



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 16 October 2018

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TUESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2018

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 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.

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

Date of Assent: 20 September 2018

A Bill for an Act to amend the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Criminal Code, the Maritime Safety Queensland Act 2002, the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Regulation 2012, the Police Service Administration Act 1990, the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 and the Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994 for particular purposes.

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

20 September 2018

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 20 September 2018, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to a certain bill on 20 September 2018 [[1624](#)].

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: 28 September 2018

An Act to adopt the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018 (Cwlth), and to refer certain matters relating to the National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse to the Parliament of the Commonwealth, for the purposes of section 51 (xxxvii) of the Commonwealth Constitution, and to amend the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 for particular purposes

An Act to amend the Electricity Act 1994, the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006, the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014 and the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 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

28 September 2018

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 28 September 2018, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 28 September 2018 [[1625](#)].

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Divisions, Personal Votes


 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, standing order 104 provides that where a division is demanded a party vote is to be held unless the subject of the vote is to be treated as a personal vote. Where the Speaker receives prior advice from a party whip of a personal vote, the Speaker will permit a personal vote to be held instead of a party vote. I advise the House that I have received advice that all divisions on questions relating to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill are to be treated as a personal vote. Accordingly, all divisions on this bill will be a personal vote.

The process for personal votes is set out in standing order 107. Once the bars have closed, members voting aye will move to the right of the chair and members voting no will move to the left of the chair. Members who have been in this place for some time may have fond recollections of how that process works. I will then appoint two tellers who will count those members voting aye, and two tellers who will count those members voting no. The tellers will count the members voting and then provide the division sheets to the clerks at the table. To assist in the count, I ask that members take a seat where possible. Once the seats on a side are full, other members will stand in single file near the wall.

I also remind members that, once the division bells have stopped, all members present in the chamber must vote. This means that if a member is intending to abstain from a vote they must absent themselves from the chamber before the bars are closed. I thank members in advance for a respectful and courteous debate. I know that this is what Queenslanders would expect from this House.

SPEAKER'S RULING


Question on Notice Out of Order

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, standing order 115 provides that questions on notice shall not ask for an expression of opinion. On Wednesday, 19 September 2018 the member for Whitsunday asked a question on notice of the Premier and Minister for Trade. The member's question asked whether the Premier supported the comments and opinions expressed by another person.

There is clear precedent that questions which ask a minister whether they support the opinions expressed, or comments made, by another person are, in effect, seeking an expression of opinion from the minister. I refer to Speaker Simpson's ruling on 31 May 2012 at page 353 and Speaker Wellington's ruling on 3 December 2015 at page 3165. Accordingly, I rule question on notice No. 1262 of 2018, submitted by the member for Whitsunday, out of order.

PRIVILEGE

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

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 23 August 2018 the member for Mermaid Beach wrote to me alleging that the member for Keppel deliberately misled the House on 22 August 2018 in making two statements. I wrote to the member for Keppel seeking a response to the allegation. The member for Keppel responded on 12 September 2018.

Accordingly, on the evidence before me, I consider that the member for Keppel has presented material to support an argument that her statements were factually correct and therefore not misleading. Therefore, I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring this matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence in relation to the allegation by the member for Mermaid Beach, Mr Ray Stevens MP, that the member for Keppel, Mrs Brittany Lauga MP, deliberately misled the House [1626].

I seek leave to incorporate the ruling circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

On 23 August 2018, the Member for Mermaid Beach wrote to me alleging that the Member for Keppel deliberately misled the House.

On 22 August 2018, the Member for Keppel made the following two statements:

Some 500 teachers were cut under the former LNP government—500 teaching positions from Queensland schools. This decision put greater pressure on class sizes, robbed teachers of collaboration and preparation time and also meant that there were fewer teachers in our schools to support students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

And:

To clarify, 500 teaching positions—500 jobs—were cut under the previous government, Taranganba State School was one of the state finalists ...

In his letter to me, the Member for Mermaid Beach alleged that the Member for Keppel misled the House and provided the information on which he based his allegation.

I wrote to the Member for Keppel, seeking a response to the allegation. In her response, the Member for Keppel argued that her statements were not factually incorrect or misleading and provided the information on which she had based her statements.

The Member for Keppel has also provided a reference to an answer by Deputy Director General, Department of Education to a question in an Estimates Hearing in 2015:

As part of the then government's fiscal repair strategy, the department undertook some changes to the staffing allocation methodologies that were in place in the 2012 staffing model for the 2013 school year. That related to the removal of the rounding benefits for primary schools, the key teacher allocations in primary schools, some minor changes to the rounding benefits in secondary schools and the removal of the resource teachers in secondary schools at the time. The approximate savings in that particular year were some 519 FTEs in the 2015 enrolment numbers. When we look at the changes that were made then, it is some 519 FTEs impact.

Additionally, the Member for Keppel has also referenced a briefing note tabled by the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations on 6 September 2018. This states that while there were more than 9,700 additional students in Queensland schools, there was no teacher FTE growth. Instead, teacher FTEs declined by 61.9. The brief also states that changes made by the former Newman Government resulted in a net impact of some 519 fewer teacher FTE allocated that year than if these staffing methodologies had remained unchanged. The Minister stated:

In anybody's language, this is a fundamental cut in teacher numbers.

The Member for Keppel has stated that in the above references, the former Minister for Education and the current Minister for Education have both clarified this matter in the Parliament and during an Estimates hearing, showing that there was an effective cut of more than 500 teaching FTEs. The information provided by the Member for Keppel supports her contention that her statement was factually correct.

Standing Order 269(4) requires:

In considering whether the matter should be referred to the committee, the Speaker shall take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter. No matter should be referred to the ethics committee if the matter is technical or trivial and does not warrant the further attention of the House.

On the evidence before me, I considered that the Member for Keppel has made an adequate explanation of her statements.

I have therefore decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter.

I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

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



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, on 27 August 2018 the member for Chatsworth wrote to me alleging that the Premier and member for Inala deliberately misled the House on 22 August 2018 in making two statements whilst answering two questions without notice on the same issue. I wrote to the Premier seeking a response to the allegation. The Premier responded on 12 September 2018.

On the evidence before me, I considered that the Premier has made an adequate explanation for the basis of her statements. Therefore, I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence in relation to the allegation by the member for Chatsworth, Mr Steve Minnikin MP, that the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk, deliberately misled the House [1627].

I seek leave to incorporate the ruling circulated in my name.

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

On 27 August 2018, the Member for Chatsworth wrote to me alleging that the Premier and Member for Inala deliberately misled the House in making two statements whilst answering Questions Without Notice on the same issue.

On 22 August 2018, during Question Time, the Premier made the following two statements in answer to two separate Questions Without Notice:

They did not spend any money on the M1 when they were in government. They had all the MPs on the Gold Coast, but where was the money? Where was the planning? There was absolutely nothing done.

And:

As I said very clearly, my government is investing in the Gold Coast and fixing up the M1. As I said very clearly, those opposite—and the honourable member who asked the question was a member, and a minister for a considerable short period of time—in the previous government failed to deliver any funding whatsoever to the M1.

In his letter to me, the Member for Chatsworth alleged that the Premier deliberately misled the House and provided the information on which he based his allegation.

