recurring expenditure.

Let's go back even further. Public Service expenses in 2015-16—the first Labor budget—were \$23.29 billion. In less than four years, the recurring extra expenditure is over \$4 billion—a growth of 17½ per cent. We wonder why we are heading towards \$83 billion worth of debt! Those opposite are totally incompetent when it comes to economic management. They prove it time and time again. It is not only us who say that.

The Treasurer herself has overseen, in her short period of time as minister, 4,300 extra public servants. When we invest more money in public servants, Queensland taxpayers expect better results. They are not getting the results they deserve. When we look at indicators in health, education and so on we see that things have become worse.


Mr McArdle interjected.

Mr MANDER: That is exactly right. I take the interjection from the member for Caloundra: their leadership is wanting in this area. We are fifth in CommSec's State of the States ratings, just ahead of the Northern Territory. The CCIQ says that this government has the lowest level of confidence on the part of small business because of the amount of red tape and the influence the unions have in decision-making. The CCIQ and small businesses see that, and that worries the heck out of them.

The member for Bancroft said earlier that to be successful and to have a growing economy you must have confidence. There is very little confidence on the part of stakeholders with regard to the management of the economy by those on the other side of the House.

(Time expired)

Redland Hospital, Palliative Care

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.21 pm): It saddens me to report that a member of this House, the member for Oodgeroo, preyed on the terminally ill, the sick and the elderly by running—

Dr ROBINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr BROWN: I withdraw. What we saw on 10 August was a fear campaign run by the member for Oodgeroo that the Redland Hospital's palliative care beds were going to be cut. Where did he get this information?

Mr Mander: A scare campaign about health!

Mr Powell: 'Mediscare', Caboolture Hospital.

Mr BROWN: I will not take the interjections. All the member needed to do was look at a question asked by the member for Mudgeeraba at the estimates hearing the previous week. She asked about palliative care funding and the minister clearly said that there was an increase, to \$3.56 million from \$3.2 million, to Redlands residents. That was in answer to an opposition member's question in the estimates hearing the week before.

So rushed to run a scare campaign was the member for Oodgeroo that he put up a Facebook video, the subtitles to which called on the Palestine government to reverse the cuts. He did not even read the subtitles before he rushed out this video. I hope the Palestine government reverses the cuts, because I reckon that would be a sight to see.

Dr ROBINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is extreme that the member finds palliative care of the terminally ill such a joke.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Member for Oodgeroo, what is your point of order? None? Sit down.

Mr BROWN: It is not a joke. You preyed on the fears—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, please.

Mr BROWN:—of the terminally ill and the elderly in our community—preying on them, with no facts whatsoever, by saying that there would be cuts. The minister came straight out that day and said, ‘Guess what? We are increasing funding. Guess what? We are not cutting beds.’

Dr Robinson: He did not say that at all.

Mr BROWN: He said exactly that. He said that there were no beds being cut from Redland Hospital. He said that the same day.

Dr Robinson interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Oodgeroo, you have been having a pretty good go. Your interjections are not being taken.

Dr Robinson: I am being provoked, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, I will counsel you to not debate with the chair in my deliberations about conducting this parliament. You will not reflect on the chair. Take that warning.

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There is a long-held tradition, from previous rulings of Speakers, that if an individual is being personally provoked by the member on his feet then that individual is entitled to respond. From listening to what the member for Capalaba is saying, my understanding is that he is specifically targeting the member for Oodgeroo and therefore the member for Oodgeroo is entitled to respond.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Order! I call the member for Capalaba.

Mr BROWN: Six hours later the Minister for Health came out and rejected it completely. The five beds were staying and there was an increase to funding. What did the member for Oodgeroo do the next day? He released another video claiming victory. It was the quickest campaign ever. There was no petition, there were no emails to the minister and there was no political pressure whatsoever, but he claimed victory. Do members know why he was able to claim victory? It is because there were never any cuts in the first place.

It is absolutely sickening to prey on the terminally ill and the elderly and their families in the Redlands community in their time of need, but it is a trend down there. A couple of days later we saw the federal member for Bowman, Andrew Laming, start up a page called ‘Redland Hospital: Let’s fight for fair funding’. What do members reckon the first post was?

Mr Dick: Him pushing a kid over?

Mr BROWN: I take the interjection. He is fighting to put kids into hospital by pushing them over in fun runs. He put a profile picture of himself. That is how he fights for fair funding at Redland Hospital. I table that document.


Tabled paper: Extract, undated, from the Facebook page of Redland Hospital, titled ‘Let’s Fight for Fair Funding’ [\[1150\]](#).

We know that the member for Bowman, Andrew Laming, is facing a tough preselection fight. I know that the member for Nanango gets a vote in that preselection. I implore the member for Nanango to go to Bowman on 6 September to vote for Mr Laming as the candidate because we in Bowman want the chance to vote this guy out. He has had 14 years to fight for fair funding and has not done so for Redland Hospital.

Let us look at what the federal government has done for Redland Hospital. It still owes \$134 million in the 2016-17 budget for Metro South, the hospital and health service area of Redland Hospital. It has cut bulk-billing. It has cut Medicare rebates, which has caused bulk-billing rates to be far lower in our local community.

Labor is doing something about this. We have just preselected the candidate for Bowman, a respected, long-term former GP in Tom Baster, who has already taken up the fight for fair funding. That is what we in Labor do. We fight for funding. He will support the Labor Party’s policies to not only stop the cuts of the Turnbull government but also increase funding by \$2.8 billion. I cannot wait for the opportunity to vote in Bowman, and I implore the member for Nanango to vote for Andrew Laming for Bowman because we want the opportunity to vote him out at the next federal election.

Rural and Regional Queensland, Maternity Services

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.28 pm): I rise to speak about the birthing service crisis that is gripping our regional and rural communities and putting mothers and babies at risk. Queenslanders deserve a world-class public health system no matter where they live. Newborn babies are dying at a higher rate in Queensland country towns due to there being no maternity services. Some 23.3 babies

in every thousand are dying in towns where no birthing services are available, compared to 6.1 babies per thousand in rural areas with obstetrics. This equates to a death rate in newborns that is almost four times higher in towns where there are no birthing services.

Queensland has the highest rate of freebirthing, which is a birth without a registered midwife, in the nation. More than one child every day is born before arriving at hospital, often at the side of the road. This problem has been escalating since 1995. This is a problem wholly and solely created by Labor. Under Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk and 26 years of consecutive Labor governments, 36 maternity services have closed. Labor has been slashing these services at a rate of three per year—from Mossman to Texas and Quilpie to Nambour, with Theodore recently added and Chinchilla and Emerald set to join the list.

Earlier this year it was revealed that the Chinchilla Hospital has been on maternity bypass since December 2017. Over eight months later there is still no firm time frame for when these important services will be restored. We have seen the impact on patient care already with the harrowing story of an emergency caesarean birth earlier this year. The Theodore Hospital in the Callide electorate, as we know, has had a reduction in regular maternity services as well. Despite the fact that the Central Queensland town raised money to rebuild its own hospital maternity ward, ruined in the 2010 floods, local residents have been told full birthing services will not return. The hospital had maternity services up until the floods and since then has only been able to cater for emergency deliveries.

These are two examples of a major reduction in front-line services under Anastacia Palaszczuk and Labor. Rural and regional towns are being treated like second-class citizens. These closures are forcing desperate mums to either deliver their babies at home with no medical support or to risk a roadside birth by driving hundreds of kilometres to the nearest hospital. When asked in the recent budget estimates hearing, the government downplayed the Chinchilla Hospital maternity closure as referring residents to Dalby as being in relative close proximity. The distance is almost 85 kilometres—further than the distance from the Gold Coast to Brisbane. I put this to the minister: would he find this an acceptable situation if it were his wife and his child? I doubt it. Why are families in rural and regional towns being forced to do what many city families would deem unthinkable?

As a mum and as a nurse and as a person who was raised in a regional town and born in a bush nursing hospital, I am appalled by the choices this government has forced hundreds of regional and rural families to make. Sadly, regional Queenslanders have become accustomed to the reduction in important services—whether it is banks, family owned and operated small businesses or local hospital services—and it is not good enough. ‘Dr Doolittle’ thinks he will solve this problem with a summit. That is code for a no-action talkfest. It is time for Anastacia Palaszczuk and Minister Steven Miles to stop playing politics and start putting patients first. Regional mums and bubs need a solution to this crisis now. Every minute is critical and crucial when the life of a baby is at risk.

While in power the LNP tried to address this mess. We began reinstating birthing services in Beaudesert and Cooktown. Regional women also benefited from our 40 per cent increase in the flying hours of the Flying Obstetric and Gynaecology Service. Thankfully, now the federal government is doing the heavy lifting with increased support for additional rural doctors and more funding for the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Overall, when the LNP was in government we improved front-line health services across the whole state. The LNP made record investments in Queensland Health that led to improvements in emergency departments, with 87 per cent of children seen within the clinically recommended four hours compared with just 81 per cent at the change of government. Ambulance ramping significantly reduced by over 20 per cent under the LNP and we cleared Labor’s long wait public dental patients, who had been left on waiting lists for more than two years. At the change of government, Labor had left 61,405 dental patients waiting for more than two years. By mid-2014, this figure was reduced to zero. The LNP believes strongly that every Queenslanders, no matter where they live, deserves a world-class public health system—no matter where they live. This government has demonstrated that it does not care.

Keppel Electorate, Tourism



Mrs LAUGA (Keppel—ALP) (2.32 pm): Tourism is a cornerstone of the Central Queensland economy and the southern Great Barrier Reef region. The Palaszczuk government is building on our success with a record \$180 million funding scheme to position Queensland as Australia’s leading tourist destination. In fact, we are investing more in tourism than any other government in Queensland’s history. Tourism in the southern Great Barrier Reef region is going from strength to strength. We are seeing increases in domestic and international tourists visiting our region. For the southern Great Barrier Reef region, tourism is worth a whopping \$1.2 billion to the local economy and supports around

12,400 jobs. This is a 6.4 per cent growth in the number of people employed in this sector according to the latest research from Tourism Research Australia. In fact, in the year ending March 2018, two million domestic tourists visited the region spending \$1.1 billion.

The southern Great Barrier Reef destination has seen the strongest growth in visitation across the state, with 10.2 per cent growth in visitors this year. In the Central Queensland region the Queensland Labor government has been a driving force in developing tourism infrastructure and our investment is starting to pay dividends—investments such as the \$1 million upgrade at Mount Archer, \$16 million of new playground and water feature equipment at Kershaw Gardens, the \$53 million upgrade to the world-class Yeppoon foreshore and lagoon, the \$6.3 million upgrade to the Emu Park foreshore and Centenary of Anzac precinct and \$810,000 in upgrades to the lookout at Wreck Point. These investments are all drawing more and more visitors to this beautiful region.

The time is right for the government, working with industry, to push into new tourism markets and invest in innovative tourism experiences to increase our market share and grow our \$25 billion tourism industry, but we must provide a high level of tourism infrastructure to underpin the industry. The government's record \$180 million tourism spend includes \$48.6 million for the Attracting Tourism Fund, the \$36 million Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund, the \$10 million Outback Tourism Infrastructure Fund and, importantly, \$25 million to deliver power and water infrastructure to the jewel in the crown of the southern Great Barrier Reef destination region, Great Keppel Island.


Our \$36 million Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund, which is now open for applications, is designed to create new jobs and drive more visitors to regional Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is also investing \$25 million to rejuvenate Great Barrier Reef island resorts, with applications for this fund also now open. The Great Barrier Reef has an important role in the growth of tourism in Keppel and securing our region as a leading tourist destination. The Great Barrier Reef contributes \$6 billion to the Queensland economy and supports more than 60,000 jobs. It is without a doubt Queensland's greatest asset. However, the reef is more than just about our economy; it is an iconic part of Queensland and something we must protect for our future generations—something I hope my daughter, Odette, will cherish when she is older.

That is why we committed \$25 million during the state election campaign to revamp these island resorts. Island resorts are an iconic part of the tourism offering and are essential to attracting new and return visitors to the reef. The Great Barrier Reef Island Resorts Rejuvenation Fund has a focus on greening, growing and cleaning the GBR island resorts with one main aim—to encourage protection of the reef and its islands. This funding is in addition to the \$25 million commitment we made at the 2017 election to deliver power and water infrastructure to Great Keppel Island. Tourism operators, residents and future tourism development projects will benefit from improved access to infrastructure that will create jobs and provide a catalyst for tourism and economic development across the region. Providing affordable and reliable power and water will support existing tourist operators to become more sustainable and grow while also supporting new and expanded tourism ventures on the island.

Last week I was proud to reveal that the planned demolition of the decommissioned Great Keppel Island resort is now complete, paving the way for future development. This is a major milestone for this project. Now that demolition is out of the way, we can get on with the job. We are committed to partnering with the private sector to deliver new tourism experiences on Great Keppel Island and we are delivering on our commitment by putting a \$25 million Great Keppel Island infrastructure investment on the table, together with the opportunity for a slice of the \$36 million Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

The LNP had no long-term plan to grow tourism when it was in government. At a time of unprecedented growth of the Asian middle class, those opposite took their eye off tourism and conceded market share to the southern states. They ripped \$188 million from the tourism budget. I am proud to be part of a government that is making a record \$180 million investment in tourism to create jobs in this sector in the long term. This investment is a game changer for Queensland's tourism industry, for Keppel and for the southern Great Barrier Reef.

Drought; Training

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.37 pm): I rise to draw the attention of the House to another aspect of the drought crisis in Queensland. As has appropriately been spoken about in this state and by my colleagues, we are deeply concerned for the farming families of the vast areas of this state that are suffering from drought. They in turn depend upon their local towns—their communities, the small businesses in those towns—to be their lifeblood and to be their continued source of services.

I ask people to remember that when they are reaching out to donate to the very worthy causes of our brothers and sisters throughout drought-affected Queensland they consider giving cash to some of those schemes that are seeking to support those farming families because through those donations, particularly through programs such as the Western Queensland Drought Appeal, there is the opportunity to also support those small businesses in those local towns that in turn continue to provide the services and employment for those communities. We should not forget that those small businesses are also hit by this terrible drought that our farming families are at the front line of. I ask people to donate big and to also donate cash through these very worthy organisations. There are a number, but I give a shout-out to the Western Queensland Drought Appeal.

I wish to talk about the training priorities in Queensland. This Palaszczuk Labor government is focused on wining and dining TAFE officials and is taking its eye off this most important issue of training. Since 2014, under this state Labor government, we have seen a 42 per cent drop in completion rates at TAFE and other government providers. Compared to the number of completions under the LNP government, 16,375 fewer Queenslanders per year are completing government funded training programs.

Whilst student completion rates fall, the expenses account of TAFE Queensland continues to rise. Over the past three years, TAFE's hospitality expenses has doubled to more than \$83,000. Worse still, TAFE Queensland plans to spend more than \$680,000 for officials to travel to Asia, Europe, South America and Africa in the coming 2018-19 financial year. That is on top of nearly \$30,000 TAFE spent to send the TAFE chair and former CEO to London for the Queen's baton relay. That is completely outrageous. Labor's priorities are all wrong. That is hurting young Queenslanders who are missing out on the training they need. Nearly a quarter of a million dollars was spent by TAFE on Commonwealth Games tickets. This government misses completely the right priorities for Queensland. The large increases in both travel and hospitality spending has left people wondering whether improving training is a priority for this Labor government. When we see where the government is spending its money, clearly, it is not.

The government and its training minister, Shannon Fentiman, have the wrong priorities. They have taken their eye off the ball. They should be focused on upskilling Queenslanders, not on overseas jaunts and junkets. They should also be focused on transparency. This training minister is collecting big bucks as a minister of the Crown. It took her nearly six months to put in place the right to information process in her department and her office. How completely hopeless! What a shipwreck of a minister. They do not even understand that basic level of accountability. Accountability matters, particularly when young people are failing to get the training completions they should achieve. The wining and dining and largess of this government is spilling over into TAFE. They have taken their eye off the ball.

The LNP wants the next great chapter of our state built by Queenslanders for Queenslanders. That is why we are calling for immediate action to fix Labor's training priorities. It should be focused on upskilling Queenslanders, not going on overseas jaunts. The hospitality budget of this big-splurging government is out of control. This government has completely taken its eye away from what matters to people. It is wasting money in areas that are not at the cutting edge, which is where people want to see their hard-fought-for tax dollars spent.

Cook Electorate, Premier's Visit



Ms LUI (Cook—ALP) (2.42 pm): I rise to speak about the Premier's recent visit to the Torres Strait in my electorate of Cook. This visit occurred over three days—from 31 July to 2 August—and included Thursday Island and the outer island community of Yam Island. As a first-term member of parliament and the first Torres Strait Islander elected to state parliament, it is a huge privilege to have a leader who supports not only me but also the people in the communities I serve. That is indeed significant to me and my valuable constituents.

The Cook electorate is unique in size and it has diverse issues affecting people living in rural and remote areas of Far North Queensland. The Premier's visit once again demonstrated the Palaszczuk government's commitment to consultation—listening and actively engaging with people in the communities of Far North Queensland. This was a great opportunity for my constituents to raise issues that were important to them directly with the Premier.


I can confirm to the House that this visit was unique. During the visit, the Premier engaged in discussions with local mayors and council representatives, attended community receptions and visited a range of key sites, including the Tagai school campus on both Yam Island and Thursday Island, and a vital water treatment plant on Thursday Island. Given some big announcements in the recent budget, the Premier's visit to my electorate could not have come at a better time.

Unlike the LNP, this government believes in providing the best services and infrastructure for people no matter where they live in Queensland. This government continues to invest in a diverse range of projects and initiatives across the region, including the redevelopment of Thursday Island Hospital and the upgrade of the Torres shire's water infrastructure. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$1 million over two years to upgrade the existing water treatment plant so that the people of Thursday, Horn and Hammond islands have access to clean water. The commitment to solving the Torres Strait inner islands' water-quality issues with the installation of a filtration system will also directly benefit the local economy through jobs in design and construction.

The Palaszczuk government has committed \$20 million to seawall and flood mitigation work on five islands in the Torres Strait. While on her visit the Premier had the opportunity to inspect firsthand the seawall site on Yam Island where homes were damaged in severe weather conditions earlier this year. The Palaszczuk government's funding is conditional on that funding being matched by the federal government. Clearly, the Palaszczuk government is working hard to achieve bipartisan support to address the impacts of climate change affecting island communities. However, just like the national partnership on remote housing, it is particularly disappointing to see the ignorance displayed by the Turnbull LNP government and the current member for Leichhardt, who continue to walk away from their responsibility to remote communities.

Lastly, can I say what an honour and privilege it was for me to take the Premier to my home of Yam Island in the Torres Strait and to share a part of my life with her. That is what makes the Premier great and unique. I had never had the pleasure of seeing or meeting the Premier of Queensland on my island. That is a reflection of a leader who is there for all Queenslanders. I am proud to represent a government who is there for all Queenslanders. On behalf of the people of Cook, I say thank you.

Drought Assistance

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.46 pm): In May 2015, I spoke in this House to draw to the attention of members the ongoing drought in Western Queensland. Back then, I warned the House that this drought was of historic proportions. Today, there is widespread recognition that this statement was absolutely true and, too sadly, it is now even more widespread. As I said then, drought is a creeping phenomenon and this monster has now crept right across Queensland, the Northern Territory, all parts of New South Wales and Victoria. This drought started in the gulf and Western Queensland. We have now endured seven failed wet seasons in a row. I speak with the voice of bitter and present experience of what has happened.

Back then, I had already formally asked the Labor government to appoint a Queensland drought commissioner. As I saw it, that role was to coordinate the drought relief response across Queensland at a departmental level but also to direct the efforts of public, corporate and charitable initiatives to achieve the most effective results. As I saw it, a drought commissioner could also coordinate between federal, state and local governments to help Queenslanders receive a speedier response despite the red tape that government brings.

Although it is over three years since I made that request, I am delighted that, this month, drought commissioners have been appointed. That was a correct decision and long overdue. I am particularly delighted that Vaughan Johnson is to be one of the drought commissioners. It is a characteristic of the man that Vaughan takes this position with no pay. I can tell members that he is motivated by the suffering of Western Queenslanders whom he served so long as the former member for Gregory. Vaughan is motivated by ideals of public service for a state that he loves so deeply.

Vaughan has an intimate knowledge of the different districts of regional Queensland—the different ecosystems, the different agricultural industries and the different local economies across this vast state. That will make him a source of invaluable service to this state. His love of the people of Western Queensland will make him a champion in exploring ways to provide them with practical relief and support. I have one request for the Premier and the cabinet: when Vaughan asks for something, respond speedily and decisively. Anything less, we will suffer.

Back in 2015 when I asked for a drought commissioner, I also asked for the government to set up a Queensland drought appeal so that the public and the corporate sector could donate to the drought. That request was refused, although I note the Premier's enthusiastic launch this month of the public drought appeal put together by the wonderful people at the Queensland Country Women's Association, the *Courier-Mail* and the *Sunday Mail*.

This appeal is vital because in terms of donations, cash is king in Western Queensland. I urge all members to use this experience in their electorate office. If they receive an inquiry about donations, tell them that cash is the only form of donation that helps everyone. This is how it works. After the

government refused, a group of community leaders in Western Queensland came together in 2015 to form the Western Queensland Drought Appeal, which has been run by a committee of volunteers for over three years now. In that time we have distributed over \$1 million of public and corporate donations to needy households and communities across 18 shires in Western Queensland, north to south. The key to their great success has been putting cash donations on the table and putting it on preloaded debit cards. These are then distributed to drought-affected graziers right around the district to spend locally on the necessities of life. It may be food from the local grocer, butcher, baker, it may be medicine from the local pharmacist, school books from the newsagent or it may be an essential service from the local tradie like an electrical repair or getting the car serviced by the local mechanic.

These cards give recipients discretion, dignity and a choice and they still enjoy the social stimulation of their weekly shopping trip. It is these small business households that get a little bit forgotten when it comes to drought. They are not eligible for primary producer relief yet in a monster drought like this the income stream that sustains them, their employees and their families evaporates completely. These are mum-and-dad operators with children in the schools and membership of the local clubs that make up country life. If we do not help them too we will not have communities there when the drought breaks. We need to continue.

Finally, I call on the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries to get the local drought committees back together in the Central Highlands and the shires of Banana and Isaac and drought declare the Central Highlands and those shires because they are in drought. We need to do that now.

Early Childhood Education



Mrs McMAHON (Macalister—ALP) (2.51 pm): I stand in this House to address an issue very dear to my heart, and that is the education and wellbeing of our youngest Queenslanders. In my first speech here I spoke about the number of vulnerable children in our communities, those who are in danger of being left behind, and I am proud to stand here as part of a Palaszczuk Labor government that has a stated clear priority of giving every Queenslanders a great start in life. There is almost no end to the research that shows that the early years—that is, the pre-prep years—is when the most exponential growth in brain development occurs. The role of structured early childhood education is a major determining factor of success in later schooling, educational opportunities and employment.