The Member for Chatsworth notes that the documents he provided and the information available in the 2012-13 and 2014-15 budget papers prove the Premier's statements are wrong and misleading. The Member for Chatsworth has cited the 2013-14 Department of Transport and Main Roads Service Delivery Statement which states:

- \$40 million is provided in 2013-14, for the \$95.5 million widening to six lanes of the Pacific Motorway between Worongary and Mudgeeraba, which is due for completion in April 2015

The Member for Chatsworth also notes that the 2014 budget included funding for further widening works and upgrading the Pacific Motorway interchange at Eight Mile Plains.

I wrote to the Premier, seeking a response to the allegation. In her response, the Premier argued that her statements were not factually incorrect or misleading and provided the information on which she had based her statements.

The Premier in her response notes that the Member for Chatsworth refers to the 2013-14 Service Delivery Statement for the Department of Transport and Main Roads, which references the funding for the widening of the Pacific Motorway to six lanes between Worongary and Mudgeeraba, funding which was reprioritised by the Bligh and Gillard Governments from the 2011-12 budget. The Premier states that the two media statements provided by the Member for Chatsworth were references to the reprioritisation, described above. The Premier further states that none of the budget documents refer to any new funding provided for any projects on the M1 between 2012-13 and 2014-15.

Upon inspection of the Budget papers provided by the Premier, the 2014-15 papers contain the following references: Pacific Motorway, Veloway 1 (Stages D & E) construct cycleway; and Pacific Motorway, Worongary-Mudgeeraba, widen to six lanes.

However, it is not clear from the Budget Papers exactly when funding was allocated to these projects and by whom.

However, it seems that the arguments of the parties appear to be based on differing interpretations of the reporting of the allocation of funding. The Premier has explained the basis for her statement, which was based on different information than the allegation made by the Member for Chatsworth.

Standing Order 269(4) requires:

In considering whether the matter should be referred to the committee, the Speaker shall take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter. No matter should be referred to the ethics committee if the matter is technical or trivial and does not warrant the further attention of the House.

On the evidence before me, I considered that the Premier has made an adequate explanation of her statements, such that it is open to interpretation as to whether the statements were factually incorrect.

I also note that remarks made off the cuff in a debate can rarely fall into the category of deliberate misleading, nor can matters about which the member can only be aware in an official capacity. This contrasts to matters where a member can be assumed to have personal knowledge of the stated facts and made the statement in a situation of some formality (for example by way of personal explanation), a presumption of an intention to mislead the House will more readily arise.


In this case the answers were in response to Questions Without Notice and therefore the presumption of an intention does not readily arise. There has been no evidence provided to support the proposition that the Premier intended to mislead the House.

I have therefore decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter.


I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I remind members that the annual general meeting of the Queensland branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association will be held in the Legislative Assembly chamber this afternoon at 1.05 pm. I hope all of you can join us.

School Group Tour

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the House this morning by students and teachers from Manly State School in the electorate of Lytton.

PETITIONS

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

Mater Hospital, Obstetrics Practice Closure

Mr Bennett, from 462 petitioners, requesting the House to meet with stakeholders including government, community and the Gladstone Hospital to review the decision to close the Obstetrics practice at the Mater Hospital [1628].

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

Abortion Laws

From 2 petitioners, requesting the House to reject the proposed abortion law reform bill [1629].

Sharks, Protection

From 782 petitioners, requesting the House to commit to the protection of shark species and cease the use of shark nets and drumlines [1630].

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

Trinity Park, Boat Ramp

From 403 petitioners, requesting the House to not build the boat ramp at Yorkeys Knob but at the more suitable location at Trinity Park and to publish detailed comparisons of costings and engineering investigations of the two sites [1631, 1632].

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

Eastern Busway

Mr Brown, from 921 petitioners, requesting the House to build the Eastern Busway and call on the Government to instruct Building Queensland to do a business case in 2019 for submission to Infrastructure Australia [1633].

Southern Queensland Correctional Centre

Mr Berkman, from 1,083 petitioners, requesting the House to call for Southern Queensland Correctional Centre to be returned to public operation; commit to a moratorium on prison expansion in Queensland and reduce the number of adults and children in Queensland prisons [1634].

Mount Coot-tha Zipline Complex

Mr Berkman, from 4,058 petitioners, requesting the House to not approve any part of the proposed zipline complex at Mount Coot-tha [1635].

Carriageway Width, Planning Requirements

Mr Boothman, from 184 petitioners, requesting the House to review current legislation and planning requirements regarding local carriageway width, in particular within new housing developments [1636].

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

Toowong Cycle and Pedestrian Overpass, Renaming

From 105 petitioners, requesting the House to rename the Toowong Cycle and Pedestrian Overpass to Canon Garland and Anzac Memorial Cycle and Pedestrian Overpass [1637].

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—

20 September 2018—

- [1425](#) Response from the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport (Hon. de Brenni), to an ePetition (2939-18) sponsored by Hon Dick, from 90 petitioners, requesting the House to commission and install a statue of Cameron Smith at Suncorp Stadium

21 September 2018—

- [1426](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 15, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 2 May 2018 and 12 June 2018
- [1427](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 19, 56th Parliament—Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill 2018
- [1428](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 7, 56th Parliament—Safer Waterways Bill 2018
- [1429](#) Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1430](#) Review of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, July 2018

24 September 2018—

- [1431](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Mark Ryan) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Police Service (Discipline) Regulations 1990 and the State Buildings Protective Security Regulation 2008
- [1432](#) Valuers Registration Board of Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1433](#) Surveyors Board Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1434](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (2987-18) presented by Mr Andrew and an ePetition (2912-18) sponsored by Mr Andrew, from 401 and 167 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to review and possibly offer extra resources in the way of labour and equipment to bring forward the completion of repairs to the Sarina Range following damage caused by Cyclone Debbie

25 September 2018—

- [1435](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Hon. Dr Lynham) to an ePetition (2950-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 155 petitioners, requesting the House to alter real estate legislation such that every free standing house sale cannot be finalised until solar panels and storage batteries sufficient for the number of people who might be able to live in that house are installed and operable

27 September 2018—

- [1436](#) Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1437](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 2: 2018-19—Access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme for people with impaired decision-making capacity
- [1438](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 3: 2018-19—Delivering shared corporate services in Queensland
- [1439](#) Brisbane Port Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1440](#) DBCT Holdings Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1441](#) Queensland Lottery Corporation Pty Ltd—Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1442](#) Queensland Treasury Holdings Pty Ltd—Consolidated Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1443](#) Administrator National Health Funding Pool—Annual Report 2016-17
- [1444](#) Queensland Competition Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1445](#) Queensland Productivity Commission—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1446](#) Queensland Treasury Corporation—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1447](#) Motor Accident Insurance Commission—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1448](#) National Injury Insurance Agency Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1449](#) Queensland Treasury—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1450](#) Cross River Rail Delivery Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1451](#) Queensland Investment Corporation—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1452](#) Queensland Investment Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2017-18
- [1453](#) Queensland Investment Corporation—Consolidated Annual Financial Statements and Directors' Report for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1454](#) Queensland Investment Corporation Private Capital Pty Ltd—Annual financial statements and directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1455](#) Queensland Investment Corporation Properties Pty Ltd—Annual financial statements and directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2018

28 September 2018—

- [1456](#) Queensland Fire and Emergency Services—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1457](#) Parole Board Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1458](#) Prostitution Licensing Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1459](#) Gold Coast Waterways Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1460](#) Queensland Police Service—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1461](#) Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1462](#) Queensland Corrective Services—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1463](#) Queensland Rail—Annual and Financial Report 2017-18
- [1464](#) Department of Transport and Main Roads—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1465](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1466](#) Public Safety Business Agency—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1467](#) Department of Housing and Public Works—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1468](#) Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1469](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1470](#) Board of Architects of Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1471](#) Stadiums Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1472](#) Residential Tenancies Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1473](#) Department of Premier and Cabinet—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1474](#) Public Service Commission—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1475](#) Office of the Governor—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1476](#) Queensland Audit Office—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1477](#) Trade and Investment Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1478](#) Letter, dated 24 August 2018, from Linda Lavarch, Chair, Screen Queensland Pty Ltd, to the Premier regarding the Screen Queensland Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2018
- [1479](#) Screen Queensland Pty Ltd—Financial Statements 2017-18
- [1480](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 4: 2018-19—Managing transfers in pharmacy ownership
- [1481](#) Ports North—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1482](#) Ports North—Statement of Corporate Intent 2017-18
- [1483](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1484](#) Gladstone Ports Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2017-18
- [1485](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1486](#) North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation—Statement of Corporate Intent 2017-18
- [1487](#) Port of Townsville—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1488](#) Port of Townsville Limited—Statement of Corporate Intent 2017-18
- [1489](#) Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1490](#) Building Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1491](#) GasFields Commission Queensland—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1492](#) South Bank Corporation—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1493](#) Queensland Reconstruction Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
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- [1495](#) Department of Health—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1496](#) Department of Education—Annual Report 2017-18
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- [1557](#) Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority—Annual Report 2017-18
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- [1561](#) Response from the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (Hon. Dr Lynham), to an e-Petition (2970-18) sponsored by Hon Ryan, from 564 petitioners, requesting the House to reject all efforts to progress a nuclear power industry in Queensland
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- [1562](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Hon. D'Ath) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Associations Incorporation Regulation 1999, Body Corporate and Community Management (Accommodation Module) Regulation 2008, Body Corporate and Community Management (Commercial Module) Regulation 2008, Body Corporate and Community Management Regulation 2008, Body Corporate and Community Management (Small Schemes Module) Regulation 2008, Body Corporate and Community Management (Standard Module) Regulation 2008, Building Units and Group Titles Regulation 2008, Casino Control Regulation 1999, Charitable and Non-Profit Gaming Regulation 1999, Collections Regulation 2008, Fair Trading (Code of Practice-Fitness Industry) Regulation 2003, Gaming Machine Regulation 2002, Interactive Gambling (Player Protection) Regulation 1998, Introduction Agents Regulation 2002, Keno Regulation 2007, Liquor (Approval of Adult Entertainment Code) Regulation 2002, Liquor Regulation 2002, Lotteries Regulation 2007, Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Regulation 2004, Security Providers (Crowd Controller Code of Practice) Regulation 2008, Security Providers Regulation 2008, Security Providers (Security Firm Code of Practice) Regulation 2008, Security Providers (Security Officer—Licensed Premises—Code of Practice) Regulation 2008, Tourism Services (Code of Conduct for Inbound Tour Operators) Regulation 2003, Tourism Services Regulation 2003, Trust Accounts Regulation 1999 and the Wagering Regulation 1999
- [1563](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (3001-18) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (2925-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 7,204 and 1,019 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to support mental illness and disabilities by prioritising funding for outdoor therapies projects such as those proposed by Bamboo Projects Education
- [1564](#) Queensland Local Government Grants Commission—Annual Report 2017
- [1565](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (2961-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 121 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate for the introduction of binding citizen initiated referenda similar to referenda available in California, Switzerland and New Zealand
- [1566](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), to a paper petition (3000-18) presented by the Mr Hart, and an ePetition (2945-18) sponsored by Mr Hart, from 85 and 466 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to prioritise the reopening of the Burleigh Head National Park Oceanview track
- [1567](#) Response from the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (Hon. Dick), to an ePetition (2888-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 2,216 petitioners, requesting the House to prevent the development of a Queensland veal industry and the opening of the Sunshine Coast "bird to beast" abattoir
- [1568](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2944-18) sponsored by Ms Boyd, from 211 petitioners, requesting the House to plan and construct safety upgrades on Eaton's Crossing Road, Cashmere
- [1569](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (2881-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 1,530 petitioners, requesting the House to construct an overpass at the intersection of the Warrego Highway and Lowood-Minden Road, Minden
- [1570](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (2998-18) presented by Mr Mander, from 28 petitioners, requesting the House to improve access to Lawley Street, Kedron, by the addition of safety improvements to the intersection of Gympie Road and Lawley Street, Kedron
- [1571](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (3002-18) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (2965-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 1,566 and 796 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to construct a new northbound on-ramp and a southbound off-ramp to the Bruce Highway at Dohles Rocks Road, Murrumba Downs
- 5 October 2018—
- [1572](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 16, 56th Parliament—Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018
- [1573](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 9, 56th Parliament—Ministerial and Other Office Holder Staff and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, government response
- [1574](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 20, 56th Parliament—Criminal Code (Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images) Amendment Bill 2018
- [1575](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to an ePetition (2960-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 506 petitioners, requesting the House to bring in voluntary euthanasia legislation
- [1576](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (3004-18) presented by Mr Knuth, from 25 petitioners, requesting the House to vote against the abortion Bill

- [1577](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), to an ePetition (2958-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 44 petitioners, requesting the House to ban the use of all combustion stoves and heaters, all garden fire pits and heating implements in cities throughout Queensland
- [1578](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 11, 56th Parliament—Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018
- 9 October 2018—
- [1579](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 5: 2018-19—Follow-up of Bushfire prevention and preparedness
- [1580](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan), to an ePetition (2879-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 803 petitioners, requesting the House to commit to the funding and construction of a new police beat/police station to service the Ormeau and Pimpama growth corridor
- [1581](#) Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors: Section 157—Review of the operation of the Forensic Disability Act 2011, Final report
- [1582](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Jackie Trad) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Regulation 2007
- [1583](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Jackie Trad) pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Petroleum and Gas (Royalty) Regulation—formerly Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Regulation 2004
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- [1584](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan), to an ePetition (2915-18) sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4), from 207 petitioners, requesting the House to apply consistent application of Police Memorial Process and “memorialise” the recognition of Queensland Police Senior Sergeant Michael Isles
- [1585](#) Jobs Queensland Annual Report 2017-18
- 11 October 2018—
- [1586](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006
- [1587](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006
- [1588](#) Professional Standards Councils—Annual Report 2017-18
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- [1590](#) Mental Health Review Tribunal—Annual Report 2017-18
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- 12 October 2018—
- [1593](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on a Trade and Investment Mission to Japan and South Korea by the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), 9-15 September 2018
- [1594](#) Ruling by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Curtis Pitt, regarding referral to Ethics Committee, Katter Party Resources
- 15 October 2018—
- [1595](#) Report to the Legislative Assembly from the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport (Hon. de Brenni), pursuant to section 56A(4) of the Statutory Instruments Act 1992, regarding the Architects Regulation 2003, Building and Construction Industry Payments Regulation 2004, Building Regulation 2006, Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003, Professional Engineers Regulation 2003 and the Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003
- [1596](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 10, 56th Parliament—Inquiry into the operations of toll roads in Queensland: Erratum
- [1597](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 12, 56th Parliament—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1598](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 17, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 13 June 2018 and 21 August 2018
- [1599](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 18, 56th Parliament—Annual Report 2017-18
- [1600](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on an official visit to San Francisco, United States of America, by the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), 10—15 September 2018
- [1601](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 8, 56th Parliament—Subordinate legislation tabled between 2 May 2018 and 12 June 2018
- [1602](#) Office of the Information Commissioner—Annual Report 2017-18: Erratum