As a parent of two kids currently in the early childhood education system, I acknowledge the work that our early childhood educators do. We are moving, albeit slowly, from the perception of our educators merely as childminders and nappy changers. Our early childhood educators plan, build, engage, cuddle, lead, correct and challenge our kids. They are truly some of the most influential people in this state. Speaking to primary school principals in my area, I have been made acutely aware of the challenges that our prep transition officers and teachers face. I am advised that our prep teachers are often educating young Queenslanders who have never had a book read to them or have never held a pencil before starting school. The difference in exposure to kindy or pre-prep readiness programs is startling, particularly when one considers what the research shows us of their projected later outcomes.

It is with sadness that I report that in my home city of Logan, and certainly concentrated in parts of my electorate, this issue of disparate access to early childhood programs is a concern. Data on Logan shows some of the lowest uptake in structured early childhood education in the state. When combined with some of the lowest immunisation rates and child health clinics, this paints a very complex situation among some of our kids. I would like to acknowledge the work of the Logan Together team which, with the support of the state government and other key organisations such as Griffith University, are working to address these much larger problems.

Recent federal changes to childcare subsidies should have been about ensuring greater access and affordability of early childhood education for all Australian families. Personally, I am more than pleased that the changes have made the cost of child care for my family certainly affordable, but I am pretty sure that it was not my wage bracket that required the greatest amount of relief—but thank you nonetheless. What is concerning though is the lack of certainty and ongoing funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. The national partnership agreement funding provides families with 15 hours a week of accredited kindy programs in the year before prep. This was to ensure that all kids Queensland wide, regardless of their family income or circumstances, could access what we know to be incredible life-changing, structured learning kindy programs.

The 2018 federal government budget refuses to fund this program beyond 2020. This means that our kids who are currently one or two do not have any guarantee of access to the kindy programs that our kids in Logan desperately need. Our families need this and they need the certainty. For many Logan families these 15 hours of kindy are the only ones that they can afford. Long day care rates are often over \$85 or \$100 a day. Even with childcare subsidies this is often out of the reach of many Logan families. My biggest fear is that the loss of the 15 hours a week will disproportionately affect those families for whom this time represents their only access to formalised kindy programs. With the removal of this access we are placing further barriers in front of them to help them improve their life outcomes.


I call on the federal government and the Prime Minister—whomever that may be in the weeks ahead—to continue to fund the national partnership agreement beyond 2020. Not only that, I implore them to consider expanding the funding to include the two years before prep. The money that we spend in early education and childhood development today is going to save us money in the long run. This is not a disputed fact. The research is there. We just need governments that are willing to invest in our best and most valuable resource, and that is our young children.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISSOLUTION OF IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL) BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1881, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (2.57 pm): I rise this afternoon to make a short contribution on the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. As a new member in this place I am again amazed at the incompetence of this government. The member for Bundamba, back when she was the police minister, was reporting allegations of corruption within the predominantly Labor Ipswich City Council. It is reported that one of the reasons she was sacked from the position as police minister was because she tried to expose and oust the former Ipswich Labor Party mayor.

The member for Bundamba has said that she raised and reported serious allegations of corruption to the Premier. She said she raised issues of money changing hands and suspicious trips all over Australia and internationally, but she was rebuffed—rebuffed because he was popular and he was also a member of the Australian Labor Party. Now, many years later, we are fast-tracking this urgent legislation to sack the council to eradicate the entrenched culture of corruption. This legislation would not be required and further time wasted in this House if the appropriate action was taken at the time before this conduct became systemic.

The CCC's report released last week into the culture and corruption risks in local government, written off the back of Operation Windage, makes for concerning reading. To date, 15 people have been charged on a total of 86 criminal offences resulting from this operation. The report outlined that the investigation identified significant governance failures and cultural issues that appear to have been occurring over many years and could not have occurred in an environment in which the values of transparency, accountability and good governance were paramount. These cultural issues appear to have been occurring for many years, the CCC report says—cultural and governance issues that they describe as significant and extremely concerning.

If the government took prompt and appropriate action when these allegations were first aired, maybe this culture would not have had time to become entrenched and this unprecedented legislation would not be required. Just a short time ago, during his contribution, the member for Logan posed the question: what would the public think if we did nothing and took no action? I say that we are in this mess because the Palaszczuk government took no action when these allegations were first aired.

The CCC found that one of the most serious failures of the culture and conduct was the lack of oversight and accountability for expenditure and public resources and the improper use of power and influence for personal benefit. When reading about the culture of the Ipswich City Council and the lack of transparency, accountability and good governance, I could not help but draw comparisons. A large section of the CCC report talks in detail about the use of mechanisms to avoid scrutiny, particularly the use of private email accounts.

Operation Windage found that councillors and senior executives were using private email accounts specifically to avoid RTI requests as a way to conceal unfavourable decisions or records of information from the public. The report also found the improper use of influence and power by senior members of the council. An example of improper use of power and influence for personal benefit was

when a councillor inappropriately took VIP tickets for his own use. I cannot help but draw a parallel with a report in a recent *Courier-Mail* article that around \$250,000-odd worth of government allocated Commonwealth Games tickets are still unexplained, as well as ongoing extravagant travel spends by this state government.

It was only in May this year that the government rushed through 40 pages of amendments without going through the proper committee process in an effort to resolve this issue. That gave the minister the power to dissolve the local government if the minister reasonably believed that it was in the public interest to do so. Two show-cause notices were issued and now this new legislation is being rushed through to curtail current Supreme Court action and override the recent amendments. As I understand it, this is unprecedented. Not only is this legislation effectively circumventing a matter currently before the Supreme Court but it also breaches almost every fundamental legal principle we hold dear in this great state—the presumption of innocence, the principles of natural justice, the right of judicial review and appeal—and it breaches the rights and liberties of individuals generally.

In the explanatory notes for this bill, the section outlining the breaches of fundamental legal principles is almost longer than the bill itself, but it does not explain or justify not affording those basic rights. Why is this government shielding itself from judicial review?

As recently noted by the Australian Law Reform Commission, access to the courts to challenge administrative action is an important common law right. The judicial review of administrative action is about setting the boundaries of government power. It is about ensuring government officials obey the law and act within their prescribed powers. In its submission, the Queensland Council of Civil Liberties stated—

If the government believes its decision justifiable, it should be prepared to have it subject to judicial review.

In its written and oral submissions to the committee, the Queensland Law Society raised serious concerns about the legislation and its timing, as has the LGAQ and a large number of other submitters to the committee.

The catalyst for this problem is the Labor Party. For years it turned a blind eye when its local state member for the area, the member for Bundamba, was demanding that this matter be investigated and resolved. What cost are we now paying for years of inaction to try to sweep this under the carpet? Not only is there a massive loss in public confidence; the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs could give no estimate for the ongoing total cost of the administrator to be appointed to run the council until June 2020.

I understand that later this week we will be debating new business rules to guillotine debate to help the government progress its legislative agenda, but already this year how much time have we wasted in this House in an effort—

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Ninderry is straying from the debate on the matter that is before the House. He is seeking to debate a matter that might be before us later this week.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): The member has a point. Please come back to the terms of the long title of the bill.

Mr PURDIE: This year how much time have we already wasted trying to resolve this matter? This is a debacle that the government has overseen and ignored for years. Labor turned a blind eye to the corrupt conduct of its Labor mates and is now scrambling to make the problem disappear. The CCC reported that the culture of corruption was entrenched. Maybe if action had been taken sooner, we would not be in this situation. As clearly articulated by the CCC in its report, the systemic issues within the Ipswich City Council were from a lack of transparency, accountability and good governance. Some might argue that those are the same traits often exhibited by this state government.



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (3.05 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. The bill seeks to dismiss the Ipswich City Council and appoint an administrator to carry out the functions of the council and the councillors. This bill fulfils the commitment I made to the people of Ipswich that my government will take definitive action to put an end to the scandals that have plagued the Ipswich City Council. The people of Ipswich deserve better. The people of Ipswich have endured a local council that has lost two mayors to fraud and corruption charges.

Following its thorough investigation into practices at the Ipswich City Council, last week the Crime and Corruption Commission handed down a damning report that identified significant governance failures and cultural issues within the council. The CCC's investigation has resulted in 15 people being

charged with 86 criminal offences. Of the 15 people charged, seven are either current or former council employees or councillors. That includes two mayors, two CEOs and one chief operating officer. Not only have criminal charges been laid; the report also identified a culture of a failure to comply with council policies and a lack of appropriate oversight of assets and expenditure.

As I have said, governing is about making hard decisions. Governing is not about being rash; it is about being considered and responsible and taking the right action at the right time. That applies to my government. It also applies to local governments. The decision to sack an entire council is not one that any government takes lightly. That is certainly the case in relation to the Ipswich City Council. If there were isolated cases of misbehaviour in the council, this action would not be warranted. Those individuals could be dealt with as required. However, we do not have isolated cases; we have an overriding culture of misbehaviour and cover-up.


I feel a great deal of empathy for council employees who tried to do the right thing. The CCC report found that one council employee raised concerns to a senior executive employee about the misuse of the council's donations policy. The employee was told that they were not paid enough to worry about such things. Although a number of employees knew of the misuse of the donations policy, nothing was done to stop the conduct.

This strong and decisive action is necessary because councillors are both individually and collectively responsible for the running of their council. Individually, councillors have significant powers to ensure that the council is operating in an accountable, transparent and financially responsible manner. Not every councillor has committed an act of fraud or corruption, but those councillors are collectively responsible for the due administration of the local government. The standard you walk by is the standard you accept. Despite their protestations of innocence, the councillors have walked by a standard that the people of Queensland do not accept and that my government does not accept.

The appointment of an administrator will allow proper processes and policies to be put in place. Thus far, policies have been ignored. Travel documentation was prepared in retrospect. Councillors approved each other's forms. The culture within the Ipswich City Council had created an environment where inappropriate or potentially corrupt conduct was either no longer recognised as such or not reported. With employees discouraged from reporting corrupt activity, the behaviour was able to continue for a significant period. When the type of actions disclosed by the CCC investigation are allowed to flourish, the system has failed and the entire council is responsible for that failure.

The capacity to appoint an administrator means that when Ipswich residents go to the polls in 2020 the councillors elected will have a system of administrative processes and policies in place to ensure its ongoing financial and administrative viability. Ipswich residents will be able to feel secure in the knowledge that the past practices are long dead and buried.

It is not only the Ipswich City Council that has suffered from the actions of its councillors. Unless decisive action is taken the reputations of all other local governments suffer as well. This bill puts an end to the question marks that hang over the Ipswich City Council. My government made a commitment to the people of Ipswich to restore their confidence in their local government. I acknowledge that it will take time to redevelop that trust, but this is the first step. I urge Ipswich residents to give their support to the administrator and the advisory committee once appointed. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (3.10 pm): Today is a very sad day for local government in Queensland. The government is taking an extraordinary step, which I do support, to deal with an extraordinary mess. It is fitting that it is a Labor government that has been forced to dissolve the Labor Ipswich City Council. I believe that if you make the mess then you should clean it up. This mess is 100 per cent owned by the Queensland Labor Party. Ipswich's rotten council—

Government members interjected.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Member for Logan!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Ipswich's rotten Labor council is stuffed full of Labor mates and has been for years. Last night we saw pictures of the Labor councillors in Ipswich in tears as they met for the last time. I am quite sure there are not too many ratepayers of Ipswich who are shedding tears to see the back of the Labor council.

Ms Boyd: Maybe you should have read some of the submissions.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to take that interjection. The Crime and Corruption Commission's report talks directly to the corruption of Labor's Ipswich City Council. I take that interjection from a Labor member in this House agreeing that the Labor Ipswich City Council have had

to submit. The submissions into the Crime and Corruption Commission make for disastrous reading. I feel for the people of the Ipswich region who have been dragged through the mud by the Labor council for many years.

It is the people of Ipswich whom we in this House should feel sorry for. We have a member of this House who has been standing up for her community and bringing those concerns to the Premier, who is part of the same party and who has not been listened to because of the secrecy and cover-ups that have come into play because of this part-time parliament sitting Premier Palaszczuk.

Ipswich is a proud city and a close community. It has seen its reputation dragged through the mud by this incompetent, rotten council. They have seen two mayors—two Labor mayors—arrested and charged with corruption offences. They have seen a further 13 council officers, including two former chief executives and a chief operating officer, also charged. Ipswich has been through some tough times before, including the devastating floods in 2011, but nothing has ever hurt this proud city's name like this Labor-made scandal. To rub salt into the wound, the Palaszczuk Labor government will force Ipswich taxpayers to foot the full costs of the administrator being imposed upon them. Labor makes a mess, but it is the people who pay for the clean-up. It is the same old story.

What makes this story even more galling is the Palaszczuk Labor government's fingers in it. Unlike the Premier, when the revelations about the extent of misconduct and corruption were publicly revealed back in May, I immediately stood up and called for the council to be sacked. I called for the Palaszczuk government to act decisively, but unfortunately the government just dithered and bungled its response.

What the Palaszczuk government wants to forget is that it was warned time after time about claims of corruption in the Labor Ipswich City Council. They were warned both in parliament—in this House—and elsewhere. Serious questions were repeatedly raised about the integrity of the Labor politicians in Ipswich and time after time the questions were ignored and the doubts brushed aside—even when they came from within Labor's own ranks. Protecting the reputation of the Queensland Labor Party takes precedence over protecting the public. Labor turned a blind eye to the mess in its own backyard. It was not the Labor mayors of Ipswich who were given the cold shoulder by Labor but instead the state Labor member of parliament who raised the alarm.

Labor's Ipswich City Council was allowed to roll on undisturbed. Its leaders knew they had nothing to fear from the Palaszczuk government. They knew there would be no awkward questions from the Premier or her ministers. The show only came crashing down once Ipswich's integrity issues were made public in a dramatic fashion.

Once again, the Palaszczuk Labor government was only compelled to act because of negative headlines. We saw that again today. Labor's Ipswich connection did certainly come in handy one more time for the Palaszczuk government. Ipswich council's reckless support for the commercial waste dumps was used to justify the imposition of a new waste tax on the whole of Queensland—not just Ipswich but the whole of Queensland. This tax will hit each and every Queensland household and business in their hip pocket. Labor made sure that Ipswich's local crisis did not go to waste. Labor moved swiftly to take advantage of Ipswich's waste problem and levy a new tax.

Their removal of council itself has been simply shambolic. Unfortunately, the minister has shown the same level of professional incompetence that he has demonstrated in his handling of rail fail and Eagle Farm. The minister announced the suspension of mayors under the new laws that were not actually in place at the time. The minister issued two failed show-cause notices to the Ipswich City Council, costing the ratepayers of Ipswich and the taxpayers of Queensland even more money.

This Labor government is now curtailing the Supreme Court to fix a mess that was meant to be fixed back in May with 40 pages of amendments. The dissolution of Labor's Ipswich council has been a fiasco from start to finish and it sees us in this House debating this bill today. Even now the installation of an administrator is being bungled. It is unacceptable that the appointment of an advisory panel is being left entirely to the administrator. We may never be told who is advising the administrator behind the scenes. The public have a right to know, especially the Ipswich public.

The panel cannot be tainted by an association with the Labor Party. That is clear. It is clear from the people of Ipswich who are speaking to us. They do not want Labor's fingers in this. They do not need Labor's fingers in this. The panel cannot be tainted by an association with the Labor Party. Labor politicians have made this scandal and Labor politicians are the ones—except for the one on their side—who have completely ignored the scandal. We had one lone voice from the Labor Party speaking up and we had the opposition in the state parliament speaking up and standing up for the people of Ipswich.

Labor operatives cannot be allowed anywhere near the independent administration of the Ipswich City Council. We are trying to clean up the Ipswich City Council, not mess it up once again. Labor has a sorry record when it comes to local government. It changed the industrial relations laws for all Queensland councils without consultation, costing ratepayers tens of millions of dollars. Who in this chamber could ever, ever, ever forget Labor's forced council amalgamations? It caused disruption across the state, particularly in regional areas.

Mr Perrett: I went through it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. The member for Gympie did go through it when he was in the Gympie shire council. No-one can ever forget the pain caused to regional Queensland because of those forced, bungled amalgamations that caused disruption across the state. Today the anger caused by this heavy-handed approach still lingers within many of our communities. I also note that the Taroom shire council was divided up four ways—four ways—bungled by the Labor government.

Ms Simpson: The only shire in Queensland.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It was the only shire in Queensland that was divided that way. They could not even get their rot sorted out so they did not have to split up the important area of Taroom shire council four ways. It was an absolute disgrace.

Mr Krause: It's about silencing voices.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. It is about silencing the voices. That is what they have done to the people of Ipswich. They have done it again to the people of Ipswich just like they did it to the member for Bundamba, who was trying to speak up for the community.

Mr Hinchliffe: Are you going to start talking about the precinct of Greater Brisbane being created in 1924 now?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I have five more minutes on the clock and I think I should use it after that interjection. The Minister for Local Government is clearly out of touch if he wants to bring up 1924 when we are talking about the forced council amalgamations in 2008. Sadly, Labor's Ipswich scandal has cast a shadow on local government all across Queensland.

I emphasise that only a tiny fraction of our hundreds of mayors and councillors have been accused of any wrongdoing. I would like to congratulate and thank those hardworking councillors and mayors across this great state who have not been accused of any wrongdoing but who have been dragged through the mud because of the Labor Ipswich City Council. I value the incredible work that councils do in serving their communities. Most elected officials care passionately about their communities and have been as appalled by recent events as anyone else.

The LNP has a record of working in partnership with councils and the LGAQ, and that will continue. It will take a long time to restore the confidence of Queenslanders in local government after the scandal that Labor has inflicted on the City of Ipswich. I promise them that the LNP will do all we can to ensure transparency and accountability are the cornerstones of our local councils.



Mrs MILLER (Bundamba—ALP) (3.23 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I quote—

Laws can embody standards; governments can enforce laws—but the final task is not a task for government. It is a task for each and every one of us. Every time we turn our heads the other way when we see the law flouted—when we tolerate what we know to be wrong—when we close our eyes and ears to the corrupt because we are too busy, or too frightened—when we fail to speak up and speak out—we strike a blow against freedom and decency and justice.

These words were spoken by Robert F Kennedy.

To the members in the gallery today, this is the day that the people of Ipswich reclaim their city. It is the day when corruption hopefully stops. It is the day when the light can be shone on every corner of our city's administration. For too long the honest, decent and ethical people of Ipswich have been waging a war—a war against the forces of greed, power, corruption and maladministration. Each fought in their own way, while others ran and hid. These courageous few put the interests of the working-class people of Ipswich first—first before their careers and their reputation—and they paid a high price. For some it was their families, for some their livelihoods, for some their businesses, for some their life savings, for some their dignity and mental health, and for others, sadly, the cost was far greater. I express my condolences to families in these truly sad circumstances.

This bill is for them—those who put the people of Ipswich before themselves; those who called out the corruption while others cowered to protect their careers; those who, instead of protecting their political party by rooting out corruption and flushing out the greedy, grubby and corrupt behaviour, wanted to bury it whilst they sipped wine with the art set and mixed with the bourgeois classes. Labor members should always be above that—always.

It is no secret in this House or on the streets of Ipswich that at times I have been the lone wolf for taking a stand against the alleged corruption and maladministration. I have paid a high price for standing up, but finally this government has been forced to listen. I have clashed swords and I have rattled cages, and I have got a few kicks in the teeth for good measure. Others, like Jimmy Dodrill, were literally bashed up. He was hospitalised. Now people can see why—at long last.

Politics is about doing what is right and fighting for what is right, not giving the illusion of doing things. It is about never being too scared to call out alleged criminal behaviour because of a mayor's perceived popularity. The price is the impact on the lives of our Ipswich residents and the anxiety of council staff, throwing up before they go to work, accepting traffic infringements because they were in fear of their job. The easy way was to cosy up to corruption, as can be seen in the *Hansards* here in Queensland and nationally, but it takes guts and honour to call this behaviour out.

People know about outlaw motorcycle gangs that thumb their noses at the law, the institutions and the people. This council is, I believe, an outlaw local government gang which has exhibited the same traits only worse. The councillors wore the Ipswich City Council colours but they did not ride bikes; they used taxpayer funded cars and private jets.

How did this happen and how can we prevent it ever happening again? The councillors of Ipswich were a gang of people who ran Ipswich as personal fiefdoms in their divisions, with only a few thousand people voting. The view was that they all wanted an easy life and to swing off the coat-tails of a populist mayor. There was never any real or perceived opposition to anything. They all clambered to be on the winning ticket of that mayor, having joint how-to-vote cards and not questioning the disgraceful antics, even though I am sure that most of them knew that what was going on was wrong. Why? Because the councillors did not have to worry about elections. They did not have to worry about preselections. They were so arrogant that they said nothing, did little and let it go over their heads because that way they would be re-elected time and time again—guaranteed.

The mayor of Ipswich effectively controlled the entire council with the support of these silent numpties. He also controlled those who came into the council and the candidates he supported. He controlled any opposition candidates to existing councillors, resulting in local government practices that were allegedly corrupt, that were against the will of the people and good governance. He did it by being a con man, by raising huge sums of money from businesses and using that money to buy electoral favour from other councillors, by wining and dining the media and vested interests and by effectively conning a disengaged public who trusted them.

The rules of the ALP state that there can be federal electoral councils and state electoral councils—just as there is in the LNP. The ALP in Queensland also has the ability to have MECs, which are municipal electoral councils which are set up to assist Labor councillors. I want to make it clear today that there was a Labor MEC in Ipswich running for years until the mayor, councillors and state and federal MPs decided that it would not meet. Some Labor councillors were on this committee. The Labor councillors manipulated ALP rules to their own benefit which removed the oversight mechanism of branches, so even though the councillors were not technically endorsed ALP councillors, many had corflute signs with 'Labor' plastered all over them. In the mind of the Ipswich community, they were definitely viewed as Labor Party councillors.

Not having an MEC also meant that, whilst the community thought the ALP had some control over them, they stole the ALP brand and they used it and abused it for their own selfish, low and corrupt undertakings. This must never be repeated. Never should the Labor Party allow this to go on ever again. To cynically use our Labor Party branch members to put up corflutes, to staff polling booths and then claim to be independents is absolutely and utterly dishonest. It is an abrogation of Labor values and principles and it has resulted in Ipswich people not trusting Labor in local government again, which naturally flows to state and federal levels. In a July ReachTEL poll conducted by the *Queensland Times*, Labor's primary vote was down to 29.7 per cent. We cannot win anything on that sort of primary vote.

I have raised these matters many times over the years, as members of this House know, and I have also supported our branches and branch members. However, I was continuously advised that I had a personality conflict with the then mayor. It was never that. It was a corruption conflict and the ALP in government—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Member, please be cautious of the sub judice rule in what you are saying to the House.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you for your guidance. The ALP was conned time and time again, but I was not conned and neither were the majority of our branch members. Today I call on the ALP to reform its rules in relation to local government, especially given the Ipswich experience.

The vast majority of people who work for the council are decent, honest people, but in an almost textbook case of corruption this council sought to control who were given jobs at council, promote them into roles that would help in corrupt activities and remove those who opposed the corruption. Some were removed because they asked questions or somehow got in the way. They were isolated, they were picked on and as a result either resigned in frustration, have mental health issues, were sacked, were paid out or were made to sign confidentiality agreements. Many were told that because they had just signed those agreements they could not go to the CCC. That is wrong and I ask them to go to the CCC now.

The system meant that those most loyal had pay and perks that the ordinary worker in Ipswich could only dream of—all because of alleged corruption and unchecked greed like the fancy restaurants, the private jets and the exclusive Brisbane Club. Instead of being a Labor council that represented the working class and being proud of it, the councillors and the senior staff were like pigs with their heads in the trough. They became part of a system of corruption, greed, profit and habitat destruction that the average person in Ipswich despises.

Over the years, as has been heard today, I have advised premiers, deputy premiers and local government ministers about the alleged corruption. I did this because other state and federal MPs refused to do so even though they knew about it. Over the years I have been advised that people have asked to see their MPs only to be told that they would not see them on council matters. Too many people were seeking help but the doors were shut. Many people well outside my electorate came to see me in sheer frustration at how they were being treated by other state and federal MPs. I tried to see all of them, and it was clearly an established pattern of corruption.

In the early years I would write to local government ministers and talk to them. I even nominated to go on the Labor caucus local government committee to raise the issues but to no avail. The matters fell on deaf ears and successive governments on both sides sat on their hands. More recently I felt I could not raise the matters as I knew that some ministers, especially local government, were in cohorts with the then mayor and councillors to get rid of me. I knew that any letters would have been on-sent to them and used as political ammunition against me. I was sick and tired of being told to work with the council when I knew that working with them was against every single Labor principle and value I held, and it was against every single moral and ethical value that I hold. I was being directed to work with corrupt people. I refused and I am proud that I did it.

The systemic dismantling of oversight mechanisms like internal audit procedures and the establishment of Ipswich City Council private companies is simply disgraceful. To question anything that the council did was to make sure you had a target on your back. Many gave up in sheer despair and hopelessness, and everything was hidden in a shroud of secrecy. If you FOI'd anything, you were called out in the papers.

The *Queensland Times* seriously betrayed the people of Ipswich. Many poured out their hearts to the QT only to get abusive phone calls from councillors. It was obvious there was a corrupt relationship with the QT by successive editors and journalists. This was exposed to some degree by *Media Watch*, but the grave disservice by the likes of editor Peter Chapman and other journalists is absolutely shameful. I hope they rot in hell because they refused to shine a light on the wrongs, they accepted the drivel they were told, they were wine and dined and were simply bought off by being offered higher paying jobs that they accepted at the council.

When people wrote to the ministers and the CCC what they got back was, 'There's nothing to see here; go away.' That system was also totally corrupted. The impact on local business is also shocking. We have the example of Rob and Jackie Sellars. They were asked to do private work at the home of the CEO of council but were never paid. When they asked to be paid they stopped getting the contracts which were the bread and butter of their business. They caught the council out dodging up the tender process to exclude them. They fought it all the way—and still are—looking for fair compensation. They lost everything. There is also Liz at the Queens Park Cafe. She recently won the tender to keep on going, but despite winning that tender process the council is continually shifting the goalposts. They have ridiculous clauses about maintaining the whole park and they are charging rent like a Westfield shopping centre. This must be investigated.

Mr Speaker, I seek leave for another 10 minutes to continue my speech.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. Member, I think you have to seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Mrs MILLER: Mr Speaker, I seek leave to move a motion without notice.

Division: Question put—That leave be granted to move a motion without notice.

Resolved in the affirmative under standing order 106(10).

Mrs MILLER: I move—

That I be further heard for another 10 minutes.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs MILLER: I was talking about Liz, who is the lessee of the Queens Park Cafe, and the ridiculous clauses that the council is trying to impose on her, even though she won the tender to operate this particular cafe. They have tried to put ridiculous clauses in this particular tender so that Liz maintains the whole of Queens Park of Ipswich and they want to charge her rent similar to a Westfield shopping centre. This has caused great anxiety for Liz, her family and all of her staff. I am asking that this be investigated.

On another matter, many people in Ipswich are bewildered about the role of the trade unions in relation to Ipswich City Council. Many of the staff want to know where they were. They want to know what they were told and what they did. They want to know why the unions were not protecting the staff. I would like the unions to report back to all of their members in Ipswich City Council about what they have done and whether they have reported the allegations that were made to them to ministers and also to the departments and the CCC.

Those in my community never want to see the City of Ipswich in such an embarrassing and disgusting light again. We were vulnerable as people because we trusted the councillors, but our trust was abused and used against us. There was a disengaged public because the people knew that to raise an issue publicly was to invite bile on themselves, their friends and families and, as I said, even be bashed. Even writing a letter to the editor was to be abused. We have a retired Ipswich councillor in our gallery today, former councillor Casas. He knows only too well that if you wrote a letter to the editor of the *Queensland Times* a councillor would either turn up on your doorstep and abuse you or ring you at four o'clock in the morning and abuse you. We were under siege in the City of Ipswich. Anyone who made any dissenting comment whatsoever or went to the local paper was abused. It was a disgusting situation whereby a lot of people were put under so much pressure.

In my particular case my family and friends and other party members were abused. I have been through two preselection challenges because of Ipswich City Council's opposition to me shining the light on the corruption in Ipswich. I have been followed home in my car several times. I have been really frightened. I have been warned by thugs and goons in places like shopping centres. There are many times when I thought I would not make it home or I would be bashed myself.

I can remember being at the Ipswich festival ball a few years ago when the then mayor of Ipswich and one of his mates got up on the stage in front of 700-odd people and singled me out and told me to leave because I was calling out corruption in Ipswich. Anyone who knows my husband would know that he was absolutely horrified and mortified. My family has been humiliated over the years. Many people in this parliament should look up some of the ABC footage and other footage in which the then mayor put on a blonde wig and made some disgraceful allegations against my sister, who is a lawyer and an upstanding member of our community. There have also been disgraceful comments about my husband and daughters. There have been lies about where my daughters have in fact lived.

I have been threatened with legal action, with defamation and that the coppers were going to be sooled onto me. I have been continuously leaked against in the media, most of it being lies, of course. This has been political thuggery and political bullying by not only opposition people but also people in the Labor Party. All it takes is for one person to stand up and one person to say that this is wrong. All it needs is for one person to believe that one day they will be caught out.

Usually in modern politics that person—who may be a member of parliament like myself—leaves beaten and broken, but on behalf of the people of Ipswich I still stand. I stand in this House representing the people of Ipswich, the people of my electorate, and I am here today even though my father is gravely ill in the ICU unit at the Ipswich Hospital. I am here at his express wish to cast my vote to sack this wicked, evil, wretched and corrupt council. Fifteen people have now been charged with 86 offences: it is shocking.

On behalf of the residents and ratepayers of Ipswich we need to have an administrator in place. In my view, this administrator needs to conduct a forensic audit so that we know where the money is and how it has been spent. There needs to be an ethical standards command established almost immediately. All of the private companies need to be shut down, and private companies should never be allowed to be opened again in Ipswich by the Ipswich City Council. The Ipswich Planning Scheme needs to be reviewed because it is stuffed. We need to stop the dumps because it is wrong to have dumps within a couple of hundred metres of people's homes. Brisbane City Council, keep your rubbish over on your side of the border!

I call on the councillors of Ipswich to now accept their fate and shut up, because whilst the administrator is in place the administrator needs to clean the place up and clean it out once and for all. We do not want those councillors to suddenly form an opposition group and continuously gripe in the media or anywhere else, because they were silent when they had the opportunity to say something. They had sticking plaster over their mouths; they said nothing. We do not want them to form an opposition to the administrator. We want them to sit back and get out of Ipswich and shut up, because we have had a gutful of them!

The councillors have collectively failed in their statutory role. They have failed in their governance. They have failed each and every one of us, the citizens of Ipswich. They have had their time. They knew—even though they say they did not, they are fibbing—and they did nothing. I say to each of those councillors, 'Get out of the way!' I say to each and every one of them, 'If you have any sense of decency get out of Ipswich, because you have brought such shame and disgrace on our city.' Mr Speaker, they would not know an ethical standard if it hit them over the head with a piece of four-by-two. They just do not have a clue.

I hope that it ends now. I hope that no government will ever allow it to happen again. I hope that vigilance and sunlight are the key. I say to the people of Ipswich that together we have reclaimed our city back. Never, ever let it go back into the days of shame we have had to put up with. I ask them over the next couple of years to please bear with us as we go through this painful process.



Mr KRAUSE (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.56 pm): I commend the member for Bundamba on her passionate advocacy for the people of Ipswich. I know that the passion she has for representing the people of Ipswich is very genuine and heartfelt. We do not agree on a lot of things in politics, but I think we can all agree that the member for Bundamba does have passion for her community.

I begin by addressing comments made about me earlier by the member for Logan in relation to my questioning in committee briefings on this bill. Not surprisingly, they were made while I was out of the chamber on a pairing arrangement and unable to object to its irrelevance. I make no apology for asking questions of the government about this bill. In particular, given the unprecedented bill before us, I make no apology for asking the government to put into the public domain its evidence to justify the bill. Asking questions is what members of parliament do to hold the government to account. I knew that the member for Logan was not going to ask these questions. He is simply a lackey of the government. In the public hearing into this bill I asked a simple question. At that point we had seen very, very little to justify this unprecedented bill. The member for Logan was obstructive even when I tried to ask the question. He was clearly warning up for his gold-medal-winning performance in obstruction when estimates came around.

I also asked about how locals in Ipswich will have representation when there is an administrator in place, which is something that a lot of people would be concerned about when it comes to approvals for dumps and developments, maintaining parks like Heit Park in Willowbank, or fixing their roads and rubbish collection issues. I know that the 2,300 or so Ipswich residents in my electorate, especially in Willowbank and Ebenezer, are worried about these things. I know that the residents of Purga, Peak Crossing, Mutdapilly, Mount Forbes, Calvert, Lanefield, Lower Mount Walker and Grandchester have council roads they sometimes have to have maintained. How will they get maintenance done now? How will they get the message through to the council now with an administrator in place? These are the types of questions I was asking. For the member for Logan to accuse me of playing politics by asking simple questions like that—standing up for the 2,300 or so electors that I have in Ipswich—is quite frankly a bit of an overreaction, but it is something that we have become used to seeing from the member for Logan.

Our job is to ask questions. These are the issues that people have raised with me, and I think that some of the other issues that I asked in the hearing that day such as the cost of the administrator, whether or not divisional offices would remain open and the appointment of the administrator, have already been addressed by the minister in public comments. May I just say that a member of the

government told me recently that local Labor supporters in Ipswich were disappointed that the only member who asked some of the questions they were seeking answers to was me: not the member for Logan and not the other Labor members on the committee. I will not shy away from asking questions on behalf of my community and my electorate. Whether they are Labor voters or LNP voters, whoever they vote for it is our job as their representative to question the government. That is what I will do, as I did in the public hearing on this bill which the member for Logan was the chairman in relation to.

Members should remember that we are only debating this bill, unprecedented as it is—a bill to dismiss a council by specific legislation—because the government has completely failed to do the job it set out to do under the Local Government Act. Only three months ago we were debating in this House significant amendments to that act to give the minister the power to sack Ipswich City Council—or any council or councillor—if it was in the ‘public interest’. We on our side of the House did not support those provisions because it was considered that it was giving too much power to the minister, whoever it may be—Labor, LNP or whoever. What is even more concerning at this point, however, is that even with all of those powers under the Local Government Act the minister still could not get the job done. He stuffed it up.

It was a fait accompli that Ipswich City Council was going to be sacked. I think that much is clear from the statements of the Premier and the minister over the past few months. Even with all of the extensive and broad powers that the minister has under the act, he simply could not deliver. Ipswich City Council challenged the minister's action in the Supreme Court, as it was entitled to do under the Labor amendments to that act. Then the minister must have received some cracking legal advice from Crown Law—advice I would surely love to see, because it would shed some light on the minister's ineptness. After the Supreme Court action was taken, the minister simply pushed the nuclear button and decided to bring this bill into the parliament to get rid of the council, point blank—no show-cause, no notice.

I said back in May, when those amendments to the Local Government Act were made, that the government would have been wiser to send those amendments off to committee for a full review and inquiry because there no doubt would be some errors or unintended consequences in those amendments. I noted back in May that the government could have made Ipswich-specific legislation to deal with those immediate issues at the time and let the committee process sort out the significant amendments to the act which were handing much power to sack councils to the minister.

The Supreme Court action by Ipswich council and the fact that we have this bill before us today shows that those amendments were flawed or that the minister is incompetent—or possibly both. For a government that was elected on a platform of transparency, openness and accountability and the importance of the committee process—due process—to act in such a manner shows that this government and the ALP are committed to these things only when it suits their political agenda. They wanted to get rid of Ipswich City Council from the start, and when things got too hard for them and the council decided to exercise its legal rights under the act they decided to simply cut short the show-cause process and remove the council through this unprecedented act.

It is no wonder that we have seen the problems at Labor's Ipswich City Council. The way Labor has handled this sort of problem at Ipswich City Council I think shows why the council has some issues with probity, financial probity and governance and accountability measures. When the agenda requires it, Labor will do whatever it takes to run their agenda—whatever it takes, as ‘Richo’ says—pushing aside accountability measures, governance structures, the committee process and the right way to run things. As Labor runs things in Queensland, Labor runs things in Ipswich. That has brought us to this point.

Innocent people have been hurt through this whole process and through the actions at Ipswich City Council over many years. We know that many people have suffered as a result of the problems at Ipswich City Council. Staff have suffered. Residents have suffered. No doubt many residents and businesses have paid and will continue to pay for the problems at Ipswich, a council dominated by Labor figures from the mayor through most of the councillors for many, many years—as long as I can remember. It will now be up to an administrator to sort out the problems at Ipswich City Council.

We do not for one moment deny that there are significant problems there. I have heard many people relay to me accounts of how they consider the council dealt with them inappropriately and their view is that the council should go. By the same token, many residents of Ipswich express to me their gratitude for the work undertaken by their local councillor, their local representative. Remember, local government is the tier of government closest to the people. Some people see that this bill is necessary

to address problems at Ipswich, but that does not mean they are not concerned about losing representation. That is why I was asking the questions I was asking in committee. Some people are also concerned about the way councillors are being dismissed, but they see that there is an overriding problem with the way the council is being run.

When this bill passes—and it will, because the Labor government has a majority in this House—the council will be dissolved and councillors will be dismissed. I urge the government to make sure the administrator has all the power to fix the problems—not just mark time until 2020—but also listen to residents through the period of administration. It is hard enough at the best of times for the 2,300-odd electors in my electorate who live in division 10 to have their voices heard, as they are competing with nine other urban based councillors. The minister and I have spoken about this previously. I urge the minister, through his power to influence the administrator when the administrator is appointed, to ensure there are mechanisms so that people in that rural area of Ipswich that I represent can have their voices heard.

In division 10 it is very hard to have your voice heard because of the spread-out nature of the division. They are on the edge of state electorates, on the edge of federal electorates and on the edge of Ipswich, Scenic Rim and Lockyer. They need mechanisms put in place to ensure they are heard. In fact, they should have representation on the advisory panel, because that will be one of the very few mechanisms for people to have local input into the administrator's work. There are many issues that require representation. I talk about roads, dumps and developments. The dumps have been a big issue at Willowbank, where there are proposals for mine voids to be filled with rubbish. Residents in that part of the world are very concerned about that.

In the public hearing we spoke about whether or not divisional offices would remain open. That is an avenue for local input and local representation for my constituents in the Scenic Rim electorate. There should be public notification of the advisory panel—I support the amendment to be moved by the member for Warrego—because we need to know that the people who are on that advisory panel are independent minded residents of Ipswich free of any interference by the Labor Party in that process. In fact, I think the local MPs representing the Ipswich City Council area should also have some input into who goes onto that advisory panel—not the final decision but the ability to nominate people who would be willing to serve on that advisory panel.

The other issue that was raised in the public briefing was the ability of the administrator to make the necessary changes to personnel at Ipswich City Council. One of the reasons the minister gave for bringing this bill into this House—this unprecedented bill to dissolve a council—was that he did not want the appeal process to be tied up in legal action for months or years, so he is short-circuiting that. The same could be said when it comes to the appointment of certain senior officers at the council. They are all bound under the industrial relations framework that we have here in Queensland, and I want to make sure that the administrator has the direct power to hire and fire senior executive officers at the council so that legal action does not hinder the reform in governance and accountability processes at Ipswich City Council at the staffing level.

I know that the member for Bundamba is a proud Ipswich daughter. Her father was a coalminer. She has often said that she is the daughter of a coalminer. I have said before, too, that I am the grandson of a coalminer from Rosewood, which is in the Ipswich City Council area. We are all concerned, as people who love the area, about what has gone on in local government. It is now over to the government, the minister and the administrator they appoint to make sure those issues are fixed.

There is no other buck-passing to happen here. It rests squarely now with the Minister for Local Government. I hope that he has the best interests of reforming this council at heart and that we are not going to allow the administrator to mark time until 2020 when there is another election. No doubt, as we heard from the member for Bundamba, there will be a Labor ticket running in Ipswich City Council. That is an important issue we need to remember when it comes to getting the administrator on the job.

In closing, we all wish this had turned out differently for Ipswich City Council. My great-great-grandfather was the mayor of Ipswich for one year in 1905, and I reckon he would be rolling in his grave to see what has been going on there not only over the last 12 months or so in particular but also over the last several years. I say to the residents of my electorate who live in the Ipswich City Council area that my door is open and my office is available to represent you when it comes to local issues as they relate to the Ipswich City Council now that, following the passage of this bill, you will be without a full-time councillor for the Ipswich City Council.

Interruption.

DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT


Error in Division

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Order! It has come to my attention that there was an error in the count of the last vote. Instead of 87 ayes, there were 86 ayes. For the benefit of *Hansard*, I correct the record on that.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISSOLUTION OF IPSWICH CITY COUNCIL) BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1901.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (4.11 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018, and I do so with a heavy and conflicted heart. I am a fairly new member in the Ipswich region, having secured the state seat of Jordan at the most recent state election. My electorate takes in the established suburbs of Gales and Camira and the more newly developed and growing areas of Greater Springfield which includes Springfield Lakes, Augustine Heights and Spring Mountain. In many ways my electorate represents the new Ipswich—dominated by new housing, new industries and a new way of doing things—but in the nine months that I have been representing the electors in Ipswich I have seen the conflict between the old and the new, the ‘business as usual’ versus ‘disrupting the expected’, the ‘us’ and ‘them’ that sadly pervades and has been allowed to pervade.

This may have something to do with our location, sitting halfway between the Ipswich centre and the Brisbane CBD—never quite belonging to one, not quite with the other. We have also been particularly fortunate in our part of the world where good master planning via early state government approvals and a single developer has allowed Greater Springfield to grow in a more cohesive, strategic and community centred manner than perhaps other more established regions of Ipswich. We have certainly been blessed with quality community infrastructure—the Robelle Domain parklands, the impressive Orion Lagoon, the smaller district parks, the sports fields and community facilities. These are all things that the council can point to as achievements, and I agree, but they must also credit that much of this has been achieved through the significant infrastructure contributions imposed on housing developments within our part of Ipswich. Most of what has been spent in Greater Springfield has come from the ratepayers of Greater Springfield—something I struggle not to remind critics of when they say that Springfield gets everything.

In the last nine months I have worked closely with all three of the local government representatives within my electorate. I do wish to thank Councillor Paul Tully, Councillor Sheila Ireland and Councillor David Morrison. They have all been very helpful as I have settled into my role. I have found them to be professional in representing their divisions and I am sad at the thought of losing these good working relationships that have been established. But here is the conflict I feel and of which I spoke earlier: I have struggled to reconcile these individual working relationships with what has clearly now been shown to be an unhealthy culture within Ipswich council—a lack of oversight and accountability and a clear lack of transparency.

I have not been swayed by hearsay and innuendo. I have not followed Facebook comments, irate community associations or potential future mayoral candidates. I have not sought to take advantage of this extraordinarily sad situation for our community by making comments I cannot validate just to garner front-page headlines in the *Queensland Times*. I have waited diligently for evidence and I have kept quiet and respectful for the process to unfold.

The Crime and Corruption Commission has undertaken a long and thorough investigation into the Ipswich City Council through Operation Windage. The resultant charges that have stemmed from this and the final public report into Operation Windage released last week has, as the CCC states—

... identified significant governance failures and cultural issues that appear to have been occurring over many years and which would not have occurred in an environment in which the values of transparency, accountability and good governance were paramount.

The report goes on to say—

While the CCC accepts that some individual councillors may not have been directly involved in or aware of the extent of some practices, they were none the less during their time as councillors part of a collective body that was accountable for the good management of the Council, as entrusted to them by the voters and ratepayers of Ipswich.

Further, the three reports prepared by advisory firm McGrathNicol on behalf of Ipswich City Council into the council owned entities also highlighted serious concerns of multiple alleged breaches of the Corporations Act including failure to lodge audited financial statements, to prepare a director's report and failure to sign off on board minutes, putting decisions into doubt. There was also no oversight through the appointment of any independent directors, allowing the perception of a closed shop or something to hide to pervade these companies.


I have read each of the reports outlined above, the CCC's report into council and the Economics and Governance Committee report into the draft bill we are debating today. I have relied on evidence, not supposition, to determine my position on the future of the Ipswich City Council. I have also given bearing to the views of my constituents who have approached me directly to discuss the legislation. I feel that collectively there has been a collapse of public confidence in the council and in the councillors. Whilst many have sympathy for individual councillors, as I do, most agree that, in the words of the CCC chairman, they stand or fall as they must under the Local Government Act and the Constitution of Queensland as the body—the entity—collectively responsible for the good governance of that community. There has been a failure of that.

The decision to appoint an interim administrator is extraordinary though not unique, having occurred in Queensland previously for the Gold Coast City Council in 1978, the Johnstone shire council in 2007 and a number of smaller regional councils that have had similar long-term administrator appointments to improve their capacity. I do not propose to stand here to say the next two years are going to be a walk in the park. If the legislation is passed by the House, the role of the administrator will be complex and is likely to be greater than just the skills and experience of one individual. The Local Government Act does provide the minister with the ability to create an advisory committee to give the interim administrator advice about the performance of the council's responsibilities, and I am pleased the minister will proceed with this provision.