[1603](#) 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, government response

[1604](#) Overseas Travel Report: Report on Queensland Treasury Corporation and QIC Limited Roadshow Meetings in New York, London and Brussels by the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Trad), 8-15 September 2018

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Nature Conservation Act 1992—

[1605](#) Nature Conservation (Estuarine Crocodile) Conservation Plan 2018, No. 147

[1606](#) Nature Conservation (Estuarine Crocodile) Conservation Plan 2018, No. 147, explanatory notes

Environmental Offsets Act 2014, Nature Conservation Act 1992, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999—

[1607](#) Nature Conservation (Estuarine Crocodiles) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 148

[1608](#) Nature Conservation (Estuarine Crocodiles) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 148, explanatory notes

Fisheries Act 1994—

[1609](#) Fisheries (Regulated Periods) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 149

[1610](#) Fisheries (Regulated Periods) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 149, explanatory notes

Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2018—

[1611](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 150

[1612](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 150, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law as applied by the law of States and Territories—

[1613](#) Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 151

[1614](#) Heavy Vehicle (Mass, Dimension and Loading) National Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 151, explanatory notes

Justices Act 1886—

[1615](#) Justices (Recording of Pleas and Decisions) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 152

[1616](#) Justices (Recording of Pleas and Decisions) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 152, explanatory notes

Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999—

[1617](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health (Respirable Coal Dust) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 153

[1618](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health (Respirable Coal Dust) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 153, explanatory notes

Environmental Protection Act 1994—

[1619](#) Environmental Protection (Regulated Waste) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 154

[1620](#) Environmental Protection (Regulated Waste) Amendment Regulation 2018, No. 154, explanatory notes

[1621](#) Review of the Regulated Waste Classification and Waste-Related Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) frameworks—
Decision Regulatory Impact Statement


Housing Legislation (Building Better Futures) Amendment Act 2017—

[1622](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 155

[1623](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 155, explanatory notes

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Cyberbullying

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): At the outset I acknowledge that today is rural firefighters day. I thank our fireys for all the great work they do in serving Queensland.

Last Christmas a friend told me about his daughter. She had been the victim of a cyberbully—a cruel, unrelenting stream of abuse that did not end when she left school. That was the catalyst for forming the Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce.

Never have truer words been spoken. Kids can be cruel. What do you do when it happens to your child? How do you stop it? How do we protect our children when their tormenters get past locked doors? The answers are here in the report of the Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce, an approach to address cyberbullying among children and young people in Queensland. I table this report.


Tabled paper: Document, dated September 2018, titled 'Adjust our Settings: A community approach to address cyberbullying among children and young people in Queensland, Report of the Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce' [1638].

The Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce travelled the length and breadth of the state talking to hundreds of citizens, children, experts and parents like Tick and Kate Everett, who lost their beautiful girl Dolly. Even though we never met Dolly, we will never forget her. Everyone says the same thing: we need greater awareness about this modern evil and better education to defeat it.

My government has committed \$3.5 million to implement all 29 recommendations of the anti-cyberbullying report. This initial funding includes \$450,000 to Tick and Kate's Dolly's Dream foundation, which will match this funding with \$300,000 of its own and expand their eSmart Schools Program to another 500 schools. This is part of \$1 million that has been earmarked for all schools. There will be \$2 million over two years to roll out awareness and education campaigns to assist the community, parents, carers and young people to understand what cyberbullying is, the harm it can cause and how we need to address it, and a \$500,000 grants program to youth and community organisations to undertake their own initiatives to address cyberbullying. Social media companies need to do more too.

This is not the end of the battle; it is only the beginning. As I said in a social media post yesterday, there is no 'one thing' we can do to beat cyberbullying; we have to do everything.


Ice

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.40 am): My government is resolute in our war against ice. As with the rest of Australia, ice is having a significant impact across many communities in Queensland. That is why we have committed \$105.5 million over five years to tackle this important issue. We are doing this by reducing the supply of ice, reducing the demand for ice and reducing the harm from ice. Ice impacts not only individuals but also families and entire communities.

When I launched the new Ice Help campaign I met Greg, who told me of the utter despair of being in the clutches of this dreadful drug which hooks some of its victims after the very first go. Greg told me that you lose everything: work, friends and family. All that matters to you is the drug. Then one day Greg realised that it had to stop. He found help, and now Greg and five people like him front our campaign to tell others that ice can be beaten. He has been clean for five years now.

Work is also progressing on a new \$14.3 million, 42-bed residential drug rehab centre in Rockhampton. The police minister and Police Commissioner have assured me that they have all the resources possible to address this issue and that anyone involved in producing and dealing with drugs, particularly ice, will be caught. This is a complex issue and one that we must all fight together as a community.


McAulay, Constable P

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): Nearly three weeks ago a young Queensland police officer was tragically struck down by a vehicle in Booval. Constable Peter McAulay sustained life-threatening injuries whilst doing his job. It is alleged that two teenagers who were driving a stolen car ran into him. A 16-year-old boy and a 15-year-old girl were charged with attempted murder and unlawful use of a motor vehicle. They will appear in court in November.

Since then, 24-year-old Constable McAulay has been in the fight of his life in the Princess Alexandra Hospital. Twelve days ago he was moved from the ICU to a specialised ward after showing signs of improvement, and I am told that his condition continues to improve. He has more surgery ahead of him. Peter continues to be supported by family and colleagues, who are very grateful for the constant support provided by the QPS and the Queensland community.

Constable McAulay, you are a fighter and a true-blue hero. Our thoughts are with you in your recovery. I have spoken with Peter's family and I have passed on the thoughts and prayers of not just everyone in this House but all Queenslanders. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Royal Visit; Royal Baby

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.43 am): A much anticipated royal visit to Queensland has just become a little bit more exciting. On behalf of all Queenslanders I congratulate the Duke and Duchess of Sussex on the announcement that they will have a baby early next year. While I know that Queenslanders are looking forward to welcoming the royal couple, I am glad that it is in Queensland and on Fraser Island where they will have the chance to meet with people and enjoy beautiful Fraser Island. I have arranged that whilst on Fraser Island the royal couple will have the chance to meet Hervey Bay paramedics Graeme Cooper and Danielle Kellam.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana and member for Mermaid Beach, I would ask that you use members' correct titles in this House. Please cease your interjecting. I do not think the Premier is being at all controversial.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Their act of kindness in transporting a dying woman to look at the ocean one last time typifies our Queensland spirit of looking after each other.