I also wish to ensure that ratepayers have confidence that they will be able to raise issues of concern around council matters and that these issues will be addressed. I appreciate that some ratepayers may also wish to revisit decisions or actions of the council that perhaps they felt were unfair or not taken seriously enough at the time. My intention is to work with my local Ipswich communities on ensuring their voices are heard during this time of transition and I and my office will be there to assist where we can. Most importantly, I want to see confidence return to our region. Our business community deserves to have their businesses judged on their merits, not the sadly sullied reputation of their location. We have strong and innovative industry within the Ipswich region and the capacity to see that grow even stronger. We have an incredible livability within our region that can and should be envied and we need to continue to build the necessary infrastructure to not compromise or devalue that livability. We need to create more local employment to stop the drain to Brisbane and we need more and better social and government services in our communities, and we need a council that understands and is committed to this shared vision.

I recently met with 60 new residents at a welcome to the neighbourhood event. I was struck by their happiness of building or finding their dream home, their enthusiasm for what our region offers in terms of amenity and the belief that they had made the right decision to move to Ipswich. I want to ensure that they never regret that decision. Finally, I would like to say that this has not been an easy time for me or for my colleagues in the Ipswich region. As I have stated publicly, there are a number of councillors whom I consider to be friends and who have supported me as I have supported them. As we all know, friendships in politics are not always easy to make and it hurts to know that some of my friendships with these councillors may not be the same after today.

I was elected to represent my community in Ipswich—a community that has gone through a very difficult time this past year. We need confidence and certainty returned to the Ipswich City Council. As the Queensland Local Government Reform Alliance put it so simply, you have to make a break and a temporary administration is the only way to make a break. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.19 pm): Firstly, I refer to the contribution in this debate of the member for Bundamba. I believe we heard a compelling case as to why it is poor form for this Labor government to propose to shut down this parliament—to create a standing gag—because it does not like hearing voices that disagree with it. The member for Bundamba spoke out about the corruption in the Ipswich City Council and was shunned and gagged by her own government. There is a real concern that this state Labor government now wants to put a further gag upon this parliament. Members of parliament need to speak on issues of importance to their community, even ones that could get them sued outside the walls of this parliament. It is a special parliamentary privilege for members to be able to speak on behalf of their community. There are issues that require that protection in order for members to speak up on behalf of their people.


I can almost see the drag marks on the carpet where Labor members of parliament were dragged kicking and screaming to act on the stench of corruption hanging over the Labor aligned Ipswich City Council. It is hard to believe how this corrupt Labor controlled Ipswich City Council operated for as long as it did. It had a level of protection of a state Labor government that did not have the courage to act. It did not listen to the concerns that were raised by one of its own—the member for Bundamba. She paid a price for speaking out. Firstly, she was ignored and then she was shunned by the Premier's and Deputy Premier's government. The corrupt Labor Ipswich City Council does not deserve our sympathy and it does not deserve the protection of this parliament. It has trashed the good name of its good city, its good people and it has abused their trust.

This is extraordinary legislation before the House to address an extraordinary systemic failure of a local government that was allowed, as another member of parliament said, to fester. This was not an overnight train wreck of civic corruption and maladministration—and let us not forget that maladministration is as bad as corruption because its impact upon the people is the same. This maladministration and corruption had unfolded over many years. Rather than acting on reports of abuse of power, corruption and maladministration in the Ipswich City Council, the Palaszczuk Labor government played down the problems. When in May the state Palaszczuk Labor government finally moved to act, it was inept in its response. We are again in this parliament as more legislation is brought in to try again to sack the Ipswich City Council and allow for the appointment of an administrator.

After listening to question time this morning, I do not believe that Labor Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk has properly answered questions about what she knew and when and what she was told particularly by the member for Bundamba going back years concerning allegations of corruption and maladministration by Labor councillors in the Ipswich City Council. Sacking councils should not be done lightly but, as there are significant public interest reasons, it has become necessary to do this in the case of the Ipswich City Council, where systemic issues of grave concern have been reported. However, there needs to be checks and balances around a power to sack councils as this power also can be abused. I support the amendments to be moved by my colleague the shadow minister for local government and member for Warrego, Ann Leahy. They are about providing more accountability and transparency particularly around those who are appointed to the advisory committee as they allow for those names to be publicly gazetted, to be put in the public domain.

People need transparency and certainty of their future and their local area. As has also been raised, administration is not ideal. It is necessary owing to a terrible failure of governance that has impacted people's lives. We have heard about the excessive dumps being dumped on Ipswich by the Ipswich City Council and an undermining of the planning scheme, which has caused great distress to people in Ipswich. The people of Ipswich will need to have representation in relation to local issues. We still do not know how well the administrator will be able to respond to those local issues where people genuinely need to have their voice heard. As I said, administration may be necessary, but it is not ideal. Ultimately, we want elected officials acting under the law with propriety and ethics, fighting for their area, standing up for issues and being aware that, if they do not, they can get voted out. Bureaucrats do not have that impetus to perform. The sooner good governance can be restored with democratically elected people to Ipswich to listen and act on behalf of their constituency the better.

We are reminded that the Ipswich community did not deserve what they received from those who abused their trust. It is not fair, because the community of Ipswich and the greater area warned of these terrible issues that have come to light. This state Labor government failed in its duty of care to act, to listen and to put in place effective remedies when it was alerted to the problems in Ipswich. We should not forget that this state Labor government has let down the Ipswich area by allowing its mates in this Labor council to continue to operate with impunity until now, when we see this extraordinary action being brought to bear in this parliament.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (4.27 pm): Today is a really sad day. I think it is fair to say that we have seen some of the darkest days in local government in recent times. The CCC validates that through the work that it has done, as has the Integrity Commissioner. Today, we have in front of us an extraordinary bill to pass through this House. It is an unfortunate but necessary bill that has arisen because the underpinning principle and purpose of the Local Government Act has been broken. The Local Government Act states clearly—

A local government is an elected body that is responsible for the good rule and local government of a part of Queensland.

It is responsible as a collective to deliver for its community. During the inquiry process, we heard about the systemic corruption rife within the council and the existence of a longstanding collective culture of fear and cover-up. In its submission to the committee, the CCC referred to 'significant and extremely concerning governance failures and cultural issues within the council', including an improper

use of power and influence for personal benefit; a lack of oversight and accountability for expenditure and public resources; inappropriate relationships between the council and the private sector—in particular, property developers and contractors; the use of mechanisms that allowed avoidance of scrutiny of actions and decision-making; an inability or unwillingness of council officers to stand up to inappropriate instructions or behaviour from the former mayor; failures to report suspicions of corruption, including by successive chief executive officers; instructions to council officers to breach policy and procedures and falsify records; and abusive attitudes towards council officers.

Today, I am really disappointed by the contributions made by those opposite. They were largely flights of fancy. I want to reflect particularly on the contribution of the member for Broadwater. Let me be very clear: the mess that the Labor Party is here today cleaning up is a mess that was exacerbated by the LNP—that is right, those on other side of the House. They have very short memories.

This is a dirty mess created by the LNP and the then member for Mundingburra, the LNP's local government minister. He was the architect, he was the designer, of changes to legislation that has enabled this type of integrity and transparency issue to occur within the governance frameworks of council—the train wreck that allowed maladministration, as the member for Maroochydore put it. I would like to table two media releases by the then local government minister, the member for Broadwater.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 6 September 2012, by the former minister for local government, community recovery and resilience, Mr David Crisafulli MP, titled 'Mayors unite to push for Local Government Act changes' [\[1151\]](#).

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 14 November 2012, by the former minister for local government, community recovery and resilience, Mr David Crisafulli MP, titled 'Ipswich Mayor backs Council reform' [\[1152\]](#).

One media release is dated 14 November 2012 and is titled 'Ipswich mayor backs council reform'. It goes on to say—

The biggest reform of Local Government in a generation will become law after changes to the Act were passed in Parliament late last night, with the support of Ipswich City Council Mayor Paul Pisasale.

Local Government Minister David Crisafulli said amendments to the Local Government and City of Brisbane Acts will change the way councils do business.

'I've met with Queensland's 73 Councils, and they wanted change,' Mr Crisafulli said.

'The Mayors and councillors are united on this, regardless of political leanings, the size of their Council, or their location.

If we want to change the economy, we need to change the things that were holding Queensland back.'

Mayor Pisasale thanked the Minister for the changes.

'Under the old legislation, I couldn't ask my CEO to do something without keeping a record of the directive. How much red tape is that? Mayor Pisasale said.

Can you believe that, member for Nanango and member for Broadwater? 'How much red tape is that?' This red tape is the checks and balances. It is what represents transparency in the governance and framework of our local councils. When the member for Glass House in his contribution spoke of festering, let us again be clear: this change in legislation was the moment where the LNP opened the wound wide allowing the festering rot to set in.

During the inquiry process we went out to Ipswich to hear directly from councillors who will be impacted by this bill. Both Councillor Tully and Councillor Bromage raised concerns with changes made to section 170 of the Local Government Act in 2012 which amended the provision that allows mayors to give a direction to the CEO or senior executive employees so that there was no requirement for the request to be recorded—an apparent move to reduce red tape and to empower local government bodies. Councillor Tully advised—

Every councillor, including the mayor, previously was prevented from directing staff and it was an offence for them to give such direction. Section 170 was amended in 2012 to provide that the mayor may give a direction to the chief executive officer or senior executive employees.

Councillor Tully went on to say—

The legislation says that we do not get involved in day-to-day operational issues. There are good reasons for that. Councillors under the act set the policy direction of the council.

Councillor Bromage went on to advise—

As you know, the ability to record that decision for everyone to see is not in the act anymore whereas it previously was. We feel that there are a lot of decisions that are made outside of council's and councillors' knowledge as well.

...

I think most of those issues that you have raised there are staff matters, where the direction is actually set by the CEO for the staff to follow. The majority of those issues that you raised about staff not following procedure, the payments and things like that are not a councillor's role.


Further to this, it was argued by some submitters that the behaviours of those charged were only uncovered due to the CCC being able to investigate using its investigative powers and therefore councillors could not be expected to have known about the behaviour of other councillors or council staff without similar powers.

When the member for Broadwater talks about rotten apples and wonders how they came to be in existence in our council, he need look no further than the very legislation that he brought into this House as the then LNP minister for local government. The member for Nanango should look no further than over her shoulder to find the creator of this mess—in fact, she should probably keep looking closely over her shoulder.

In concluding, ultimately it is as the Chair of the Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, summed up at the public hearing supporting the dissolution of the Ipswich City Council—

There has been a collapse of public confidence in that council and those councillors. That is what is being addressed here. It is not about them individually being guilty of misconduct or otherwise. It is about systemic failures collectively of good governance, and a lack of transparency and accountability across-the-board. They stand or fall, as they must, under the Local Government Act and the Constitution of Queensland as the body, the entity, collectively responsible for the good governance of that community. There has been a failure of that.

Evidently there is a problem with the culture and organisation of Ipswich City Council that only a fresh set of eyes from an administrator can get to the root causes of and that will charter a new course that restores integrity and accountability within the framework of council and its operations. It is incumbent on this House to ensure that we restore faith in the function of council for the people of Ipswich—they deserve that much—that we provide the mechanism that ensures good rule is restored and adherence is made to the principles and operations of local government that the community of Ipswich expects. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.35 pm): I rise to address the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. I will start with the contribution that we have just heard from the member for Redlands. What an absolute farce. The attack on the member for Broadwater was unwarranted. It is unfair. It is inaccurate. It is false to attack the member for Broadwater. This crisis is a making of the Labor Party and that is clear for all to see, not only in Ipswich but across Queensland. When will Labor ever learn? The incompetence of this Labor government and its steadfast refusal to adhere to date to the principles of transparency, accountability and good governance clearly knows no bounds.

Mr Power interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I hear the member for Logan interjecting, yet sadly for the people of Queensland, and in particular for Ipswich, we have seen this all before. It is almost as if those opposite go out of their way to stick to the same script whenever a new crisis engulfs this government. We all know how it goes. Step 1: an issue begins to surface. Labor says, 'Nothing to see here. Move on.' Step 2: the Liberal National Party proposes a common-sense solution, only to be ignored by Labor. Step 3: the issue then turns to crisis and Labor scrambles for a solution. Step 4: Labor then adopts the LNP's common-sense solution. Step 5: repeat. With the entire process repeating again when a new Labor crisis emerges.

Yet again and true to form the Labor Party followed the same script as the issues surrounding the Ipswich City Council only grew from bad to worse. As concerns regarding the Ipswich City Council were raised last year by the member for Bundamba, what was the response from the Labor Party? 'Nothing to see here. Move on.' In fact, it was worse than that. The former ALP state president, Dick Williams, went so far as to call on the member for Bundamba to resign because, as he put it, it had nothing to do with the greater good of the ALP. Talk about shooting the messenger.

I heard the member for Bundamba's contribution. I pay tribute to her because what she outlined with respect to the vilification, the abuse, the harassment, the bullying that not only she has experienced but many innocent people as well in the Ipswich community have experienced is absolutely disgraceful. Clearly there are systemic failures which are going to be addressed, but personally what she and many innocent people have experienced in Ipswich is absolutely terrible. I have not always agreed with her or seen eye to eye with her, particularly when she was the shadow minister for Health in opposition, but she did pose the question where were the unions? The culture of many of the unions includes harassment, bullying and intimidation. We have seen that in relation to the findings of the Royal Commission into Trade Union Governance and Corruption and what has happened at Oaky North as well. The culture of the union movement to a certain extent is the same culture that has existed within Ipswich City Council.

In my electorate of Moggill I have had a number of residents, particularly in the area of Priors Pocket Road, contact me about industrial estate development application approvals within the jurisdiction of Ipswich City Council. I have, in fact, written to the Crime and Corruption Commission about those matters raised by residents given the range and plethora of issues that are still emerging in relation to the functioning of Ipswich City Council.

The Liberal National Party has been calling for the dismissal of the Ipswich City Council and the installation of an independent administrator since May of this year when it was clear that Labor could not be trusted to manage this sorry saga. Yet it is only now, after scrambling to deal with the fallout, that the Labor government has come around to the same conclusion—in other words, as I mentioned before, step 4: Labor adopts the LNP's common-sense solution.

In that time, under the Premier and her Minister for Local Government, Labor has done all that it can to mismanage this untenable situation that in essence has run for months and was years in the making. We know that, over a long period, Labor has been running a protection racket for its own people. The Labor protection racket must end today and certainly it will end today. For years, there have been concerns surrounding the Ipswich City Council and its ALP aligned councillors and mayors, and for years this Premier and the ALP have done nothing but sit on their hands and turn a blind eye to the allegations plaguing their Labor mates.

For years, the good people of Ipswich have been let down by Labor and Labor has allowed bullying, harassment, alleged corruption, and greedy and dubious practices to flourish. Earlier this year, the Minister for Local Government rushed through parliament new powers that, as the people of Ipswich were assured, would fix the issues in the Ipswich City Council. Fast forward and here we are, yet again, with the Minister for Local Government desperately wanting to rush through further legislation to fix the laws that previously he told us would fix the issues at the Ipswich City Council.

Is there a ministry that the member for Sandgate cannot touch without running into chaos? First we had the 'rail fail' debacle courtesy of the member's tenure as—

Ms Grace: That's so cheap.

Dr ROWAN: It is just fact. I hear the minister interjecting.

An opposition member: They can't handle the truth.

Dr ROWAN: They cannot handle the truth. We had rail fail under his tenure as Minister for Transport and now, under the same member's stewardship of the Local Government portfolio, again we find ourselves in this House trying to clear up Labor's mess. If we did not know any better, we could be forgiven for thinking that the member for Sandgate was also in charge of the embarrassing Commonwealth Games closing ceremony fiasco.

Just last month, after announcing his intention to bring further legislation to the parliament to fix this sorry mess, the minister was quoted as saying—


What the city of Ipswich needs right now is good governance and good financial administration.

It is a sad state of affairs when this state Labor government sees fit to lecture on good governance and good financial administration, yet here we are.

The Crime and Corruption Commission report is a damning indictment on the culture and functioning of the Ipswich City Council. The decision to support the legislation to ultimately dissolve the Ipswich City Council is not one that the LNP has taken lightly. In normal circumstances, the thought of a state government completely wiping the slate clean and removing entirely an elected council is not a thought or idea that should ever have to be considered by this parliament, but these are not normal circumstances. As much as this is about providing certainty to the ratepayers of Ipswich and restoring trust in their local council, it is also about cleaning up after Labor's mess—a mess that was started by Labor, was allowed to grow under Labor and, almost to the very end, was largely ignored by Labor.

In May of this year, when the Premier prematurely declared that enough is enough, she told this House that there were too many charges levelled against too many officials for anyone to have confidence in the management of the Ipswich City Council. That was when there were 12 people facing 66 charges by the Crime and Corruption Commission; now we have 15 people and 86 charges. I say to the Premier that there are too many charges levelled against too many officials of this Labor council for anyone to have confidence in her Labor government to manage this saga, given Labor's extensive connections to the scandal. Let us make no mistake: the failures of the Ipswich City Council are failures of the Queensland Labor Party. The people of Ipswich deserve better from their council, the people of Queensland deserve better from their state government and Labor should apologise to the many innocent victims of their mess as it relates to the Ipswich City Council.

Finally, LNP shadow minister Ann Leahy has foreshadowed some sensible amendments, especially with respect to the transparency of the advisory panel. I encourage all members of the House to support the LNP's amendments.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (4.44 pm): What a mess! What a mess the Labor Party has got into with the Ipswich City Council. There is no doubt that the community of Ipswich knows that this is the Labor Party's mess. As I said this morning, this is the fourth attempt by the minister to fix this. In parliament one or two sittings ago, he said that his solution was the last legislation that we passed. Of course, then they went to the Supreme Court and now he is circumventing the Supreme Court. We know that at estimates the minister got into all sorts of trouble when the CCC chair, Mr Alan MacSporran, was asked directly by the shadow Attorney-General, 'Mr MacSporran, did you tell the minister to do this?' and Mr MacSporran clearly said, 'No.' There have been different propositions from this minister as we have gone along.

Once I have read from these documents I will table them. I will table a letter that I wrote to the CCC Chair, Mr Alan MacSporran, on 15 May 2018. I wrote—

I am writing about your ongoing investigation into allegations of corruption at the Ipswich City Council.

On Wednesday 2 May 2018, I was a witness to a conversation between Jo-Ann Miller MP, Member for Bundamba and Hon Stirling Hinchliffe MP, Minister for Local Government. Other Members and staff were also in the vicinity. The conversation was in relation to the ongoing investigation into Ipswich City Council. The conversation occurred in an anteroom behind the Legislative Assembly chamber at about 6:15pm.

Ms Miller raised with Mr Hinchliffe the proposition that she was entitled to an apology for her complaints about former Ipswich Mayor Paul Pisasale being disregarded by the Premier and the Palaszczuk Government.

During the conversation, Ms Miller said on multiple occasions that over a period of years complaints about Mr Pisasale's conduct, had been put to the Premier and to the Administrative Committee of the Labor Party.

I am concerned by what I heard. I am concerned firstly that evidence relevant to your ongoing investigation may be being withheld by the Labor Party. I am also concerned, in light of the cavalier nature of the dismissals by the Premier to Ms Miller's earlier complaints that the evidence may be at risk of destruction.

Further on the evening of 13 May 2018, Ms Miller advised me, in the presence of others, that the Premier would have you believe that Ms Miller only made complaints about Ipswich in opposition. Ms Miller advised me that this was not the case and she directly told the Premier about the alleged corruption in both opposition and government.

I asked the CCC to investigate those scenarios. I table a copy of that letter dated 15 May 2018.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 15 May 2018, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Chairman, Crime and Corruption Commission, Mr Alan MacSporran QC, regarding allegations of corruption at Ipswich City Council and the conduct of the Premier [\[1153\]](#).

In response, the CCC wrote back to me on 16 July, some two months after I wrote the complaint. They wrote—

Thank you for your letter to the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) dated 15 May 2018, in which you raised concerns about the actions of the Premier of Queensland, Ms Anastasia Palaszczuk MP.

We understand that on 2 May 2018 you overheard a conversation between Ms Jo-Ann Miller MP, and the Minister for Local Government, Mr Stirling Hinchliffe MP. You provide that the conversation concerned the ongoing investigation of the Ipswich City Council. Ms Miller was suggesting that she was owed an apology for complaints she had previously made about Mr Pisasale that had been disregarded by the Premier and the Government. She apparently referred to making complaints about Mr Pisasale's conduct to the Premier on multiple occasions.

This conversation caused you to become concerned that evidence relevant to the CCC's investigation of the Ipswich City Council, was being withheld by the Government. Further, that relevant evidence may be at risk of destruction.

The CCC notes that you could not identify any specific incidents and your complaint appears to be based on possibilities raised by the conversation you overheard.

As you are aware, under the *Crime and Corruption Act 2001* (the Act), the CCC's role is to ensure that complaints involving suspected 'corruption' on the part of Queensland's elected officials are dealt with appropriately.

Before the CCC may take action in relation to a complaint of corruption, we must be satisfied that the information available to us raises a suspicion that corruption has occurred. Taking action in the absence of a suspicion would be an unjustifiable use of the CCC's limited resources.

The Act recognises that it is appropriate for us to take no further action on a complaint in those circumstances.

While the matters you have raised, as outlined above would, if proved, amount to corrupt conduct, the CCC considers you have not provided any evidence to raise a suspicion that the elements of section 15 of the Act are satisfied.

For those reasons the CCC is unable to take any further action in relation to your concerns.

I now table that letter from the CCC, dated 16 July 2018, eight weeks after I sent a complaint to the CCC about conversations.


Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 July 2018, from the Acting Director, Integrity Services, Crime and Corruption Commission, Ms Elizabeth Foulger, to the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP regarding concerns about the conduct of the Premier [\[1154\]](#).

It took the CCC eight weeks to come back to me and say, 'You can't provide any evidence of corruption in the Labor Party and the administrative committee of the Labor Party.' I never said I had it. I said that the member for Bundamba had it, but the CCC never asked the member for Bundamba about the allegations. The CCC never went to the Premier and asked, 'Is the member for Bundamba telling the truth?' The CCC said because of its 'limited resources' it did not investigate it. I think it is negligent of the CCC not to investigate the complaint.

How did it take eight weeks for the CCC to come up with something that says, 'Member for Kawana, you did not provide any evidence'? I never said I had the evidence. What I said was that I overheard a conversation with the member for Bundamba saying that she was owed an apology because she had warned the Premier in opposition and in government about the corruption in Ipswich. The CCC never lifted a finger and made a phone call to the member for Bundamba and asked, 'Is this true?' They never went to the Premier. They never put the Premier in the star chamber and asked, 'Is this true?' They simply dismissed the allegations that I raised.

I think it should be of concern to all Queenslanders that the CCC did not take seriously enough this issue when we had a member of parliament elected some 15 or 20 years ago, as the member for Bundamba was, alleging that she had told the Premier in opposition and in government about corruption in Ipswich. The CCC never picked up the phone to Labor head office to ask if this was true, never picked up the phone to the Premier, the Deputy Premier or Minister Hinchliffe and asked, 'Are these allegations true?' They said that the member for Kawana could not produce the evidence.

I am not the member for Bundamba. The only person who knows the truth in this is the member for Bundamba, the Premier—the member for Inala—and the Deputy Premier of this state. The CCC should review the complaint that I made, pick up the phone to the member for Bundamba and the Premier and find out who was telling the truth.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018 as amended. I do so very reluctantly, for many reasons. As anyone who has heard my speeches in this parliament would know, I am proud to represent the residents of Ipswich West. I was born and raised in Ipswich and I am the fifth generation of my family to live there. It is a great city, a great community and has a wonderful history. It currently has a population of about 200,000 people. This is set to double by 2031.

Anything that reflects poorly on the city of Ipswich disappoints me, and nothing more so than a bill that will dissolve the Ipswich City Council and replace the councillors with an administrator. I can understand why this legislation is of concern to some Ipswich residents, and I share those concerns. I also share the concerns of those people supporting the legislation, including the member for Bundamba, and groups like the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce and Industry who have called for the dismissal of the Ipswich City Council. The bill provides that an interim administrator will act in place of the Ipswich city councillors until the conclusion of the 2020 quadrennial election of councillors for the Ipswich local government area.

We face the reality that 15 people associated with the council have been charged with a total of 86 criminal offences. The Premier advised the parliament on 3 May—

Enough is enough. This will stop. I am stopping it. The people of Ipswich deserve better.

The Minister for Local Government went on to advise the parliament on the same day—

When a community loses faith in its elected leaders, as is the case in Ipswich, it is time to act. The impacts we are already seeing have been devastating on the morale of the council staff, including on the personal wellbeing of individuals, on the council's ability to deliver good policy outcomes and on the Ipswich community as a whole. This government has not taken this decision lightly. However, I have reached the conclusion that the Ipswich City Council can no longer function effectively.

The dire situation of the Ipswich City Council may have best been described by one of the more junior Ipswich city councillors, Councillor David Martin, who is reported as saying at yesterday's council meeting—

There are 80-odd charges pending so something is obviously not right.

He also said—

There has certainly been a stench, a stain, an oppression, a headiness not just over the city but over the Ipswich City Council.

I am friends with most of the Ipswich city councillors and some of them I have been friends with since my school days. Some are fellow members of the Labor Party. I acknowledge that none of the 10 current Ipswich city councillors have been charged with any criminal offences. Obviously, I feel great sympathy for the councillors and their families. I acknowledge the affect this bill, if passed, will have not just on their position as a councillor but on their lives generally.

The Crime and Corruption Commission, the CCC, have been investigating the Ipswich City Council since 2016 by way of Operation Belcarra after allegations of improper conduct were made to the CCC concerning the Ipswich City Council, the Gold Coast City Council, the Logan City Council and the Moreton Bay City Council 2016 council elections. As a result of this investigation, to date 15 people associated with the Ipswich City Council, including two mayors, two chief executive officers and one head of department, have been charged with 86 offences and that list keeps growing.

In October 2017 the CCC released its report titled *Operation Belcarra: A blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local government*. This report outlines serious concerns with regard to the administration and governance of local government in Queensland. The report made 31 recommendations to reform local government in Queensland. On 14 August 2018 the CCC released a further report entitled *Culture and corruption risks in local government: Lessons from an investigation into Ipswich City Council (Operation Windage)*.

The report outlines serious failures of culture and conduct at the Ipswich City Council including: lack of oversight and accountability for expenditure and public resources; use of mechanisms which allowed avoidance of scrutiny of actions and requests for information under the Right to Information Act; inappropriate relationships between the council and private sector, particularly property developers and contractors; and improper use of power and influence for personal benefit. The report found a wide spectrum of serious governance and integrity failures and it is very disturbing reading.

There are numerous allegations outlined in the report that are of serious concern to me. These include: the spending of over \$80,000 of ratepayers' money in legal fees by the council in 2016 to defend freedom of information requests; the lack of fair treatment of local businesses when they tendered for council business; junior staff members accepting traffic infringements on behalf of councillors; the use of private email addresses to avoid FOI applications; and—the one that is of most serious concern to me—the bullying of council staff by councillors.

This government cannot ignore the clear evidence of widespread wrongdoing at the highest levels of the Ipswich City Council. Honest, hardworking staff have been adversely affected by this unacceptable behaviour, along with local businesses and the Ipswich economy. Staff who wanted to report corrupt behaviour feared losing their jobs or the prospect of having their careers ruined just for doing the right thing.

I have been contacted by a number of staff members who have raised serious concerns with me as to bullying and improper conduct by some long-time Ipswich city councillors, but all made it very clear they feared retribution by the council if it ever became known that they had spoken to me. I am sad to say that I have been personally subjected to bullying by some long-time Ipswich city councillors in my capacity as the member for Ipswich West. I have experienced angry phone calls at 6 am in response to some innocuous comment I have made concerning the council that has been reported in the *Queensland Times*, threats to support my political opponents and threats to run against me in retribution. If ultimately my support for this bill costs me my seat of Ipswich West then so be it. My political wellbeing is less important than the wellbeing of the city of Ipswich.


The Chair of CCC, Alan MacSporran, has stated that he is of the opinion that the council failures uncovered by the CCC's investigation cannot be fixed by the current councillors. While the investigations of the CCC may lead to the dismissal of Ipswich City Council, if the bill is passed, this is just part of a suite of significant local government reforms being made by the Palaszczuk government. These reforms aim to make all Queensland councils more accountable while supporting the vast majority of councillors who are doing the right thing by their communities.

Hopefully these reforms will discourage or prevent the improper conduct of the type uncovered by the CCC in the Ipswich City Council. These legislative reforms include the passing of the Local Government (Councillor Complaints) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, with more local government legislated reforms in the pipeline.

The Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018 was reviewed by the Economics and Governance Committee and its findings were detailed in its report No. 12 of the 56th Parliament. The committee made three recommendations: firstly, that the Legislative Assembly

pass the draft bill; secondly, that the draft bill be amended to allow for the minister to appoint an acting interim administrator in circumstances of short-term absences of the interim administrator; and, thirdly, that the draft bill be amended to clarify that an Ipswich city councillor can be nominated as a candidate or for appointment as a councillor for any local government election in 2020.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Minister for Local Government, the Economics and Governance Committee, the committee secretariat, the Hansard reporters, as well as those people, groups and organisations who made submissions. I thank the committee for holding a hearing in Ipswich which I was pleased to attend. Finally, I would like to thank those people, including some Ipswich city councillors, who went to the trouble to let me know their views both for and against the bill.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (5.00 pm): We are having this debate today to put an end to the ongoing scandal, corruption and maladministration unfolding at Labor's Ipswich City Council. As a member of the opposition, I will not be opposing this bill and I will be supporting the member for Warrego and the shadow minister's amendments because the people of Ipswich need a clean slate. They need to be able to trust the administration and trust their council once again. This is sad enough, but the bungling way the Labor government have tried to deal with the Ipswich issue, which has been festering—this bill is the minister's third attempt—has meant that this has cast a dark cloud over all local governments across this state.

I have 10 local government areas in the electorate of Gregory. These councils start one hour's drive from the coast at Duaringa to cover right across the Simpson Desert and the Channel Country on the Northern Territory border. There are 10 bodies of mayors and councillors serving over 40 of Queensland's towns. Without these fine men and women—and this is important—it would be near impossible to provide on-the-ground administration that is responsive to people's day-to-day lives in Western Queensland.

We have fantastic councillors and mayors in Queensland. Councillors, mayors, CEOs and people who work for councils in Western Queensland do it as a service, not as a career. It is hard enough to try to find people to stand for council and to stand for mayor in these vast council areas across the state. Without these fine men and women, we would not have the councils we have today. Without their efforts on behalf of their constituents and without the knowledge they provide to state and federal governments, it would be far more difficult, inefficient and expensive to try to administer this huge expanse of regional Queensland.

To these fine people, local government is a community service, not a career. I can vouch for the hours each and every one of them devote to it. All of them see service in local government as a privilege and they are honoured to serve their shires. The reason I am saying this is that there are good people out there and people who do it for the right reasons. I suspect that it is an attitude that has been lost by a small number of people in a south-east local government called the Ipswich City Council—and I say a small number of people in that council.

Instead of these self-interested candidates, what they need is people who actually love their communities, take pride in their communities and are motivated by a spirit of public service in their own communities. Most councillors in regional Queensland are long-term residents who know that the prosperity, amenity and infrastructure they enjoy today is a result of the hard work of their predecessors. They come to local government wanting to maintain and improve upon this legacy to benefit those who come after them.

On this side of the House we have some fine examples of local councillors such as the member for Burdekin and the member for Gympie. The member for Lockyer, Jim McDonald, has played a significant role in his own shire and, as a police officer and as a local councillor, made sure that his community was safe. I pay tribute to the dedicated efforts and sheer hard work and time invested by the many fine men and women serving local government across my seat of Gregory. This is what local government is supposed to be.

In sad contrast, we are having to deal with this legislation today because there is a former mayor and a suspended mayor from the Ipswich City Council and former council staff and council contractors who are facing 86 charges brought by the Crime and Corruption Commission. We are having to deal with this legislation today because the ratepayers of the Ipswich City Council have watched over many, many months these scandals unfold on the nightly news and on the front page of their newspapers. These charges have not been the result of a voluntary confession or remorse. They have only come about because of the work by the Crime and Corruption Commission and people continuing to put their story forward and not giving up.

How, as an Ipswich City Council resident, do you watch this drawn-out effort and not wonder where the end is? How do you not wonder whether there are matters that will never be uncovered? How do you continue to interact with your council with any confidence at all? To make matters worse, we have a state Labor government that at first professed ignorance to these issues and then has proceeded to handle the problem in a way that beggars belief in its bungling. First, the government announced the suspension of four mayors and a councillor under new laws that did not exist at the time of the announcement. Having issued not one but two show cause notices to the Ipswich City Council, the Labor government is now curtailing the Supreme Court with a piece of legislation which is offensive to just about every fundamental legislative principle in the book and ignores the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry. With this legislation, the Labor government abrogates individual rights and liberties, breaches the presumption of innocence and excludes judicial review and appeal.

Constituents in my local area have even asked me, 'Why does the minister need a new bill? Hasn't the state government always had the ability to remove a council and put an administrator in charge?' Well, yes. The former Johnstone shire council is an example. What is different that we need a new bill? Could it be that the bill is intended to make the Supreme Court action, launched by the Ipswich City Council, suddenly pointless and irrelevant?

Even having drawn these sad conclusions, it is sad to see what has happened to local government. I think everybody here feels for the people of Ipswich, the residents of Ipswich. We only have to see the member for Ipswich West and the emotion that he has. He has obviously felt it on a day-by-day basis. It has been incredibly hard on the people of Ipswich, the residents. We only wish we can see a speedy recovery to regaining their confidence in council. It will take time.

The Labor Party do have form on councils. We only have to look at the amalgamation of councils under the Beattie and Bligh era.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr MILLAR: If the member for Logan would sit down and listen for once, he might learn something.


Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order, members! Let's stick to the long title of the bill.

Mr MILLAR: I sit in a unique position as the member for Gregory. I have both amalgamated and non-amalgamated councils in my electorate. As I move around the electorate of Gregory, I can report that there is still a strong minority of discontent where councils were forced to amalgamate.

Mr Bleijie: Isisford.

Mr MILLAR: I take that interjection from the shadow Attorney-General, who joined me in Western Queensland over the last couple of days. We only have to go to Isisford, which is on the Barcoo. The Isisford shire council was once a proud council. There is a very big sign up there which says they will never forgive the Beattie-Bligh ALP government for forcing amalgamation. They will never forgive them. With that, I will wrap up. We need to get this cleaned up in Ipswich for the people of Ipswich.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (5.08 pm): I stand here today to speak on the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill. As my colleagues have stated, we on this side of the House will not oppose the bill. We will, however, be questioning why this government has taken so long to arrive at this stage and why those opposite, who set out months ago to provide the people of Ipswich with certainty, have created much confusion such that the people of Ipswich are still unsure of what the future holds. This is new legislation and new ground, and I am sure the legal profession will be lining up to challenge this new legislation.

Alarm bells go off for me when I see fundamental legal principles overtaken by legislation and let down by other government processes. Innocent until proven guilty, natural justice and procedural fairness are the cornerstones of our legal system, so there must have been a failure in this government's current systems to see those fundamental legal principles overtaken by this legislation. Let's make it clear: this is Labor trying to clean up a Labor mess by bringing in legislation to try to fix a problem.

Today is indeed a dark day for local governments in Queensland. After numerous investigations into its conduct, the Ipswich Labor council will be removed, as recommended by the Crime and Corruption Commission many months ago. This government's approach thus far has not been effective due to Supreme Court appeals. However, to be fair, in its own show of dictatorial prowess, it did announce the suspension of five individuals prior to having the legislative power to do so, but that was

fixed up too. The government's approach and these delays have placed a question mark over the integrity of every mayor, councillor and local government in the state. Because of these delays the community is not sure just how far these behaviours might have gone.

I want to assure the community, and the hundreds of mayors and councillors in this great state who work tirelessly to help their communities, that they have our full support and have nothing to fear if they have done nothing wrong. I know from my experience in local government and working closely with the mayors and councillors of Somerset and Lockyer Valley regional councils that this mark they have been tainted with is neither fair nor permanent. I am sure that the reputation of all local councils and councillors who have done nothing wrong will emerge vindicated and stronger than ever before.

We on this side of the chamber have been calling for action on Ipswich's Labor council for months. Even when given the necessary powers to remove the council, it took over a month. When action was finally taken through a show-cause notice it was simply a case of *deja vu* for the ratepayers of Ipswich as a second show-cause notice was issued. However, this resulted in public money—ratepayers' money in Ipswich and Queensland taxpayers' money—to fork out thousands of dollars to fight the show-cause notice in the Supreme Court on appeal. It seems that when finally it is deemed that enough money has been wasted, those opposite decided to circumvent the original course of justice—introducing this bill—which contradicts preconceived notions of justice and the independence of Queensland's judicial system. Nonetheless, the people of Ipswich deserve to have this saga come to an end. This bill is by no means perfect. People could say it is actually very regrettable; however, the people of Ipswich deserve to be recognised in this fiasco.

Ipswich's future is still clouded with an element of the unknown. The people of Ipswich deserve to know who will be administering their city until 2020. They have been let down before and now this government is letting them down again by withholding the names of those who hold the future of Ipswich in their hands. With this government's track record in transparency being questionable at best, we feel it is essential that the names of the members of the advisory committee set to appoint an administrator for Ipswich council be published. Only by doing this can we be sure that the committee and the administrator who is appointed are truly independent from any political entity and suitably qualified to take on the role. The people of Ipswich deserve nothing less than the whole picture. Only with this knowledge can they be sure that their city is starting off afresh.

In closing, I would like to commend the people of Ipswich for their patience during this seemingly endless series of stuff-ups. I know I am not alone amongst the people of the Lockyer and Somerset council areas when I say we take comfort in the knowledge that our neighbours are resilient enough to handle this adversity. I am sure the people of Ipswich will be looking forward to democratically electing a new council in 2020 and I wish them well on the road ahead.



Mr PERRETT (Gympie—LNP) (5.14 pm): I rise to speak on the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018. Transparency and accountability are, and should be, at the heart of all levels of government. The primary objective of this bill is to dissolve the Ipswich City Council and provide for the appointment of an interim administrator to act in place of the ICC councillors. The interim administrator is to be in place for the next two years until 30 June 2020. In any democracy that is a long time to be without elected representation.

In a democracy it is as serious as it can get to have to replace elected representatives. It is disappointing that recent events involving the conduct of a few councillors have contributed to a situation which has eroded Queenslanders' confidence in their local representatives and councils. I doubt there is a member in this House who has not dealt with council complaints. Because local government is at the coalface of the delivery of services it means it also, unfortunately, attracts much criticism. That is why councillor conduct has to be beyond reproach. However, the way this government has handled this issue with Ipswich is blackening the names of all hardworking councillors and councils. It has been incompetent and clumsy. In this state only 0.6 per cent of councillors are in trouble. The rest—over 500 elected mayors and councillors—are doing the right thing by their communities.

This government is a government of spin and doublespeak rather than a government that values transparency and accountability or the rights of Queensland residents. The government has made a dog's breakfast of this most serious issue. We are here today because the government has been dragged kicking and screaming to this point. It ran protection for any complaints about Ipswich City Council and councillors because they were Labor Party political bedfellows. Complaints had gone back many years and the government did nothing. Then when it was compelled to do something it announced the suspension of four mayors and a councillor under new laws that were not even in place at the time. The government issued two failed show-cause notices to the Ipswich City Council, costing the

ratepayers and taxpayers of this state. Despite new powers being in place since 21 May, it still took the minister until 20 June to issue a fresh show-cause notice, in effect adding to the uncertainty. The government is now circumventing the Supreme Court to fix the mess—a mess that was meant to be fixed in May with 40 pages of amendments.


The minister talked today about providing good governance and good processes. Only three months ago, in May, it was this government which did not follow due process with its public interest amendments by having them scrutinised by the parliamentary committee process. It was this government that has brought legislation to this parliament that breaches just about every fundamental legislative principle in the book. This legislation abrogates the rights and liberties of individuals. This legislation breaches the principles of the presumption of innocence. This legislation excludes judicial review and appeal, contrary to fundamental legislative principles and the recommendations of the Fitzgerald inquiry. It is the Labor Party which is at the heart of these problems. These problems have their genesis in the Labor Party. They stuffed up the process to fix them not once, but twice. Now we are back a third time.

That is why in the interests of accountability and transparency this government has to ensure that any administrator is not some quasi Labor Party operative or fellow traveller of the Labor Party. Ipswich residents and all Queenslanders deserve the courtesy of knowing and trusting that an administrator has no links to the Labor Party. It is also why the names of the advisory committee should be published in the gazette notice in the interests of transparency.

This government and the Labor Party like to talk about accountability and transparency but not when it applies to them. This is a government which arrogantly thumbs its nose at good governance and ethical behaviour. It has used private emails to conduct ministerial business, used dodgy processes to make questionable appointments to government boards, pushed through significant electoral changes with only 18 minutes notice and treats this parliament and its processes with contempt. It is not a reputation to be proud of. Queenslanders are increasingly learning that they have to judge the government on what they do and not what they say.

I saw the impact of Labor government decisions on local government and how they often had to pick up the pieces as a result of badly researched decisions and buck-passing. Before I was elected to this place I had 12 years experience as a local government councillor and deputy mayor. I witnessed firsthand the heavy-handed approach of Labor governments to councils. As a former councillor and deputy mayor, I understand the role councils have in providing essential services to communities across the state. They are naturally close to the eye of the action and often the first point of call.

Many LNP members have cut their teeth in local government politics. We value this third tier of government. Queenslanders need trust in all levels of government. They need to believe that transparency and accountability are the cornerstones of governance and that they are not fobbed off with lip-service. That is why I will support the opposition amendments and not oppose the bill. Let us hope that this time the government has finally got it right.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (5.20 pm): I rise to speak on the Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill. I begin by recognising once again that the Greens condemn corruption in all its forms. We have campaigned for a long time to crack down on all types of corruption, including unlawful corruption and legalised corruption through corporate donations. As others have said, it is a grim set of circumstances that bring us here today. I do ultimately support the bill. The Greens strongly supported the ban on developer donations. We had been pushing for that ban for years before it came into place. We are very glad that Labor has finally listened.

During the 2017 election campaign we focused on a really strong initiative against corruption. We proposed a number of necessary measures like the ban on corporate donations and the cap on other political donations, which I have started to deal with through private member's legislation. We need to stop cash-for-access meetings with government ministers. We need to give our corruption watchdog, the CCC, real powers to launch independent investigations, hold more public hearings and jam the revolving door between politics and big business.

Sacking the Ipswich City Council is truly a grave step, but I acknowledge the government has said that is their proposal and I support them in that. The people of Ipswich do deserve a fresh start. We have heard plenty so far today about the circumstances: 15 people facing over 80 charges. It clearly is a grave matter. It is clear that the culture of the organisation of council needs to change. I also want to acknowledge the contribution of all of those ordinary people in Ipswich who have worked to draw attention to the allegations of corruption and misconduct over the years. They have often had to do so

in the face of indifference from local and state governments. They also had to deal with a system that is ill-equipped to deal with corruption. At the same time, it is deeply disappointing that Labor has not been able to manage this dismissal under existing processes.

We have concerns that there are very limited oversight and transparency mechanisms in this bill in relation to the interim administrator and acting interim administrator, and the amendments put forward by the shadow minister really do not do anything to meaningfully address this. In fact, they look more like a reason to debate inserting the name of the Labor Party into the title of the bill. All appointments will be made without any input from the parliament or the people of Ipswich. The Governor in Council and the minister hold all the cards, and short of passing this legislation—which will clearly be done before the day's end—the parliament has no further role to play. Despite apparently dropping information to the *Courier-Mail* this morning, the minister still has not let us in on who he intends to appoint. Ipswich residents will be without a democratically elected council for about 18 months. I do welcome the news that divisional offices will stay open, but there are real concerns with further centralising power in the hands of an unelected administrator.

The residents of Ipswich are facing some serious issues which will no doubt be dealt with or progressed significantly by the administrator over the next 18 months. There is the super dump at New Chum proposed by BMI and a number of other waste industry projects, including the expansion at the Cleanaway landfill, and the proposed incinerator that has been mooted under the guise of waste to energy. A lot of locals have contacted me and our Greens colleagues in Ipswich with genuine concerns about runaway development there. The administrator cannot be held to account for decisions that Ipswich locals disagree with. This unelected official will wield all the powers that an elected body is supposed to exercise. Despite the atrocious administration they have been subjected to in recent years, the people of Ipswich are being asked to trust the government as far as appointing the administrator and advisory committee. They are being asked to simply trust the administrator and the advisory committee to make decisions on important issues which will affect the entire community.

Ultimately, across all local governments in Queensland we need to move towards decentralising power and giving ordinary residents more control over their neighbourhoods. We can make those changes with any number of bold ideas such as participatory budgeting for local government expenditure, giving city residents a vote on major amendments to their city or neighbourhood plans, or novel approaches like trialling citizen juries for big decisions on major projects and planning matters. Decentralisation and genuine engagement with the community are the kinds of steps that we need to take if we are going to turn around the growing cynicism we are seeing throughout the community with all levels of government.



Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.24 pm), in reply: It is indeed heartening to see agreement around the action we are taking here today in this parliament, and I do thank all members for their contribution. I think that everyone in this House knows this is not an easy decision to take. I want to thank members for the way in which they have largely approached this matter, but I would like to address some of the matters that have come up during the second reading debate.