I have a dilemma: what special gift can we give the new royal baby that typifies Queensland? Could it be a Tambo Teddy? Could it be a Maroons jersey?

An honourable member: Tambo Teddy.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am hearing Tambo Teddy.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, you asked the question; you are going to get lots of suggestions.


Honourable members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: A bilby perhaps. I would like to hear from Queenslanders about their views and what gift I should present on behalf of Queenslanders to the royal couple on their visit to Fraser Island next Monday, which I know we are eagerly anticipating.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Kawana, you are off to a flying start. You are warned under the standing orders.

Distribution of GST

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.45 am): On 3 October I attended a meeting of the Council on Federal Financial Relations in Melbourne to discuss the Morrison government's proposed changes to the distribution of the GST. I was there to ensure that any changes come with a guarantee that Queensland will not be worse off. The Palaszczuk government is fighting for a fair share of GST funding from the Morrison government. Unfortunately, the Morrison government clearly has other ideas. It has given a sweetheart deal to Western Australia which could result in Queensland losing out on billions of dollars of GST revenue.

The Morrison government's proposal is a huge step away from the current and fair system of horizontal fiscal equalisation, which is a fair distribution of GST based on the different circumstances faced by states and their capacity to generate their own income. The system was designed to share GST among states and territories such that we can all provide the same standard of service to our residents and citizens, no matter where they live.

Not long before the meeting the Morrison government announced that they would seek to pass urgent legislation to give effect to their proposed GST changes. This was a complete about-face after we had been assured that the agreement of the states and territories would be sought before any changes were made. The new federal Treasurer claims that the states have nothing to fear and that nobody will be worse off under its proposal because the Commonwealth will top up the GST pool. Despite this assertion, the federal LNP refuses to guarantee its commitment in the legislation it is proposing before the federal parliament.


All we are asking is that they make their promise law. Our modelling shows that Queensland and all states other than Western Australia could be worse off under some very real economic scenarios such as the current downturn in housing in New South Wales or additional royalties flowing into Western Australia. Under some scenarios we could be more than \$3 billion worse off between now and 2027 or nearly \$1 billion in one year alone. This would mean cutting 3,100 teachers, 3,100 nurses, 1,860 police officers and more than 700 firefighters.

The Australian government is also yet to provide details of where the top-up money will come from. Will it be taken from existing national partnership agreements? Will it come from Queensland's schools and hospitals? At the moment, all the states have are questions and the Commonwealth do not have any answers. If they do, they are not being honest with the people of Queensland. All states and the Australian government need to have a reasoned and extensive conversation about the future of the GST. Queenslanders need a guarantee from the Morrison government that not only will they get their fair share of the GST revenue but also our fair share will not come at the expense of hospitals, schools and training.

While there was no satisfactory resolution on the GST allocation, we did secure a significant outcome for all women when treasurers unanimously agreed to remove the GST on women's sanitary products from 1 January 2019. This reform is long overdue, and I am glad to see the end of this discriminatory policy. The Australian government is currently undertaking public consultation on the definition of the products to be excluded from the GST. After consultation, a Commonwealth ministerial determination will remove the GST on feminine hygiene products.

The Palaszczuk government stands ready to continue to work with the Morrison government on the important issue of the GST distribution, but we will never sign up to any deal that will leave Queensland worse off. If their promise is not hollow, the least they can do is make it law.

Qantas Pilot Training Academies; Aviation Industry

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.49 am): While governing from Toowoomba in late September the Palaszczuk government achieved many key milestones. However, the jewel in the crown rests with the decision by Qantas, our national airline, to build its new regional pilot training academy at Wellcamp Airport. I am pleased to report to the House that the 'Q' in Qantas stands for Queensland.


Officers from the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning worked tirelessly with Qantas, the Wagner Corporation and the Toowoomba Regional Council to secure this result for our state. This academy, which is set to open mid next year, will have the capacity to train up to 250 pilots a year and create up to 160 jobs in training and support roles. Building the academy itself will create 100 direct jobs and 300 jobs in the wider construction industry.

The hard work has not stopped. Right now my department is continuing to work behind the scenes to make sure Mackay is best placed to secure Qantas's second pilot training academy. More than 60 regional airports across the country applied to host these two academies, with nine regional cities making the short list. We have already landed the deal for Toowoomba and we are doing everything we can to do the same for Mackay.

It is no surprise that this government has a strong working relationship with Qantas. In late August Qantas announced a new Brisbane base to service four Dreamliner planes which will create 470 direct and indirect jobs. It is estimated that an additional 85,000 visitors will fly into Brisbane each year because of the Dreamliners and will spend more than \$27 million while they are in Queensland. The Dreamliner decision was made possible due to the government's \$105 million Advance Queensland Industry Attraction Fund and the \$10 million attracting aviation industry fund.

Queensland has a proven capability to provide high-quality support to the aviation sector. The recent launch of the *Queensland Aerospace 10-year Roadmap and Action Plan* not only demonstrates Queensland's commitment to aviation and aerospace but also signifies how serious our government is about building and supporting this industry for Queensland.


Ecotourism

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (9.52 am): Today I am pleased to announce that the engineering design for Queensland's first ecotourism project, the Wangetti Trail, is now complete. This is a major milestone for this brand-new, 76-kilometre walking and mountain-biking trail from Palm Cove to Port Douglas. This trail will take visitors through rainforests, waterfalls and creeks and of course along the Great Barrier Reef coast and is being delivered in partnership with the traditional owners, the Yirrganydji people.

Our government is also creating more ecotourism experiences throughout the state. Last week the environment minister and I called for expressions of interest to deliver new ecotourism experiences at three other walking trails. This will see new tourism experiences created at Thorsborne Trail on Hinchinbrook Island, the Whitsunday Island trail and the Cooloola Great Walk on the Sunshine Coast.

Queensland is famous for its natural beauty. That is why we are determined to develop more ecotourism experiences for tourists. We know that eco and adventure tourists stay longer and spend more money when they visit which in turn supports more Queensland jobs. Our economic modelling shows that the Wangetti Trail will generate \$300 million for Queensland in its future and will create 150 jobs once it is operational. This is all part of our commitment to partner with the private sector to show the world the best parts of Queensland and create sustainable tourism jobs in our state.

Young Workers Hub; Cyberbullying

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.53 am): Many young students have casual and part-time jobs while they are still at school. Every parent wants to ensure that their child is not exploited and is safe and healthy in their workplace when they are working all kinds of hours during the week.

I note that there have been media reports this morning about the Young Workers Hub, which has developed a program to help inform students about their rights at work. I understand that these materials are publicly available on its website. For the benefit of the House and the people of Queensland, let me make this very clear: no formal proposal has been provided to the Department of Education or to me from the Young Workers Hub. Again, this program has not been endorsed by the department or by me as Minister for Education.


As I said at estimates and in the media, there is no place for union recruitment of students on school grounds. However, it is important to note that there is broad support from the community for young people to understand their rights at work, in line with the Australian Curriculum. Almost every week the education department and my office receive correspondence from outside organisations, and indeed members from both sides of this House, seeking support for their services or initiatives to be run in Queensland state schools. All are handled in a professional manner.