Disappointingly, the member for Warrego was more than a little inconsistent. The member for Warrego said that on one hand the government should have done this months ago, yet on the other hand she said that she had concerns about the lack of access to appeal mechanisms. The Ipswich City Council had access to appeal mechanisms when I issued each of the show cause notices. In May when I issued the first of two show cause notices I did take action at that time. I accessed my powers under the Local Government Act and, as we have heard, I sought to strengthen those powers in this place as well. It was the Ipswich City Council that appealed to the Supreme Court. In the next breath there was a suggestion that with this bill we are denying councils access to the Supreme Court. I say to those members opposite who hold that position that it seems we were too slow to act for some, but for others we were rushing in. Some said that we should have done this months ago, while others said that we should not be denying natural justice.

The other suggestion that many members made is that this has gone on for years. When the Newman government was on the government benches I did not see any evidence of great action: I did see evidence of cosying up to some people on the Ipswich City Council. It has taken a Labor government to take action in relation to this council, so if the Labor Party is running some sort of protection racket we are not very good at it. While it was easy for the council to create problems and try and disrupt normal processes under the Local Government Act, it is important in relation to the certainty—and I come back to the point that I have made again and again—that the people of Ipswich

need and it required that we act. This action and this bill are the most important ways to achieve that, but it achieves more than merely avoiding great cost and uncertainty as a result of the ongoing levels of action that would have arisen around the continued processes under the Local Government Act.

Under the LGA we would not see an administrator in place for a nine-month period with the ability to dig deep and go further into the issues that members have raised around the chamber this afternoon, including the member for Bundamba's call for a deep forensic investigation to be carried out. That will be one of the capabilities of the administrator and those people who advise and support the administrator. It is very important that we see that provided for, and that would not necessarily have been available under the Local Government Act. This bill provides the opportunity to achieve that transparency.

There has been a question raised in relation to the costs of the Supreme Court action in this matter. Because I want to be fully transparent about this matter, I want to advise the House that the state's costs were in the order of \$57,700. During the debate today I have heard people remark about the cost to Ipswich City Council and the ratepayers of that city. They are much, much larger figures than the one I have just mentioned, but I know that the action this government and this parliament has taken today has saved taxpayers and ratepayers further costs which would have achieved nothing.

Before I sum up on some elements of the bill, I want to address the amendments proposed by the member for Warrego. In relation to the first amendment, which seeks to insert the word 'Labor' into the short title, the Leader of the House and I had a debate earlier about whether this was a juvenile amendment or a childish amendment. It was a close run thing. I will probably go with the English approach of the Leader of the House, as opposed to the French, and say that this is childish—absolutely childish. I think it is a shame that the member would waste the time of the parliament with such a childish amendment, which does not even bear any relationship to the truth.

Mrs D'Ath: It is actually not addressed in the explanatory notes.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: It is not addressed in the explanatory notes. You would not address it in the explanatory notes because it is embarrassing.

Mrs D'Ath: And they couldn't explain it.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: It would be inexplicable, because it does not represent in any way anything that would be acceptable and understandable as the truth.

We are talking here about 11 councillors who will be the subject of this matter, four of whom are members of the Australian Labor Party. There are others who have been National Party candidates. There are others who are closely aligned with the LNP. I think pointing the finger at a particular party in this situation is not taking the matter seriously and does not take into account the needs of the people of Ipswich. It is playing cheap, sad political games.

The second amendment goes to the potential for an advisory committee to be created. I want to address that in the context of a broader discussion around the administrator. The point has been made by some members that as part of this process I should be announcing who the administrator is going to be. There have been some criticisms of me at different times. One of the things that has been raised in this debate on a number of occasions relates to something I found deeply embarrassing, when I made a grave error in relation to a previous bill in this House and announced a matter before assent had been given. That was gravely embarrassing to me. As many people around this place know—some people criticise me for being more about process than politics—I am attuned to the process. As a consequence, I would never pre-empt the parliament. This is a position that does not exist until the parliament decides so. We have to deal with what is in front of us.

Upon passage of this bill I will be seeking assent to the bill, as I flagged in an adjunct debate earlier today, after which we will see the administrator appointed. I am hopeful, with the good grace of the Deputy Governor, that we will be in a position to announce the name of the interim administrator—and, indeed, the names of the interim management committee members—tomorrow. In relation to the membership of the interim management committee, I make a commitment that these names will be made public. I also make a commitment, as I have on previous occasions, that none of the appointees will be politicians, former politicians or people with a link to a political party. That is not what the people of Ipswich deserve. They deserve the independent, studious service of an administrator and advisers to that administrator in the form of an interim management committee.

The question raised by the second amendment foreshadowed by the member for Warrego is: will there be an interim advisory committee? The advice I can give to the House is that I would not be proposing an interim advisory committee at this point. Interim advisory committees, as set out under the LGA, are typically made up of local residents. I have deliberately made the decision to have

outsiders appointed and no interim advisory committee at this stage. There needs to be a clear set of eyes. As we know from what has been raised in relation to matters and discussions that have occurred and debate in this House on this bill, this community has been affected by these issues for some time.

There are people, no matter what their role in the community, who are in some way connected to, potentially conflicted by and involved in the issues that need to be addressed. It is my view that in the first instance we not have an interim advisory committee, that we have clear sets of eyes in the form of the interim management committee with expert capability to address the fundamental issues that need to be addressed within the Ipswich City Council. However, I do give a guarantee to the House that, should there be in future the need to establish an interim advisory committee—if that comes to being a matter that is appropriate—as is provided for in the bill, I will ensure the names of the members of that committee are made public.

I reiterate that we have not taken this action lightly. This bill is gravely regretful. I would prefer that we were not in this situation—I believe that everyone in the House shares that view—but it is the right thing to do. It is the right way to deal with the extraordinary circumstances that are in front of us. I put that into context by quoting a statement made by the chair of the CCC, Alan MacSporran, at the public hearing at which he supported the dissolution of the Ipswich City Council. He said—

... there has been a collapse of public confidence in that council and those councillors. That is what is being addressed here. It is not about them individually being guilty of misconduct or otherwise. It is about systemic failures collectively of good governance, and a lack of transparency and accountability across-the-board. They stand or fall, as they must, under the Local Government Act and the Constitution of Queensland as the body, the entity, collectively responsible for the good governance of that community. There has been a failure of that.

I conclude where I began when I introduced the bill this morning, by saying that it is our duty under the Constitution of Queensland to provide for the good governance of this state. In particular, I think what we are doing with this action, with this bill, with this intervention, is providing for the good local governance of the City of Ipswich. 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—



Ms LEAHY (5.38 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 1 (Short title)

Page 4, line 4, after 'of'—

insert—

Labor

I table explanatory notes to my amendments.

Tabled paper: Local Government (Dissolution of Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Ms Ann Leahy's amendments [\[1155\]](#).

There is good reason why the short title of this bill should be amended to read the 'Local Government (Dissolution of Labor Ipswich City Council) Bill 2018'. The Premier called for two former mayors to be removed from the Labor Party. It was the government that made the issue about the members of the Labor Party.

This council is a regular matter of discussion by the Labor branches in the region, and we heard from the member for Bundamba that the Ipswich council is a regular topic of conversation in the Labor branches. There is also much written in the newspapers about whether local branch members are reportedly organising a ticket for this council. They said that they have done this before and they were considering whether they should do it again given the current circumstances. Given the history and the membership and the untoward influence of the Labor Party on this council, there is no doubt that this council is part of the Labor activities. If it walks like a duck, it quacks like a duck and it flies like a duck, it usually is a duck. When it comes to the Ipswich City Council, it has a number of Labor members. It acts like Labor, it talks like Labor and therefore it is Labor and 'Labor' should be included in the short title of this bill.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Childish!

Mr McARDLE: I rise to support the shadow minister in her endeavours here today because it should never, ever be forgotten that this Labor government took so long in protecting its mates before it brought this bill into the House. It should never be forgotten that the member for Bundamba time after

time after time warned this House and warned this government to take action, and this Labor government did not do so. It is time that this bill reflected liability. It is time that this bill stood for what it should stand for—the inaction of a Labor government in taking steps because it did not want to have the rancour of being seen to overturn its mates. It did not want to be seen to take action unless it was pushed into a corner by its own members to take action.

This is a Labor council in everything but name and this bill should reflect the accuracy, as the member for Bundamba pointed out, that this mob was doing the wrong thing by its own people and it should have the term ‘Labor’ inserted. The minister raised the question that the word might be embarrassing, and you bet it is—to Labor and what it has failed to do. I support the amendment.

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

AYES, 37:

LNP, 37—Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Costigan, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

NOES, 49:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pair: Russo, Mickelberg.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Ms Leahy) negatived.

Clause 1, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 4, as read, agreed to.

Clause 5—



Ms LEAHY (5.47 pm): I move the following amendment—

2 Clause 5 (Appointment of interim administrator)

Page 5, lines 18 and 19, from ‘the name’—

omit, insert—

the following by gazette notice—

- (a) the name of the interim administrator;
- (b) if an advisory committee is created under the *Local Government Act 2009*, section 124(10), or a committee is appointed for the interim administrator under the *Local Government Act 2009*, chapter 6, part 7, as applied under section 7—the name of each member of the committee.

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

AYES, 41:

LNP, 37—Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Costigan, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

KAP, 1—Dametto.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 46:

ALP, 46—Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Pair: Russo, Mickelberg.


Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Ms Leahy) negatived.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, under the provisions of the resolution agreed to by the House and the time limit for the consideration in detail of the bill having expired, the question is—

That clauses 5 to 9, as read, be agreed to.

Third Reading


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, under the provisions of the resolution agreed to by the House and the time limit for the third reading of the bill having expired, the question is—

That the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, under the provisions of the resolution agreed to by the House and the time limit for the long title of the bill being agreed to having expired, the question is—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL


Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill

Economics and Governance Committee, Report

Mr SPEAKER: The House will consider the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill first and then the Appropriation Bill. The question is—


That the report of the Economics and Governance Committee be adopted.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (5.55 pm): I rise to endorse report No. 10 of the Economics and Governance Committee titled *2018-19 budget estimates—Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2018*. This year, this grand old House celebrated in some style its 150th birthday. Three thousand Queenslanders explored the House and listened to bands and choirs. It made for an exciting day. We can truly say that this is the people's house. It is worth remembering that so few democracies have operated continuously for 150 years. When we look at the wall outside this chamber and we see the many names written on it, we know that we are simply here for a period and, with that knowledge, we have a responsibility to maintain this House and this institution.

The Economics and Governance Committee heard that the Parliamentary Service's strategic objectives are to support the Legislative Assembly in fulfilling its functions within the institution of parliament; support members of the Legislative Assembly; provide information; and safeguard, promote and strengthen the institution of parliament.

I thank the Speaker for appearing before the committee, the committee members and guests, which included the member for Maiwar and the member for Kawana, and especially the deputy chair and member for Mermaid Beach, whom we learned today was the greatest and worst mayor of Albert. The committee endorses the report of the House. With that universal support, may this House continue to thrive for 150 more years.

On behalf of the committee—and the member for Mermaid Beach may wish to do this as well—I wish to thank the secretariat, and particularly Trudy Struber, for their assistance during the estimates hearing. It was Trudy's last hearing. I wish to thank her sincerely for her assistance and wish her well in her new role. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (5.57 pm): I rise to speak to the report of the Economics and Governance Committee on the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2018. It is a very timely and important expose of the budgetary expenditure of the Parliamentary Service. During the estimates committee

hearing, we were advised of the expenditure in relation to the structure of the House. The committee also received a report on staffing matters. That gave a very good insight into the efficient and effective way in which the Parliamentary Service deals with all members regardless of political persuasion.

The committee also asked questions about the 150th celebrations of this wonderful edifice in Queensland, this pre-eminent heritage building in Queensland. I think it would be fair to say that it has to receive the expenditure to maintain it. We are aware of the work that has been done to the stonework. The majority of that work has been completed.

Another issue that was raised during the grilling of the Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament was the importance of ensuring that expenditure in relation to travel and the promotion of the parliament were appropriate for the Office of the Speaker and the staff involved in carrying out the effective delivery of the Parliamentary Service to help other countries in terms of developing procedures. The CPA is a major organisation that supports South Pacific nations. There was expenditure in relation to some travel by staff of the Speaker's office. The Speaker kindly justified that expenditure and how it is to the benefit of the parliament.

The Parliamentary Service is keen to receive more expenditure for the upgrade of certain parts of the parliamentary precinct that have fallen behind through time marching on. Although the Parliamentary Annexe lives in a time warp, the refurbishment of the seventh floor has been a major accomplishment of the Parliamentary Service. It is now a very welcome area that is utilised by many sectors of our community. The fairly large expenditure that was involved in bringing that part of the Parliamentary Annexe into the 21st century is justified.

From our perspective, as a result of the very hard and pointed grilling of the Speaker's office and the Parliamentary Services, we found that they had expended their budget lines adequately and that they had budgeted for an appropriate increase for the year ahead that we will be monitoring very closely through the Economics and Governance Committee. All in all, we are pleased to support the passing of the budget for the Parliamentary Services for the year ahead.

I thank very much Trudy Struber and wish her well in her new occupation in government. She did a great job for the secretariat and we could not recommend her highly enough. Whilst we will miss her, I am sure Melissa will do a great job. It was a wonderful job by the secretariat. We thank them for the good advice they provided to all the members of that committee.

Report adopted.

Clauses 1 to 4, as read, agreed to.


Schedule, as read, agreed to.

Appropriation Bill

Economics and Governance Committee, Report

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): The question is—

That the report of the Economic and Governance Committee be adopted.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (6.06 pm): I rise to endorse report No. 11 of the Economics and Governance Committee titled *2018-19 budget estimates—Appropriation Bill 2018*. The Economics and Governance Committee has portfolio responsibility for the Premier and Cabinet, Trade, Treasury, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs. I thank the committee members for their participation and the other members participating, including the members for Nanango, Everton, Moggill, Warrego, Surfers Paradise, Maiwar and Noosa. We certainly were popular, member for Mermaid Beach.

I thank the many public servants who made themselves available. Much has been made in the media of the media not finding the sensational issues they wished to find to create sensational stories. However, I think this misses much of the detail and interesting answers to both opposition and government questions. It also forgets the hard work by both the department and the ministers to be prepared and ready for all sorts of questions and prepared to be accountable in public to all sorts of issues to do with the budget expenditure.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs Frecklington: You couldn't ask questions! You couldn't get it together! You can't get on your high horse now.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, those on my left!

Mr POWER: I thank the member for Nanango for her compliments about my chairing. The estimates is a bit like an iceberg in that 90 per cent of the questions that ministers and public servants prepare for do not actually get asked, but they know they might have to account for every dollar. Some might not find this process that riveting, but it is a vital part of the accountability of the executive to the parliament through the committee process.

Finally, I thank the Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Racing, Local Government and Multicultural Affairs for appearing before our committee and our many guest members. I do note that the full report of the Economics and Governance Committee ran to 111 pages. I am advised that of the questions, 122 were asked by the opposition, which was 67 per cent of the questions, while the government put 63 questions—although they were of a very high calibre—which was 32 per cent of the questions. The member for Maiwar put eight questions, around four per cent, and the member for Noosa put one question, representing about one per cent. In total there were 194 questions put to ministers. The answers, as I said, gave us a lot of detail about the budget. There are 111 pages. I am sure all members have read each page individually. I know the member for Whitsunday hung on page 110 a lot.

As part of my endorsement of the report I would like to bring forward a couple of highlights. When the Premier appeared before the committee I put a question to her about the objective of creating jobs, particularly referencing Advance Queensland and how that is contributing to the objective. The Premier answered in some detail about the total funding that we have put to be now over \$650 million and in this year an extra \$40 million for the Business Development Fund and \$60 million for the Industry Attraction Fund. Especially worthwhile is the \$50 million for the Innovation portfolio. As we all know, this government is all about jobs and creating innovative jobs. To that end it is important that Queensland takes a key stake in our defence industries. We saw the landing of the contract by Rheinmetall to build the Land 400 and its Boxer next generation Army reconnaissance vehicles right here in Queensland. They are good vehicles and they will be a credit to Ipswich.

The Treasurer spoke about strong population growth and investment in our local area. Particularly important was a question put by the member for Everton where he asked about our fiscal position. I appreciated the answer from the Treasurer which went into great detail about our fiscal position and how it was so much better than at the end of the Newman years. I commend the report and these answers to the House.




Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.09 pm): As members would know from the statement of reservations in this report, the non-government members of the committee were extremely disappointed in the budget presented by the government. I have witnessed 12 estimates hearings—some were a little changed in the middle years—and this year I saw the most deliberate obfuscation, avoidance and dodging of questions that I have seen in those 12 years. I remember good Labor ministers such as Terry Mackenroth and Rob Swarten who actually answered questions. I take the glare from the member for Clayfield. I did not say they were good ministers; I said they were good at answering questions. Basically, there were no holds barred and members could ask whatever they wanted.

However, this year we saw a deliberate strategy of obfuscation as the government made a half-baked attempt to use standing orders to block questions from the opposition. The opposition was allocated 89 minutes to question the Premier and government members were also allocated time. However, in reality, opposition members had just 50 minutes because all we heard was 'I'm sorry, that's an imputation', 'I'm sorry', 'I'm sorry'. The hearing went on and on in that vein and the Premier dodged 39 minutes of our allocated question time. That was deliberate and we could see that they were directed to do it. It tells me that the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the racing minister were not across their portfolios and could not answer questions. That would not have happened with former ministers of the Labor Party, such as Robbie Swarten, who would answer questions fully. It might not have been the answer that you wanted to hear and it might not even have been the correct answer. As Gordon Nuttall found out, questions can lead to one's demise. He spent a while in the iron house because of estimates.

The reality is that questioning of the government under the Westminster system of estimates hearings was deliberately fouled by a Labor Party that is short on its capacity to answer genuine questions from the opposition. Ministers hid behind their departments because they have no knowledge of their own portfolios, which is a sad indictment on a government that is incompetent and not across its portfolios. Junior ministers could not answer questions. Even the good media, including the independent ABC, found the estimates process totally hopeless because of the deliberate strategy to try to foil the opposition's attempts to ask questions.

Why wouldn't the opposition question the debt blowout in this budget, unreal projects such as Cross River Rail that mean waste for Queenslanders and all the other matters that are a smokescreen for the Labor government? Unfortunately, government ministers were not prepared to answer our questions, which were all very simple and straightforward questions that were non-political in direction. They only needed to be answered correctly. Unfortunately, these ministers do not have the capacity to front up and be counted. The Premier was the worst of them all, which is a sad indictment in itself. In the days to come there probably will be an opportunity for the Deputy Premier to run a bit of a challenge, which I hear is all the go at the moment. The racing minister was also short on answers for where the racing industry is going. Racing is an important industry for Queensland, but the committee never benefitted from correct answering. It was a very disappointing estimates process.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (6.14 pm): It is clear why the member for Mermaid Beach was once sacked as a council representative, because that contribution was completely underwhelming. If the member for Mermaid Beach wants to talk about obfuscation at estimates committees, I draw his attention to the last year of the Newman government when they collapsed what is traditionally two weeks of interrogation of government ministers into two days. If those opposite want to talk about transparency, accountability and holding the government of the day up to the scrutiny of and assessment by the opposition party, they need look no further than their time in government. It was an absolute disgrace.

I appreciate the chance to make a contribution on the Economics and Governance Committee report. From the outset, I thank the chair of the committee, all committee members and the committee secretariat for the enormous amount of work and effort that went into preparing for the estimates committee hearing and the questioning that took place.

I am enormously proud of the fourth Palaszczuk Labor government budget, which was delivered in this chamber in June this year. The budget helps to navigate our communities through the challenges that are presented in a modern economy and also ensures that we steer them towards the great opportunities that come with a growing population, a diversified economy and all the things that growth and change represent. Our budget was built on three key objectives: delivering on each and every single one of the election commitments that we made to the people of Queensland in November last year; detailing our plan to create jobs in a transitioning economy and to ensure that we are a strong, diverse and future focused state; and directing all of our efforts and expenditure to our key priorities. As a government, our No. 1 priority is to create jobs in a strong economy.


We know that governments fund what they care about, which is why we have prioritised significant funding to essential infrastructure projects that meet the needs of our growing population to ensure that we are setting up Queensland to be an economically stronger state into the future. That means big investment in productive infrastructure such as the M1, the Bruce Highway and Cross River Rail. I make no apology for bringing forward our borrowings, because the chaotic and dysfunctional Turnbull government has provided all of its money out beyond the out years. Today in Canberra, the federal government has proven itself dysfunctional and chaotic. We always knew that it just did not get Queensland and it continues not to get Queensland. This budget responds to our community, because the Turnbull coalition government cannot and does not care about Queensland.

The budget delivers record spending in terms of health and education to cater for our ageing population and to set our kids up for the future. It invests in critical programs such as Advance Queensland, Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which those opposite axed when they were in government, and Back to Work that deliver new industries and skilled Queenslanders to fill the growing jobs in our economy.

Our borrowings are stable and sustainable. Under our government, debt as a percentage of GSP has fallen substantially and is expected to stabilise at 10 per cent, which is on par with other states. Additionally, we borrow to build productive infrastructure. The fact is that in 2017-18 general government debt is the lowest since 2011-12. In 2021-22 it is still expected to be lower than it was under those opposite in 2014-15. We make no apology for our significant spend on the needs of Queenslanders. By investing in infrastructure, front-line service delivery and industry attraction we will create the jobs of the future.

I am actually not taking interjections from those opposite, who may care to pay attention. I reflect on the fact that this budget also delivers for Indigenous Queenslanders, particularly where the Turnbull government has abrogated its responsibility in terms of remote Indigenous housing.

(Time expired)

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (6.19 pm): Secrecy, cover-ups, arrogance, protection racket—that is exactly what the Palaszczuk government delivered during the estimates process this year. It was unbelievable.

An opposition member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection. It was a joke. It was an absolute joke of arrogance, secrecy, cover-up. John Mickel even called it a cover-up. 'A protection racket', I think were his words. The government members abused the standing orders and used their numbers on each and every committee to run a protection racket. That was especially the case for the Premier. It was unbelievable. It was a farce. It was an insult to the taxpayers of Queensland. It was quite simply a joke.

The Deputy Premier and Treasurer talked about the challenges. The challenges facing Queenslanders were not able to be established through the estimates committee process because they would not answer any of the questions we were asking them. Worse than that, the Premier was unable to answer the questions that were put to her. The Premier refused to answer questions about whether her office or department were consulted on the Attorney-General's decision to table the Queensland Family and Child Commission annual report over five months after it was delivered to the Premier. Obviously it was a terrible report that showed the seriousness of child deaths in Queensland. As soon as that report landed on the Premier's desk what did the Premier do? She took the commission out of her department soon after receiving the report. This is secrecy, a cover-up, arrogance and a protection racket, quite simply.

The Premier refused to answer a question about when her office made the decision to adopt the QCA's decision to increase the water bills of everyone in the south-east. The Premier was actually overseas on another one of her trade missions at the time.