Another issue which we know is important to parents and young people is cyberbullying. The Palaszczuk government is leading the way in tackling the scourge of cyberbullying. Yesterday I was honoured to join the Premier at the Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce luncheon. It was the culmination of nine months of hard work by the task force to unpack the insidious community-wide issue.

The Premier announced \$3.5 million for a range of initiatives to tackle cyberbullying, in response to the findings of the task force. Around half of the 29 recommendations relate to schools and supporting students. Of course, my department will implement all relevant recommendations and will work with non-state schools to do the same.

As the chair of the task force, Madonna King, said yesterday, we must continue the conversation with parents and students. I am committed to keeping the lines of communication open. That is why I am pleased to report that last week I had the pleasure of meeting with my Ministerial Student Advisory Council for a second time. We spoke about cyberbullying and mental health issues. This advisory council is made up of 16 students from state and non-state schools across Queensland. I sincerely thank the students for their valuable input and look forward to the next meeting of the Ministerial Student Advisory Council in 2019.

Cyberbullying

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.56 am): The Palaszczuk government has an unwavering commitment to making Queensland communities safer and to giving our children the best possible start in life. For too many Queensland children the experience of bullying has hung over their childhood like a dark cloud. The rapid advancement and availability of mobile devices and the explosion of social media platforms have brought the complex issue of cyberbullying to the fore. In no case has that had more tragic results than in the death of Dolly Everett, a 14-year-old Queensland girl who took her own life early this year after she was bullied online. In the wake of that tragedy the Premier acted, putting together the Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce, led by Madonna King, which held more than 50 consultation sessions across Queensland and took more than 300 submissions from people wanting to make a difference to the lives of young people.

Yesterday the Palaszczuk government took action on that task force report in the hope that no other parents will have to go through the pain that Dolly's parents, Tick and Kate, have gone through. The government has accepted all 29 recommendations of the task force report and has committed an initial \$3.5 million to help lift the burden of cyberbullying from children and families. Those commitments include \$2 million over two years to roll out education and awareness campaigns to help parents, young people and carers understand and keep safe from cyberbullying; and \$1 million to implement the eSmart Schools Program in Queensland state schools, \$450,000 of which will go to the Dolly's Dream foundation in partnership with the Alannah & Madeline Foundation. The foundation will match that funding with another \$300,000. This funding will help Tick and Kate to spread the antibullying message right across the state but particularly in our rural and regional areas.

Importantly, the task force report recommended a grant program that will get supporting young people and youth organisations to be directly involved in reducing the harm from cyberbullying. \$500,000 has been set aside so that we can design a grants program that will be accessible to young people and best support their efforts to tackle the problem.

In all, the task force report made 29 recommendations to help tackle cyberbullying and the government has accepted all of them. As the Premier said yesterday, this is not the end of the process; it is the beginning. There is more to do, and we are getting on with this important work.

I want to add that in this context we know that school communities are more than places of learning; they are also places of support, connection and caring. If you had seen the outpouring of emotion this morning at Morningside State School in my electorate, where three buildings were devastated by fire, you would know the kind of connection I mean. I want to give a big shout-out to everyone from that school community and say thank you to all of the Fire and Emergency Services personnel who did so much to contain the site and support the school community.

Queensland Rail



Hon. MC BAILEY (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.59 am): I rise to update the House on the restoration of South-East Queensland rail services.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left, my appetite for those sorts of needless interjections is not very strong today. I ask you to listen to the minister's ministerial statement. He has not been controversial.

Mr BAILEY: Since October 2016 this government has been acting to restore the confidence of South-East Queensland commuters after the opening of the Redcliffe peninsula line led to the cancellation of services due to a driver shortage caused by the cancellation of driver training schools in 2014 by the previous LNP government. We are fixing the trains. It is not simple and it is not an overnight fix; it is a gradual and sustained recovery. Since 2016 Queensland Rail has selected 254 trainee drivers and 303 trainee guards. Some 105 drivers and 232 guards are now fully qualified and working on the system.

As at 7 October of this year, Queensland Rail has a net increase of 52 fully qualified drivers, boosting capacity. There are 91 more drivers and 43 guards in training in this year alone, and the rolling 12-month average for driver training durations has reduced from 18 months under the LNP to around 13 months under this government. The Palaszczuk government is running eight training schools this year compared to zero in 2014. More drivers will start training in 2018 than under the entire term of the previous LNP government. While the previous LNP sacked 1,700 Queensland Rail staff, this government is training and employing new drivers and guards to restore capacity.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Chatsworth!

Mr BAILEY: It is a fact that more drivers are being trained this year than any year before. The timetable has been stabilised and the increasing pool in drivers has meant we have come through the last two timetable stress periods during the school holidays without reduced services. Rail patronage was up 3.8 per cent last financial year compared to 2016-17 thanks to our fare reductions for 93 per cent of commuters.

Over the last 12 months Queensland Rail has delivered more than 95 per cent of its more than 7,828 weekly services on time. That is 241 services a week more than the previous LNP government ever delivered. We continue to roll out the NGR trains, with 31 NGR sets in the system and another two

starting services on the Ipswich and Caboolture lines next Monday, 22 October. I will continue to work with Queensland Rail and the Citytrain Response Unit to ensure that all appropriate measures are taken to deliver the drivers needed to increase service levels.


The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to giving Queensland commuters as many services as possible and we have the right plan to do that, but we cannot achieve that without the expertise and the oversight of Queensland Rail's board. As the House will be aware, earlier this month Phillip Strachan resigned as chair of the Queensland Rail board. Mr Strachan led the inquiry established by the Palaszczuk Labor government in 2016 to investigate train crew and timetabling issues on the network. The recommendations he made as commissioner of that inquiry provided the plan for restoring Queensland Rail services and it is the plan that we continue to follow and implement.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Today I inform the House that Queensland Rail board member David Marchant has accepted the role to succeed Mr Strachan as interim chair of Queensland Rail. Mr Marchant has served on Queensland Rail's board since 2015 and has an impressive background in rail, notably as the CEO and managing director of the Australian Rail Track Corporation for 13 years. I welcome Mr Marchant's appointment and look forward to working with him and the Queensland Rail board. We will not stop until commuters have reliable rail services they can depend on and service levels improve, with Cross River Rail coming and the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail coming online to boost rail services on every line for commuters across South-East Queensland.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Chatsworth—I did not want to interrupt the minister any more than you were—you are warned under standing orders. Members, I appreciate that sometimes there is material or commentary which might be seen as somewhat combative. I ask you to show restraint. There is a certain level of interjections which is clearly unacceptable. Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under standing orders.

ID Scanners, Review


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (10.04 am): This government is committed to keeping our community safe, and one of the key components of that commitment is tackling alcohol fuelled violence. Since the introduction of ID scanners in July 2017, more than 664 contraventions have been detected. That is 664 times dangerous patrons have been kept away from licensed venues in safe night out precincts. However, it is not just about those trying to get in being turned away. Importantly, it is about those who are no longer even trying to access our licensed venues.

I am advised that 512 people are currently on a banning order in Queensland. Only five attempted to enter a venue last week. Some may say that these numbers are insignificant. However, this is about deterrence. For the sake of comparison, there were 3.1 million RBTs and roadside drug tests in 2016-17, with 17,344 detections. That is a hit rate of 0.005 per cent. When reduced to a statistic like this, random breath testing seems ineffectual, but I do not see anyone arguing for us to stop this vital safety measure. Only one life needs to be saved for ID scanners to be considered a success.

This government is committed to evidence based policy, and that is why we have committed to a full evaluation of the measures introduced that includes the 3 am last drinks policy in safe night out precincts, a ban on rapid intoxication drinks after midnight and other violence prevention measures. Deakin University, working with the University of Queensland, James Cook University and La Trobe University, was chosen to undertake the independent evaluation following an open tender process. In response to a request from these evaluators, their final report will now be delivered on 2 April 2019 to allow the consideration of further key data.

The extended time frame will ensure the independent evaluation team is able to consider all critical administrative data sets such as hospital admissions, court data, fatal and non-fatal crash data and comparative site data. This means they will provide a comprehensive document that can guide government decision-making into the future. The revised due date will not come at any additional cost. I will continue to work with stakeholders to address any concerns but without compromising community safety and understanding that we need to provide them with certainty. We are committed to a vibrant, safe night-life in Queensland.

Yellow Ribbon Day

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.06 am): This morning I am very proud to be wearing a yellow ribbon, which is part of a big statewide 'thank you' for our 36,000 rural firefighters. We have had some of their yellow trucks parked outside


parliament this morning in a very visible salute to their tremendous work, and I know some of them are in the gallery today. I want to acknowledge volunteers from Delaneys Creek and Brookfield fire brigades and the RFBAQ president, Mr Ian Pike, and general manager, Justin Choveaux. To them and to all of our volunteers, I want to stress that, as a former rural firefighter in Victoria, I understand the tremendous sacrifice and pride that is involved in keeping communities safe. Brigade members spend countless hours away from families and friends, volunteering their time to put the needs of their community first.

Yellow Ribbon Day holds a special significance for all firefighters this year as the 2018 bushfire season is testing the strength and resolve of all of our firefighters—full-time, part-time and volunteer—with over 3,000 vegetation fires in Queensland in the past 60 days. To everyone on the state's fire front line, we say thank you. Our Rural Fire Service volunteers are much more than just firefighters. They provide assistance during a range of emergencies, protect communities against storms and cyclones and respond to incidents like traffic accidents. They are often leaders and mentors and form the backbone of their communities. They work with landowners to carry out fire mitigation activities and participate in regional training exercises to ensure people are ready to respond when disaster strikes. They are focused on protecting rural Queensland, which represents 93 per cent of the state's land area—yet another reason why it is so important for us to acknowledge their hard work.

I know the wonderful work undertaken by rural firefighters not only firsthand through my role as minister but also in my role as the member for Barron River. I want to acknowledge the rural fire brigades in my area—Koah, Kuranda and Speewah. I want to thank the businesses that let volunteer firefighters leave their jobs when they are required to perform their critical work of protecting communities.

Yellow Ribbon Day—an initiative of the Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland—is about ensuring that everyone recognises the commitment, professionalism and contributions made by volunteers in their communities. If people know a volunteer, or if they are a volunteer, or if they value the commitment made by rural fire brigades, I ask them to wear a yellow ribbon with pride just like I and other members of parliament in here today wear as a visible show of support for those who wear their yellow uniforms and ride in their yellow fire trucks.

Renting Reform

 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (10.09 am): I rise to inform the House of the overwhelming response to the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation. So far, just two weeks into this important engagement, there have been over 29,000 responses. We have also received 69 comprehensive written submissions and we have listened to the views of hundreds of Queenslanders at public consultation events and pop-up kiosks across the state.

Mr Mander: How many on the Labor website?


Mr de BRENNI: The Palaszczuk government believes that safe, secure and sustainable housing is a right for all Queenslanders, including renters, which is why this consultation has gone directly to them. Our approach of direct engagement with real Queenslanders is demonstrating that, if we have an open conversation with tenants, property owners and property managers, we can find solutions that work for all. We are listening to Queenslanders, not lobbyists.

In just 2½ weeks, the responses to the Palaszczuk government's review into renting reform have totally transformed public perceptions about mum-and-dad property investors and tenants being on opposite sides of the fence. The Palaszczuk government is not afraid of having a genuine conversation with Queenslanders about a state in which they would like to live, because we will always back those hardworking families. Queenslanders are saying that the old laws are not flexible enough to allow tenants and property owners to reach agreements about things like installing pay TV, having pets, hanging pictures, or even making a garden. The results show that both the half a million Queensland households that rent and property owners want to see houses maintained and kept in good nick.

The Palaszczuk government is giving real Queenslanders the opportunity to have their say about how we can improve renting in Queensland. Whether they be a tenant, an investor or a property manager, every Queenslanders can rest assured that this government is listening to them and learning from them. The period of consultation runs until 30 November 2018. I encourage every Queenslanders to have their say, whether that be via the department's website—and for the benefit of the member for Everton that is www.yoursayhpw.engagementhq.com/rentinginql—through a survey or at one of the many consultation events across the state. We know that happy tenants are good for property owners.

Together we are finding the right balance between an owner's investment and the place a tenant calls home. The Palaszczuk government is intent on helping Queenslanders work together because when Queenslanders work together everybody wins.

Fuel Prices

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.12 am): I am pleased to advise the parliament that preparation for our fuel price monitoring trial is rapidly progressing. Queensland owned and operated Informed Sources is already well progressed on the behind-the-scenes technology that will help Queensland motorists find the cheapest servo in town. Informed Sources has already started work on the aggregator software that will capture fuel prices from all Queensland service stations. Those prices will then be provided free to existing smart phone apps and websites such as MotorMouth, GasBuddy, PetrolSpy, RACQ and Compare the Market.

Informed Sources has more than 30 years experience in delivering IT projects for the Australian petroleum industry similar to the aggregator software that our trial requires.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, your repeated interjections are not being taken. You are warned under standing orders.

Dr LYNHAM: This morning, they have advised that their existing systems already have links to and data from most of the major retailing groups. Following my announcement of their appointment last week, one of the independent retailer groups has already contacted them. That means that, of the 1,400 or so fuel retailing sites around Queensland, more than 90 per cent will be on Informed Sources' database by the end of today.


Retailers should be able to voluntarily register with Informed Sources at the beginning of next month. I expect that the regulation that will make this registration compulsory will be in place by mid-November and will commence by early December. All retailers will be required to provide their prices within 30 minutes of the price changing at the bowser.

As an Informed Sources representative said at our announcement last week, they expect the transition to operations to be very smooth. Queensland motorists will be able to find the cheapest servo in town before Christmas. That will put informed buying power into Queensland motorists' hands and allow them to reward those retailers who give them the best deal.

Let me remind honourable members that our trial complements the 'what you see is what you pay' laws that came into effect on 31 January this year. Those laws require retailers to display full prices rather than conditionally discounted offers on their fuel price boards. This is a government that is focused on doing what it can to tackle the cost of living.

HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Report

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (10.15 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 12 of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee titled *Inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and transfer of pharmacy ownership in Queensland*.

Tabled paper: Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 12, 56th Parliament—Inquiry into the establishment of a pharmacy council and transfer of pharmacy ownership in Queensland [[1639](#)].