We also asked the Premier about the size of the Queensland Public Service following the criticism of the Together union around the use of labour hire and other contract arrangements. The Premier was unable to answer that. The Premier could not say how many public servants were currently employed under her government. The Premier could not say, or worse still did not know, how many labour hire operators or consultants were employed within the Public Service. The Premier did not even seem to care let alone know.


It is hardworking Queenslanders' taxpayer dollars that are going into the Premier's junkets and salary. We have heard even more today about the cover-ups in terms of the Premier's spending around the Commonwealth Games. Through the estimates process the Premier showed a complete disregard for the people of Queensland. Estimates is not just about numbers; it is about ensuring better services for the people of Queensland. We know that the Public Service wage bill has increased by more than \$5 billion but services have deteriorated. We know that the Premier and her ministers were unable to answer the questions through the estimates process and that they are simply unable to deliver for Queensland.

Through the process the Premier tried to justify spending of more than \$461,000 on overseas travel for her and her staff during her first 2½ years in office in her role as trade minister; however, the Premier was not even the trade minister during those 2½ years. That \$461,000 is in addition to the \$1.3 million that other Palaszczuk government ministers have spent on trade missions and travel overseas. This excessive spending by the Premier and her ministers clearly shows how out of touch she really is with everyday Queenslanders. It is quite incredible.

We would have imagined that the Premier would have wanted to talk about chickpeas—her once favourite subject when chickpea exports were doing well—given that that is within her Trade portfolio. No, not anymore; she is all chickpead out. Worse than that, the Premier was unable to justify why, given such a big market, the Premier did not send any of her ministers to India or Asia rather than USA.

The estimates process is there to shine a light on the government. It is obvious that this is a government of secrecy, cover-ups and a protection racket.

(Time expired)

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.24 pm): It is a pleasure to endorse report No. 11 on the 2018-19 budget estimates and the Appropriation Bill 2018. I see that those on the opposition benches are still holding a grudge in terms of how the whole process went. I thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Local Government for participating on the day. I also thank the departmental officers and statutory authority officials who participated in the process. I would also like to thank our research director, Trudy Struber, who is no longer with the committee.

All up we had 194 questions. I was reading through the report and reliving the fun and excitement of the day. This made me look back at the standing orders which are to govern the conduct of the business and proceedings in this House and through the committee process. As I was reading through the non-government statement of reservation I noted the reference to 39 minutes being wasted due to disruptions such as points of orders. That then made me go back through the transcript.

The member for Kawana started off with a question that was 154 words long. It contained a preamble and three questions. After he was pulled up, pulled up and pulled up yet again he managed to get the question out in 29 words. There were still three parts to it. Obviously it could be done in fewer words.

The member for Kawana also managed a number of times to raise objections around my question relating to the former member for Kallangur, Mr Trevor Ruthenberg, and my concern around the parliamentary website containing misleading information that had been provided by the former member. The member for Kawana stated—

Worried about the polls, are you? Worried about Longman on Saturday?

That is a direct quote from the transcript. I was not worried about Longman. I had worked with Susan Lamb for well over a decade and I knew that she was competent to bring in a fantastic result in Longman. All up she got a 3.7 per cent swing.

Mr MOLHOEK: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member is not speaking about the budget. Longman has nothing to do with the budget.

Mr POWER: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. This was an issue that we dealt with during the hearing. It was around the costs, the processes of the parliament and the way things were added to the website. This directly references the transcript.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): In so much as the member is relating to the statement of reservation, I will allow it.

Ms BOYD: I was very confident that the LNP would not even achieve 30 per cent of the primary vote at the by-election in Longman, which they did not. They received 29.6 per cent of the vote. As I had seen a former LNP member run against me at the election, I knew that the community would absolutely not have any confidence in them whatsoever.

Let us move on to the member for Nanango. It is a shame my time is running out because I have a long list of references in the transcript. If anyone wants to see how frustrating this process is they should read through the opposition questions. It really is quite mind-boggling.

At page 13 of the transcript the member for Nanango is seeking to table documents already tabled. There is some time gone. At page 29 of the transcript—this is a doozy—she is referring to crime statistics from two different days and two different regions and trying to form some kind of pattern. She stated, ‘I am simply trying to ask a question.’ She was simply trying to ask a question. If only the opposition could have asked a question that conformed with the standing rules and orders we would have been okay, but that was not to be. At page 32 it can be evidenced that she is blocking the Premier from answering the questions.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting.

Ms BOYD: At page 46 she complains about not having enough time to ask her questions, despite getting the lion’s share of the time—well in excess of their allocated time. After lunch we have the member for Everton straight out of the blocks from two o’clock. I was part of last year’s 2017 Parole Board fiasco. My expectations were high in terms of what he would do.

At page 51 of the transcript—hang on, there was a doozy back at page 49. Let me go back. The member for Everton sought leave to table documents that he then used as a prop, even though we had had discussions about how props were to be used. At page 51 of the transcript there were repetitive questions time after time after time. There is a great quote in *Hansard*. I do not have time to read it. I definitely recommend members check it out.

At page 65 the member for Everton then complains about the Deputy Premier answering the question. He said, ‘Are you seriously going to let this continue?’ Gosh, it was awful! ‘This response is now running to five or six minutes.’ What a catastrophe! The interjections go on. The member for Mermaid Beach even had to pull him up on his interjections at one point. This is glorious reading. I recommend the transcript.

(Time expired)

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order. There is too much noise.



Mr MANDER (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.30 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to talk about the estimates hearing of the Economics and Governance Committee. Mr Deputy Speaker, if you want a bit of a laugh, what you need to do is go to pages 48 and 49 of Budget Paper No. 2. What this government pretends to have is fiscal principles. These fiscal principles are fiscal principles in name only. They are simply for presentation value to make it look like they are doing the right thing. These fiscal principles do not need much examination to realise how they are failing their own principles miserably. The first principle states—

Target ongoing reductions in Queensland's relative debt burden, as measured by the General Government debt to revenue ratio. This is all about debt. The percentage in 2017-18 is 54 per cent. What is the figure in 2021-22? It is 68 per cent. Has that gone up or down? This is the first principle that they have failed with regard to the budget process. The second principle states—

Target net operating surpluses that ensure any new capital investment in the General Government Sector is funded primarily through recurrent revenues rather than borrowing.

We have already heard the Treasurer today proudly boast that they are borrowing—so-called borrowing to build. The Treasurer also said that we have an infrastructure crisis. That is why they had to borrow. That is one thing that I agree with the Deputy Premier on—we do have an infrastructure crisis—but who was the infrastructure minister for the previous three years? It was the member for South Brisbane. Next year Labor will have been in control of the treasury bench for 25 of the last 30 years. We only need to look to that side of this House to realise who is responsible for the infrastructure crisis that we have today. It is very easy to build infrastructure if you are borrowing on the government credit card. We all know that we are heading towards \$83 billion of debt that my children and grandchildren and the children and grandchildren of every other member in this House will be burdened with for decades to come. Another fiscal principle states—

Maintain a sustainable public service by ensuring that overall growth in full-time equivalents (FTE) employees, on average over the forward estimates, does not exceed population growth.

They tried to get away with this by saying that they are going to average it over the forward estimates. What have we seen so far? In 2015-16, we had a 1.3 per cent increase in population but a 3.1 per cent increase in the Public Service—nearly triple the rate of population growth. In 2016-17, we had a 1.5 per cent increase in population. What did we have in the Public Service? We had a 5.2 per cent increase—over triple the rate of population growth. Last year we had a 1.75 per cent increase in population and a 3.5 per cent increase in the Public Service. How can they have any credibility? How can anybody believe that they can meet that fiscal principle with their track record? I contend that the fiscal principles outlined on pages 48 and 49 of Budget Paper No. 2 are a complete and utter farce and nobody should be taking any notice of them. They have no credibility whatsoever.

We also heard through the budget process about the five new taxes. We found out that there was no modelling whatsoever of the impact that they would have on jobs. We first heard about the waste tax and that 30 per cent of that revenue will go into consolidated revenue. The government has admitted that \$400 million from this waste tax will not be used in the industry at all but will be going into consolidated revenue. If that is not a tax grab, I do not know what is. We also heard about the so-called luxury car tax, which they unashamedly say will catch the grey nomads, the thousands of hardworking Queenslanders all around the state who want to enjoy their retirement. We heard about the wagering tax, which is the highest in this country. There was no commitment about how much of that will go back to the racing industry. The budget was a farce. The estimates hearing was a farce. They have no idea about economic management.

(Time expired)



Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (6.35 pm): At the outset I thank the chair and members of the Economic and Governance Committee for the opportunity to appear at the estimates hearing to discuss the 2018-19 state budget. A lot of issues were canvassed during the estimates hearing. We outlined our key priorities for the state. Our Advance Queensland priorities include fundamentally to grow jobs in a strong economy, to give our children a great start, to keep Queenslanders healthy, to keep communities safe, to protect the Great Barrier Reef and to be a responsive government.

At the end of the day, a budget is about setting the policy framework for the future in terms of growing jobs, creating jobs, looking after the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders and ensuring that families get the fundamental services that they need. That is why we have record funding in health and

education. We are opening new schools. We are expanding hospitals. We are making sure that we have the services. This is in stark contrast to the former LNP government who cut services but also cut numbers from the Public Service that caused great distress. Queenslanders will never forget that.

What I found very interesting during this whole estimates process was the lazy opposition. I want to put this on the public record. I can remember that when I was the leader of the opposition I went to numerous estimates hearings. We spent weeks and months preparing and making sure that our questions complied with the standing orders of the Queensland parliament. Those opposite are so lazy that they cannot even put questions together that comply with the standing orders. Not only are they lazy; they are the most well resourced opposition in Australia. They have the staff to do the job.

Mr Bleijie: You had the same staff with seven members of parliament—seven members of parliament. You had 22 staff.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am glad you are interjecting because you were a complete and utter embarrassment with your cufflinks. How embarrassing!

Mr Bleijie: You had 22 staff for seven members.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The member for Kawana will cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. When we had seven, we got to all of the committee hearings that you held over two days.

Opposition members interjected.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is what you thought of the estimates process. You condensed them to two days because you wanted to hide from public scrutiny. That is what you wanted to do.

Ms Simpson: Shannon Fentiman took six months to have an RTI process. What a disgrace—six months as a minister and no RTI process!

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Maroochydore is interjecting. She was the Speaker at the time.


Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, those on my left!

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will always stand up for jobs. We will continue to grow jobs. I want to thank the members of the committee for talking about a range of issues that are very important to Queenslanders, including expanding our School Breakfast Program to ensure that kids can get a healthy breakfast before they go to school and building new inner-city schools. Those opposite put up a 'for sale' sign outside the Fortitude Valley school. We saved that school and it is going to be an inner-city school for the future.

We announced our Public Service veterans policy, one that I am incredibly proud of, to get some of our veterans into our Public Service—to give them a job. We will set the benchmark for the rest of Australia. We talked about the cyberbullying task force that is underway and also the success of our wild dog fencing. While I am speaking about wild dog fencing, I want to report to the parliament that I met with our two drought commissioners today, respected former member Vaughan Johnson and Mark O'Brien. They are looking forward to going out and hearing directly from families and working with the Country Women's Association to ensure that funds get to where they are needed most, and that is for the families who are doing it tough.

I want to thank the Deputy Premier and Treasurer for handing down a very solid budget, one of which I know every single member of the government is incredibly proud. We will continue to work in the best interests of Queenslanders no matter where we go. We will service the whole state. It is a big state; we have reached five million people. We want to ensure that the services are there for people no matter where they live. We will continue to grow the economy because that is what Labor governments do. We focus on people and we focus on families. We focus on making sure that no matter where they live in our great state we value them, we look after them and we care for them.

 **Mr O'CONNOR (Bonney—LNP)** (6.40 pm): As a member of the Economics and Governance Committee I have now experienced my first estimates hearing, sitting through nearly 11 hours, and what an experience it was! Estimates is meant to be a chance to look over how the government is spending the hard-earned taxes of Queenslanders to make sure that the people we represent are getting value for money. I am sad to say that, for the most part, this process was a complete disappointment. We saw an orchestrated protection racket run by the member for Logan. The word

'imputation' was thrown around whenever the questioning got even slightly uncomfortable for the government. I did not think it was possible to have so many Dorothy Dixers and I certainly feel sorry for the poor people who probably fell asleep as they were writing them. I certainly almost did as I was listening to them.

The Premier and ministers were shielded by standing orders, with only 50 out of 89 minutes allocated to the opposition for questions of the Premier allowed to get through.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order, members.

Mr O'CONNOR: We had nearly 40 minutes of time wasted through government disruption and points of order. Many of the members of the media gallery and even a former Labor Speaker have written about how there needs to be change. This parliament needs a process that does what it is supposed to do and is open and transparent.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Logan!

Mr O'CONNOR: More specifically about the budget and the area I represent, perhaps the biggest challenge we face in the electorate of Bonney is unemployment. So many other aspects of a good life stem from having a job.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Logan will cease interjecting.


Mr O'CONNOR: Thank you. I am not taking interjections from the cheap seats. My electorate of Bonney has the highest unemployment on the Gold Coast with the latest figures showing a rate of 7.2 per cent. It concerns me that over 2,000 people whom I represent are unemployed. They are getting no help from this government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

Mr O'CONNOR: We saw the Back to Work SEQ program raised with the Premier in the public hearing. For many jobseekers in my area, this program used to offer incentives of \$15,000 for businesses to put on long-term unemployed jobseekers and \$20,000 to employ young or mature age jobseekers who have been unemployed for at least four weeks. It is no longer a program that should have 'SEQ' in the title. Unemployed jobseekers from the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Brisbane local government areas no longer have this vital support to help them get a job. That is with double digit youth unemployment in Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, and sitting at 8.4 per cent on the Gold Coast.

Overall, these hearings were a farce. We need to have genuine engagement and transparency. Queensland deserves a government with a plan and a clear vision to ensure that this is once again a state of opportunity.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (6.43 pm): I rise proudly today to speak to the estimates report tabled by the Economics and Governance Committee, this being with regard to the Appropriation Bill 2018. I want to thank my colleagues of the Economics and Governance Committee, chaired by the member for Logan, and the committee staff. This was my first opportunity to participate in the estimates hearing process, overseeing the budgets of the Speaker of the House; the Premier and Minister for Trade; the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. We heard from the Speaker of the House and the Clerk of the parliament about the 150-year celebrations of Parliament House, and can I take this opportunity to congratulate them on the fabulous array of events and connections with our community that has made this celebration something all Queenslanders could get involved with.

The estimates process was indeed a great opportunity to interrogate the budget and to hear again about the great achievements of this budget brought down by the Palaszczuk Labor government. It was an opportunity to learn in detail about Queensland's really strong economic position under this government and the strategies for growth and prosperity into the future that this budget will deliver for all Queenslanders. The estimates process highlighted that this budget is focused on investing in Queensland, investing in Queensland services and investing in Queensland jobs.

The Palaszczuk government has demonstrated success with a strong record in creating jobs, with over 162,000 jobs created since being elected. We know that there is dignity in employment. The budget and estimates process outlined the opportunities that will continue to create jobs and continue


to position Queensland for success now and into the future. Our government is creating jobs through record investment of \$45 billion in infrastructure over four years, as the budget highlights, supporting 38,000 jobs.

This budget commits to significant projects like Cross River Rail. We know that projects like Cross River Rail will unlock South-East Queensland, and unlock opportunities in more ways than we are yet to imagine—along rail corridors that will not only provide vital transport solutions, but open up new opportunities for these transport precincts. We heard how this budget will continue to serve and deliver for all Queenslanders on matters that are critical to our great state's future like record investment of \$17.3 billion in Health and \$14.1 billion in Education. Then there is the \$650 million in the Advance Queensland initiatives that have delivered and will continue to deliver for Queenslanders through innovation and programs that are designed to ensure we create the jobs of the future and are competitive on the global stage.

This is in stark contrast to the budget delivered to Queenslanders under Malcolm Turnbull and the federal LNP government in which they are: ripping off Queenslanders in delivering our fair share of the GST; ripping off Queenslanders in delivering our fair share of funding for nation-building infrastructure like Cross River Rail; ripping off Queenslanders in providing for our fair share of Health funding for services and for our hospitals, particularly in programs like the national dental partnership with 30 per cent being cut from this program—and I know what an impact that has had in my area; ripping off our trainees and apprentices in funding cuts; and, most disappointingly, ripping off our first nations people by failing to renew the national partnership around remote and Indigenous housing. This is a shame. What makes this worse is that this is all while rewarding big banks with a gift of \$17 billion and delivering unprecedented tax cuts for the top end of town.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that is delivering for Queenslanders as it is very clear that our budget commits to infrastructure, trade, tourism, health, education and, importantly, supporting great initiatives within our communities like the breakfast program.

We are one of the fastest growing and most decentralised states in the Commonwealth and we recently welcomed our five millionth Queenslanders way ahead of schedule. Queensland is growing and Queensland is changing. Through this estimates process it is clear that the budget responds to the challenges we face and harnesses the opportunities that both growth and change present. Our government is focused on positioning for a prosperous future for all Queenslanders. I commend the report to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (6.47 pm): I rise to speak on the estimates committee report for the Economics and Governance Committee. I would like to thank the government members for their protection racket. There is a reason they ran that protection racket. They know that they have weak ministers. I would, firstly, like to address the protection racket and the appalling behaviour of some of the government members during the estimates committee process.

The chair of the committee is either a poor listener or he is hard of hearing because he had to personally review nearly every question asked by the opposition members. The member for Logan deliberately proceeded to interrupt the estimates proceedings, taking up the time allotted to opposition members. His question reviews were totally unnecessary as the opposition questions did not offend standing orders. It was quite appalling and really disappointing behaviour from those backbench members and also the committee chair. The other government members used frivolous points of order to waste time and avoid scrutiny of their ministers.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms LEAHY: It was a deliberate attempt to avoid scrutiny and protect their weak ministers. A total of 40 minutes was allocated to the opposition to ask questions on the Service Delivery Statements, which comprised four pages dedicated directly to the local government service area.


Unfortunately, under this government in the SDS local government is shrinking and scrutiny has been seriously eroded. It is our view that the Economics and Governance Committee hearings lacked openness and transparency and that government members were manipulating proceedings and misusing the standing orders. Even former Speaker John Mickel expressed his concern about how they were using backbench members and their numbers on the committee to protect ministers. To demonstrate this fact, only 50 out of the 89 minutes of question time allocated to the opposition for the Premier was allowed, and 39 minutes of that time was wasted because of disruption with points of order.

When it comes to local governments in Queensland, they do provide an essential suite of services in our communities: they employ some 40,000 people; there are 77 councils—maybe we should say 76; and they manage \$108 billion in assets, including 153,000 kilometres of local roads; \$25 billion in water and sewerage infrastructure; public libraries, parks, playgrounds and lots of local roads that many constituents across Queensland utilise every day. We in the LNP opposition support the hard work of local governments and their elected representatives and the work they do on a daily basis.

The estimates committee process is a key opportunity to scrutinise the appropriateness of the programs that the state Labor government runs for local government and see whether the administration meets the needs of local governments and the communities they serve. The LNP members do have reservations about how well informed the committee was as a result of the estimates committee process. It did not sufficiently allow for considered deliberations, and it failed to provide a level of scrutiny of the government's use of taxpayers' money.

I remember years ago when Di McCauley was the minister for local government she spent a whole day taking questions from the Labor Party. Now it has been reduced to 40 minutes of scrutiny. I think it is disappointing when we look back at what has happened with the estimates committee process, because it has been wound back and wound back so that it does not necessarily serve its purpose. I can remember when the minister for natural resources would be questioned for a whole day. They would have very significant SDS program statements, they would have to know every line that dealt with every part of the state and they would have to understand it. They did not have the option of calling their departmental officers because that was the way the standing orders operated then. They had to know it themselves and they had to answer the questions—

(Time expired)

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.52 pm): I welcome the opportunity to reflect on and endorse the committee's report to the parliament on the estimates hearing. I want to thank the committee for their good work in working with myself as minister in relation to the scrutiny of the SDS for the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs. I want to congratulate the chair, the member for Logan, for his good work in making sure the committee stayed on task and dealt with the issues that were relevant. What I saw during the hearing was, to be blunt, opposition members who could not think on their feet. When they were found wanting in terms of their question, they could not rephrase the question in order to get it up. It was pretty simple to rephrase the question but they chose to move on.


I do not want to focus on that: I want to focus on the good things that were reported on in the estimates committee process and in the report as a consequence of the Palaszczuk government's 2018-19 budget. There was a recurring theme in relation to my portfolio areas, and that is how this government—the Palaszczuk Labor government—is genuinely the government and the party for the bush. It is the party for rural and regional Queensland in so many ways. In relation to the country racing package, which is delivering fantastically for the bush, I want to encourage people to support the Birdsville Races this year. They will be televised, and 50 per cent of the wagering outcome on the event will go to the Drought Appeal, so I encourage people to support that event from wherever they are in Queensland or, indeed, wherever they are across the country.

I want to highlight that one of the key topics during the committee hearing was in relation to the very successful Works for Queensland package: \$200 million committed to delivering for local governments across regional Queensland. There is now a total of \$600 million that is delivering for local governments right across the length and breadth of the state. It is a program, a package, a commitment, that local governments have respected and valued right across regional Queensland. There has been deafening silence from the other side in relation to that, of course, because they proposed to cut it ahead of the last election. That was their plan to support local government across regional Queensland.

Very importantly, in rural and remote Queensland we also have the \$120 million Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program and the State Government Financial Program, which Labor has indexed to deliver for those communities that are the most remote and the most disadvantaged in terms of providing the infrastructure that is important for their communities. A further example is \$20 million for the sea walls, drainage and groins on the five islands of the outer Torres Strait. I want to acknowledge the member for Cook and her advocacy for that. We will be seeking matching funding from the Commonwealth to ensure that that program delivers for those communities. It is the reality that across my three portfolio areas, including the commitment to rural resettlement and the work we are

doing under the area of multicultural affairs, we are supporting the bush. We are supporting those communities that need it the most at the moment. Most significantly, as Queensland has always been a very decentralised state, it is important that we support those communities.

I thank the committee for its consideration of the budget. I thank the committee for its consideration of my portfolio areas. I commend its report to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (6.57 pm): I rise to address the recent budget estimates hearing and the Appropriation Bill 2018, specifically that area of responsibility in consideration of the Palaszczuk Labor government's proposed expenditure by the Economics and Governance Committee. I will also make some specific comments on the committee's consideration as it relates to my shadow ministerial portfolio of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships.

The first thing I would like to address relates to the chair, the member for Logan, who ran a protection racket. Those are not just my words or the words of members on this side of the House who confirm that: those were the words of John Mickel, the former Labor Speaker. With the constant interruptions and excessive use of standing orders, what they ran on the day could only be described as a protection racket. I know that the Labor member for Pine Rivers does not really want to discuss Labor's secrecy, cover-ups and failures in government, but those are certainly important issues that needed to be discussed by this committee and in many other committees throughout the estimates process.