In this report, the committee has made 11 recommendations to strengthen the state's vital retail pharmacy profession. Most importantly, the committee has recommended against establishing a statutory pharmacy council. However, we see merit in establishing a body for the industry to advise the government on a range of issues, including the enforcement of pharmacy business ownership requirements and expanding pharmacists' scope of practice in the future. We envisage that the costs of this body would be met by the pharmacy industry, not taxpayers.


I thank my fellow committee members for their work on this inquiry. I particularly want to acknowledge the contribution of the Auditor-General, Mr Brendan Worrall, and his team at the Queensland Audit Office for their audit of the Department of Health's administration of pharmacy business transfers. I also acknowledge the Queensland Productivity Commission, which prepared a cost-benefit analysis for the establishment of a pharmacy authority.

This 100-page report is a significant body of work. I know my fellow members of the committee will join me in acknowledging the committee secretariat for their work on this report, which was done at the same time as the report on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018, which we will be debating this week. We thank Mr Rob Hansen, Mr Rod Bogaards and the entire secretariat for their contribution in putting together this report.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Question time will conclude today at 11.17 am.

Young Workers Hub

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.17 am): My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to her comments on 20 July about the Young Workers Hub, and I quote—

There is no proposal before Government at the moment—

or—

before the Education Minister.

When did the Premier first become aware that her comments to media were false, because the education minister had not only received a formal proposal but her senior policy adviser had helped write it?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. The Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Education has addressed this issue during a ministerial statement. I stand by my comments that I said in this House on 23 August—that there is no formal proposal before the minister. That is what I was advised by the minister and I stand by those comments.

Young Workers Hub

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question is also to the Premier. I refer to the revelation that the Minister for Education's office was directly involved in developing the QCU Young Workers Hub program, and I ask: will the Premier keep her promise to stop unions going into schools and ban the entire QCU Young Workers Hub's proposal to push union membership onto school students?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I addressed this issue very clearly in the media where I said that there would be no recruitment of students full stop. I stand by those statements.

Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier outline the government's response to the report of the Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. From the outset I thank both the member for Mansfield and the member for Coomera who were both on the Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce. I also want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for her comments in terms of endorsing the report. This issue is above politics. I thank all members of this House for the way in which they have conducted themselves speaking about this very important issue.

As I said in the House this morning, this has been a deeply personal issue for myself. I know it is a deeply personal issue for many families. Cyberbullying has a devastating impact on young people. We know from the report and from other conversations we have had with people that young people are now spending on average over three hours every day on their social media devices. We live in a vastly different world now to when many of us went to school when there were no such devices. When you had an issue at the school it was left at the school gate. Now these issues follow young people home into their lounge rooms, into their dining room areas with their family but also into their bedrooms.

This task force is the first of its kind in Australia. I am very proud that Queensland is leading the nation and we are leading the nation in a bipartisan manner.

Mr Bleijie: Isn't there an e-commissioner?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am not taking interjections at the moment. I am talking about a bipartisan issue that I think is very important and is above politics. What I want to do is take this task force report, along with its recommendations and our government's response, to the COAG meeting because this is not just a state issue; this is indeed a federal issue, one that has the ability to transform children's lives.

I have been personally touched by meeting Tick and Kate Everett. You will not find two more courageous people. I do not want to see any other parent have to go through what they went through. Their courage, their ability to talk about these issues in terms of wanting to raise awareness, is something that I applaud and is something that I believe is setting a huge benchmark. We need to give parents the tools that they need to have conversations with their children. We need to have campaigns and we need children to be intimately involved in raising awareness amongst their peers and amongst their colleagues. We need schools to deal with these complaints in a more efficient manner, making sure that the parents are also aware of the situation.

Young Workers Hub, Schools Initiative

Mr BLEIJIE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Education. I refer the minister to her comments about the Young Workers Hub reported on 19 July saying, 'I have not been asked to endorse this. I have not been asked to support this and it is not necessarily an initiative that is going to be delivered in schools.' I now table a 91-page RTI from the ABC.

Tabled paper: Response to a right to information application relating to the Young Workers Hub [\[1640\]](#).

Given that it has now been exposed that the minister's senior policy adviser was assisting and advising the QCU in the weeks before the minister's denials, can the minister explain why the cover-up?

Ms GRACE: I reject the imputation in that question. Can I state the facts again: no formal proposal has been received by the Department of Education or me in relation to the Young Workers Hub. Secondly, the program has not been endorsed by the Department of Education or me as Minister for Education in relation to this issue. This is an initiative of the Queensland Council of Unions. The Young Workers Hub has its material available on the website for all to see.

Our office receives programs and information from all sorts of organisations, including from those opposite. Information is received and handled most professionally and if it merits it we put them in contact with the department and they meet with the department. These initiatives come from a range of organisations, from the RSL to agricultural information to training.

Mr Mander: But do they draft them?

Ms GRACE: Yes, they do.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, resume your seat. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you will cease your interjections. Also, member for Kawana, the question came very close to containing an inference. I have allowed the question, but I want to hear the minister's answer.

Ms GRACE: This was sent to an officer in my office, like all programs are forwarded into my office via email. We cannot stop stuff that comes in. I repeat once again that I have received no formal proposal and there is no formal endorsement.

Queensland Economy

Mr RUSSO: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on recent data highlighting the strength of Queensland's economy?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Toohey for the question. I always like talking about good news for Queensland, especially when it is about our economy and how we are going from strength to strength with more than 177,000 jobs being created since we were elected. Having just come back from Toowoomba, how excited were we when Qantas was able to stand with us—me, the Minister for State Development and the Wagners—to announce that Toowoomba is going to be the home of the new Qantas flight academy in Queensland. We will continue to fight for the second one to be located in Mackay. Member for Mackay, we will keep fighting.

I have more good news for Queensland in relation to our export data. I am very pleased to announce that our exports totalled \$76.7 billion. This is fantastic news. Last week we held the export awards and the one fact I wanted everyone to walk away with was this: our exports of \$76.7 billion are more than New South Wales and Victoria combined and a more than 70 per cent increase from when the opposition was in government.

We have seen huge strength in our resources industry and also in education, but I do want to talk about some of the winners from the export awards, a couple that are in the electorate of the member for Toohey. There is a company specialising in the removal of water from tailings dams and mines. They make dams safer and reduce the environmental impact. I was very pleased that Phibion was able to take out one of the awards. Then, of course, there is Cook Medical. Cook Medical is part of Queensland's ever-growing biomedical sector. This is a sector we want to keep growing in Queensland. They were very, very happy with their award and were talking about how they are continuing to expand.

When it comes to tourism we have great days ahead of us with the Queen's Wharf development, the cruise ship terminal under construction and, of course, the Brisbane airport second runway. Some people used to have a crane radar; I have a plane radar. When I look out my window I see the constant stream of planes coming in and it is only going to get better and bigger in years to come.

Mr Mander: You love planes!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will take that interjection. When I travel overseas on trade missions I get jobs and I table my very detailed reports in parliament.

Crime and Corruption Commission, Findings

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Premier. In light of the damning findings by the Queensland Crime and Corruption Commission, including a prima facie criminal case for matters such as bribery against the Premier, will the Premier now do the right thing and stand down while this investigation is concluded?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are imputations in that question. It should be ruled out.