Under Labor economic growth is weaker, employment growth is falling and unemployment remains high. Labor's budget for this year is one of taxes, debt and unemployment, and the estimates process confirmed this to be the case. Despite all the new taxes that Queenslanders will be slugged with and a massive boom in resources royalties, incredibly Labor is still managing to rack up a massive debt bill of \$83 billion in the next few years for our children and grandchildren to pay back.

The Treasurer tries to avoid mentioning the word 'debt', but the interest bill on this debt will be \$3.7 billion each and every year. This equates to \$71 million a week, \$10 million a day, \$420,000 an hour or \$7,000 a minute. As only Labor can do, they are spending more than they can afford and leaving debt to future generations.


The scathing 2017 Working for Queensland survey with respect to the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and problematic bullying and at-risk associated management practices are certainly cause for great concern. Whilst the Deputy Premier might like to constantly shift blame on to various other governments, whether former state governments or the Commonwealth government, the reality is that the Palaszczuk Labor government is responsible for workplace culture and management practices in 2017.

What was also clear from the estimates process was that the Labor government had not in a timely manner progressed recommendations and strategies with respect to a youth sexual—

Debate, on motion of Dr Rowan, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Bribie Island, Nuclear Power

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (7.00 pm): My attention has been drawn to a petition currently before the Queensland parliament that has some mischievous bearing on Bribie Island in my electorate of Pumicestone. This petition, titled 'Nuclear power plant on Bribie Island', has been sponsored by none other than the member for Morayfield, Mark Ryan.

The most contemptible rumours and mistruths will be believed by some people unless they are corrected, so let me correct this rumour and mistruth once and for all. The LNP will never allow a nuclear power plant to be built on Bribie Island, full stop. It is revealing that this petition calls on the Queensland Labor government to 'stand up to the LNP and say no to a nuclear power plant on Bribie Island'. The Palaszczuk government need not waste their time nor breath. I have just stated unequivocally that the LNP would never allow a nuclear power plant to be built on Bribie Island. Did members hear that? We would never allow it. The rumour is now dispelled, the truth is clear, and there can be no mistaking the LNP's position from this point forward.


Those circulating the rumours of nuclear power on Bribie Island have used as the basis of their claims a very outdated study that was undertaken way back in 2007 by the left-wing Australia Institute. That outdated study named Bribie Island among 17 other potential sites across Australia. To even include Bribie Island in this study is, in my view and the view of many others, just plain stupidity.

Last time I looked there were 515 signatories to this petition. That is 515 people who have been led to believe that there is some validity to the wording of this petition. There is not, and there never has been, any validity to these claims. This is nothing but an ill-informed, alarmist petition with absolutely no basis. It is not okay for the member for Morayfield, who is also the police minister, to knowingly put his name behind a baseless rumour whose sole purpose is to frighten people in their beds. I will be watching very closely to see what response the Labor government will issue to this petition. Let me be clear: it needs to dispel this rumour, as I have today, once and for all.

The member for Morayfield's involvement in this petition is yet another example of the contempt this Labor government has for the people of Pumicestone, who, quite frankly, deserve much better than the rubbish we have been served by Labor over the past three years.

(Time expired)

Greater Springfield

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.03 pm): On 12 July this year a book was launched. This was no ordinary book but a story of vision, persistence and the belief that you can deliver against the odds. I was honoured as the local state member to be at the Queensland State Library along with approximately 250 invited guests for the official launch of *Greater Springfield: Australia's Newest City*, co-authored by Madonna King and David Fagan. The book, which was officially launched by the Prime Minister, Hon. Malcolm Turnbull—he was Prime Minister the last time I checked—and Queensland Minister for State Development, Hon. Cameron Dick, reflects the journey of Greater Springfield over the past 25 years. What a journey it has been.


As the founders, Maha Sinnathamby and Bob Sharpless, say in the opening note, 'when you manage to take control of a 2,860-hectare single parcel of land so close to a major capital city, you realise that you have landed the opportunity of a lifetime'. It also compelled the founders to think boldly and do something completely unique. Demographer Bernard Salt, who provided the foreword for the book, writes that 'delivering a seamless, integrated community and town centre to the edge of the existing urban fabric takes time, money and above all the ability to convince others that the dream, the vision, is worthwhile'.

We know that to achieve this vision infrastructure must be extended, planning matters must be resolved and investors need to see a return, but mostly the community needs to be engaged and supportive. The launch event highlighted this in the most visual way. In amongst the many politicians of both persuasions—federal, state and local—the senior bureaucrats and the development partners, there were the local faces, those people who call Greater Springfield home.

Within the pages of the book, it is the interviews with many of the aspirational people who now live or work within Greater Springfield who capture the spirit of the place—people like Dr Stuart Philip, who became a resident and the first surgeon to perform an operation at the Mater Private Hospital Springfield; Principal Michelle Campbell, who oversees the Hymba Yumba independent school, supporting young Indigenous students within the region; local priest Father Mauro, who has overseen the construction of a beautiful new church and growing parish, Our Lady of the Southern Cross; and Jeanine Buchanan, who has been president, secretary and community officer for the Lions Club of Greater Springfield. These are just some of the characters in the stories captured within the book, and it is their stories and those of countless others that have strengthened the resolve of the founders and my resolve to see Greater Springfield continue to chase its limitless potential.

There is a line in the book that 'the difference between those who merely dream and those who actually deliver isn't all that glamorous'. What *Greater Springfield: Australia's Newest City* shows is that delivering on that dream involves hard work and persistence over years and even decades—for Greater Springfield 25 years to be precise, yet the journey has really just begun.

Bundaberg and Burnett, Drought

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (7.06 pm): I rise to bring to the attention of the House the increasingly dire plight of farmers and growers in the Bundaberg and Burnett regions. While many regions out west and in New South Wales are doing it much tougher than we are, conditions in the Bundaberg region have deteriorated significantly in the past few months. With the lack of any rainfall since October 2017 we are facing our own crisis. Farmers are looking to replant cane or rotational crops at present. Small crop growers are under serious pressure as they make decisions about what crops they plant.

The last of our drought-declared growers saw their electricity tariff relief finish last Thursday with the conclusion of the district's drought declaration. Right now they cannot make economic investment or planning decisions on rotational and small crops because they cannot afford to pump the water. Yes, we had considerable rain last October and over the summer, but we are now in the middle of a very long dry period. Rainfall over the 2018 autumn and winter period has been less than 50 per cent of the average at Bundaberg district monitoring sites. With an El Nino pattern declared, the remainder of winter and the beginning of spring do not appear to show much promise of substantial relief rain.

Growers in the Burnett urgently need an extension of the drought declaration for Bundaberg to support electricity tariff relief. Ergon stands ready to continue the relief, but it cannot act without a drought declaration from the minister. I call on the minister for agriculture to hear growers in the Bundaberg region loud and clear. He should not stand on bureaucracy. He can reactivate the drought committee, he can act immediately and he can look at the rainfall situation in the region.

Without electricity tariff relief, small crop growers cannot make decisions about planning the crops that are daily staples in the market. Without electricity price relief, crops like tomatoes, watermelons, zucchinis and capsicums will cost more and will be harder to grow. Without electricity tariff relief, canegrowers cannot make decisions about replanting sugar or investing in rotational crops that are the lifeblood of their viability. Sugar prices are badly affected already in this region. Canegrowers need the urgent help of the minister.

On behalf of growers in the Bundaberg and Isis districts I call on the minister to reactivate the drought committee as a matter of urgency. These are extraordinary circumstances in the region and exceptions need to be made. The minister should show his support for local families and businesses. We desperately need a four- to six-month extension of the drought declaration to get us through to the summer rains.

Calls this week have been arrogantly responded to by even the Premier, saying that farmers know what to do. Farmers do know what to do. They are looking for leadership. They are looking for the Premier to show real leadership and do what can be done for farmers. We should not forget that electricity tariff reform will mean sustainability into the future and will mean that farmers will be there at the end of the season. The minister's response was that, yes, he can do the drought declaration. Tonight I again call on the minister to stand up, get on with the job and put the drought declaration committees back in place and review the rainfall for the Burnett area. The department's response was also insulting. If the policy people do not know what is going on, I would suggest that they get out of the road and get the bureaucracy out of the road as well.

Mount Ommaney Electorate, Community Groups



Ms PUGH (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.09 pm): As of 1 July this year plastic bags are history and I want to highlight the work of some of the awesome community groups that have made sure that the Mount Ommaney community was ready for the change. Boomerang Bags is a wonderful organisation and the Centenary chapter began meeting well over a year ago to make our community a greener, cleaner place to live. When I dropped into a working bee last year it had over 10 volunteers beavering away on a Wednesday night to make these gorgeous bespoke creations. No, Mr Speaker, I will not be tabling my awesome bag. It is not a prop; it is a fashion statement! This year members of the Oxley Boomerang Bags have been meeting most Friday nights to create some truly stylish bags at the Oxley Bowls Club. They also have more than 10 volunteers there, and it is not just because of the great vinos on offer at the Oxley Bowls; it is because our community cares about creating a cleaner, greener future.

My electorate is also lucky to be serviced by CDEA, the Centenary and District Environment Action—a truly amazing environmental group that works in the local area to preserve our green spaces by working with local MPs and caring for those spaces with Bushcare groups once they have been preserved. My favourite place in the whole electorate, Lorikeet Park, is testament to the hard work of the CDEA group who lobbied hard to keep this space preserved as parkland to house our wildlife. When I take my children there of an afternoon you can hear the buzz of the beautiful birdlife that call this park home.


Most recently CDEA has played a key role in retaining 80 per cent of the Oxley secondary school site for community use and green space. Our community owes it and the community panel a debt of gratitude for their tireless advocacy and their boots-on-the-ground approach to retaining green space. Indeed, it is also supported by the Bushwaccas, which, ably led by Kat, cares for local parkland such as the Spine Street Reserve. Most recently Kat and her team were overrun with more than 30 new volunteers all eager to green the Centenary suburbs as part of the Peak to Points Festival. I was pleased

to attend the Peak to Points launch festival at the beautiful Oxley Creek Common in Rocklea. I entreated visitors that day that if it was the first time they had visited not to make it the last. Thanks to OCCA—the Oxley Common Catchment Association—there is a plethora of year-round activity happening.

Finally, I was thrilled to learn that Carolyn Vincent has been nominated as a finalist in the Brisbane Cleaner Suburbs Awards. Carolyn started a new movement, #missionlitterpickup, encouraging all Queenslanders to use social media for good and keep our suburbs clean. Last year the Jamboree Residents Association was the winner of the Location Clean Up Award and my Rotary club of Sumner Park was a finalist. My community is a much richer place for the tireless work of these groups and I want to thank them for their tireless advocacy.

(Time expired)


Bundaberg Electorate, School Air Conditioning

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (7.12 pm): Labor still will not budge when it comes to air-conditioning our state's classrooms. In June we announced that an LNP government would install air conditioning in every state high school and primary school classroom in our great state. Just a month later in July the New South Wales Labor opposition made the same commitment after thinking about it for eight years. In the same month the Queensland Teachers' Union also voiced its support for air-conditioning our classrooms. How much more convincing does this government need? With two years until the next election and a Cooler Schools program that is out of touch, P&C groups located south of Gladstone are desperately trying to come up with their own solutions to air-condition their classrooms, including those in my electorate of Bundaberg. This is wrong and our kids should not have to suffer for another two long summers under a government that has its priorities all wrong.

Countless teachers, parents, principals and students often ask me when air conditioning will become a reality in their classrooms and I am tired of having to tell them that Labor is not interested. I wanted to make it happen now, so I am giving the schools in my electorate the support they need and deserve. To help raise funds to install critical projects like air conditioning, I am donating Weber barbeques purchased locally to Bundaberg's state school P&Cs to use as raffle prizes, with all funds raised going straight back to the P&C. I am providing everything they need—the barbeques, the tickets, the posters and additional prizes to give to the teachers and students who sell the most tickets.

I am donating the barbeques to three schools at a time and how each individual school runs the raffle is completely up to them. My community raffle has been extremely well received. Every school I have offered the raffle to so far has grabbed the opportunity quickly and the staff and P&C members have been very grateful. At the moment raffles are underway at Bundaberg South, Bundaberg North, Thabeban, Walkervale and Norville state schools and we have already drawn the raffle at Bundaberg West with fantastic results. We endure extremely hot and humid conditions in Bundaberg every single year and there are classrooms in Bundy that cannot even be used in summer because they are just too hot. Our kids are worth it and they should not be suffering in hot classrooms for the better part of a year. The LNP wants our kids to be the smartest in the nation and I will continue to fight for this for not just my electorate but for all of Queensland. There is no denying that cool kids are smart kids.

Evans, Ms E

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (7.15 pm): I rise to speak about Ella Evans, a year 11 student at St Patrick's College in Townsville. She is a Darumbal woman from the Rockhampton region and recently Ella was selected to attend the United Nations Youth National Conference in Adelaide. The conference was themed 'Power, diplomacy and influence'. She has written a speech for me to read out this evening and these are her words—

Young people are often given a bad reputation for being disengaged from politics or important issues. The current generation of young people, part of the 'me, me, me' generation are often perceived as being lazy, complacent and self-obsessed. However, recent studies such as the ABC 'What's Up in Your World Survey' suggest this is not the case. We, the youth of Australia, are actually a group of hardworking, compassionate people who are worried about the future of the planet. We are a generation that is immensely politically aware, yet only 7% of us are confident that politicians are working to advance our interests. Our lack of confidence is arguably because we are rarely provided with opportunities and platforms in which we are able to actively engage with the political system.

The United Nations Youth National Conference is an example of an initiative that helps to foster a positive representation of young people, their opinions and their political consciousness. I was lucky enough to participate in this event in June this year. While at the conference, I engaged with over 100 young people from across Australia and New Zealand who were passionate about national and international issues. Many of these young people were already developing strong political views, were actively engaging in politics and community service initiatives, and were making a positive impact within their home communities. We participated in activities such as panel discussions about the news, current affairs and media. We were given opportunities to


challenge current political policies and initiatives, and posed thought provoking and mature questions to representatives from the national media. I feel that opportunities which allow young people to engage with the political process are rare. I am a young indigenous woman who is passionate about the issues our youth face, and as an active and engaged member advocating for the future of my community, I often feel I am unheard.

Providing young people with greater opportunities to be involved in discussions about the future of the nation challenges the notion that young people are apathetic. We must provide a platform for the young to voice their concerns, hopes and aspirations. We must ensure that we include young people in political and social conversations to encourage diversity in political decision making.

Remember, it is my generation who will inherit the legacy of your decisions.

Wise words from a 16-year-old.

Cleveland, Rail Services

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.18 pm): The Cleveland rail line is now the 'misery line'. This unfortunate new moniker has been adopted by residents, commuters and now the local paper, and I table the front page of the *Redland City Bulletin* headlined 'Train line misery' by Cheryl Goodenough.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Redland City Bulletin*, dated 15 August 2018, titled 'Train line misery' [[1156](#)].

Labor's rail fail continues to hit the Redlands region hard and nothing has changed in almost two years since this fiasco first began.

Constituents who were until recent times daily commuters on Cleveland's misery line are so fed up with the unreliability of service that they are getting back in their cars and driving in peak hour, further increasing—not easing—congestion on our crowded state roads. Recently, one commuter said—


I stopped catching the train or bus months ago. I drive and plan to move out of the Redlands shortly. Not because it's not a beautiful place to live and raise kids but the unbearably expensive and long commute.

Recently, Robert Dow from Rail Back on Track shared an article that lists the common issues that commuters have with what he calls Cleveland's misery line. That list included services that are often 'expressed' past stations without fair warning, leaving people stranded; the overcrowded three-car trains on some services; a 30-minute morning peak gap between the 6.24 am and the 6.54 am from Cleveland city bound; on Fridays, multiple 30-minute gaps between trains in the afternoon peak; and, the most significant one of all, the single-track sections between Manly and Cleveland causing havoc with on-time running and track capacity.

Local Labor MPs put forward the Cross River Rail as the solution, yet this solution will do nothing for many years—if it is ever built. Locals want relief now. The government can start by restoring the peak services that it cut, including the 450 additional peak seats capacity that was installed by the LNP government. The government should then restore all 42 services that were cut from the Cleveland line in 2016. That would attract back some commuters. The rail duplication is the next big step that will make a difference. The Cleveland to Manly duplication will help greatly. It should be the next big duplication line commitment by the government in South-East Queensland.

In my recently conducted community survey, the duplication of the Cleveland line rated as the No. 1 transport priority in the region, the single most important public transport project. Out of nine projects or services, guess which ranked last. The Cross River Rail project. I hope that the people of Redlands hold their silent local Labor MPs to account for this mess. They need relief now, not on the never-never. I call on the transport minister to act and act now for Brisbane's south-east. Only the LNP is fighting to take Labor's misery out of the Cleveland line.

Bayside Community Legal Service


 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.21 pm): For over 30 years in Australia community legal centres have operated and, each year, they help over 200,000 people and leverage more than \$20 million worth of legal assistance. The bayside is really fortunate to have Anna, Candice and her team at the Bayside Community Legal Service operating at the Wynnum Community Centre. The BCLS is a not-for-profit community based organisation that provides free legal and related services to locals, focusing on disadvantaged people. The clients of the Bayside Community Legal Service come from a range of circumstances and are often facing economic, social or cultural disadvantage and experiencing multiple interrelated problems. These are complex legal problems that affect not only their own lives but often the entire life circumstances of their families. That is what makes community legal services different from other legal services. It is service that recognises that clients' problems are not only legal and that it has to respond to the interrelated needs of its clients.

These individuals and their families are often in crisis, having been rejected for assistance elsewhere. The Bayside Community Legal Service provides an important service. It does not leave these people behind. It helps to resolve these people's legal problems and all of their related problems, which often prevents an escalation of the problems that they are experiencing.

The Bayside Community Legal Service provides access to justice, which makes vulnerable and often disadvantaged clients feel socially included, and allows them to exercise their rights within a fair and balanced system of justice. Baysiders are incredibly fortunate to have this fabulous legal service, which is critical in upholding the rule of law through its rights based approach. This is particularly important in my local bayside area. The Bayside Community Legal Service has forged great relationships with many community groups, service providers and agencies providing assistance and referrals to vulnerable people who are in crisis. Unfortunately, many of these services were ripped out of our communities during the Campbell Newman years.

My office has a wonderful collaborative relationship with the Bayside Community Legal Service, which works so hard in my community to ensure that the people of my community are being looked after. I am always confident to be able to refer constituents to the service, because I know that they will be treated respectfully and be supported respectfully. The Bayside Community Legal Service is an integral service in my community that serves baysiders. I look forward to continuing to work with Anna, Candice and the team, who do the great work for the service.

Emergency Services, Volunteers


 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.24 pm): It is only when we have a disaster—natural or otherwise—that impacts us directly that we suddenly appreciate those who are the first faces we see when we are at our most vulnerable. On many occasions, these faces are our incredible volunteers—our surf lifesavers, our coast guards, our SES and our rural fire brigades.

The statistics across Queensland of what those volunteer organisations provide are staggering. Surf Life Saving alone took over one million preventative actions. That is potentially one million people saved. What value do we place on these lives? These volunteer organisations save Queenslanders' lives as well as millions in taxpayer dollars annually. As an example, I will use the Noosa coastguard. Last year, it responded to 213 calls for assistance for 212 boats and 528 people and provided five search and rescues. These actions took 37,367 man hours. At a basic rate of \$30 an hour, that is over \$1 million worth. There is no sick pay, superannuation, long service leave or penalty rates included in that amount. There is no travel or meal allowance, uniforms supplied, or even a free membership included in those calculations. Noosa coastguard's basic operational costs are \$160,000 per year. Twenty-five per cent, or roughly \$40,000, is provided through state and local government funding. The balance is provided by these volunteers holding the bucket, so to speak. If taxpayers were to fund this service without volunteers, there would not be much change out of \$1.5 million annually. If we analyse every volunteer emergency service organisation across Queensland, what amount are we talking about? Billions.

It is good to see that a review of our emergency service will commence and be completed by the end of this year—before the next funding agreements. I trust a very clear message comes out from this review. These volunteers and the services they provide are irreplaceable and deserve much greater financial assistance. Across Queensland, the efforts of our sung and unsung heroes make front-page news, yet these volunteers who donate their time to save us and our properties have to fundraise to do so, and with great struggle. It is time to stop this struggle in Queensland.

As members of parliament, we can right this wrong. Multiple avenues exist to provide the necessary funding to keep our volunteer emergency services saving lives. There are examples across Australia of different models, which include levies and licensing fees. This review gives us the opportunity to look at all options. I commend the government and Minister Crawford on taking this step forward and look forward to these organisations receiving the respect and funding that they deserve to continue saving Queenslanders' lives.

Caboolture Sports Football Club

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (7.27 pm): Last week, history was made by the Caboolture Sports Football Club qualifying for the Brisbane Premier League, the first tier of senior football in Brisbane. The mighty Caboolture Snakes football club was formed almost 50 years ago and has had much success. Caboolture has been rising in the football Brisbane divisions after entering the Brisbane competition league only three seasons ago, having played in the Sunshine Coast competition for the past two decades.

To progress through to the Brisbane Premier League this quickly is an amazing achievement by a group of down-to-earth individuals from all walks of life who, together as a team, achieved extraordinary things—thanks to the coach, Nathan Walker, their fierce, determined and talented leader. Nathan's leadership and networking skills have been critical to the team's success. That success has enabled the Caboolture club to attract an exciting group of young players from around the world—not only people from the Snake pit in Caboolture but also people like Djamel from France and Jacob, who plays goalkeeper, who is from the United States.

I am excited about the achievements of this team, because they understand that the broader benefits of sport go beyond the personal benefit derived from participation in sport. The transformative potential of sport is well known. Nathan, with his Snakes, have put an empowering vision into action by embracing Indigenous heritage as well as bringing together people from across our community through the shared love of football.

Nathan is very aware of the difference the senior team can make for the junior players in the community. The senior players have taken on leadership and mentoring roles for the young players in the club. I was particularly enthused about the player cards initiative that the team has developed. These trading cards feature all the senior players and were produced and given out to the junior players—and some lucky members of parliament as well, I must say—to collect. That is a fantastic way to promote the club and foster that sense of pride in the community that the mighty Snakies have built over the past few years.

I must acknowledge our government's support of this great club. We provided an infrastructure grant to the club to help its move to its new facilities, which are almost complete, at the Moreton Bay Central Sports Complex in the electorate of Kurwongbah. Nonetheless, it is not too far down the road from the mighty Morayfield electorate. I take this opportunity to congratulate the mighty Snakies and their senior squad for their outstanding achievement in gaining promotion to the Brisbane Premier League. Watch out Brisbane Premier League, the Snakes are coming.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszcuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson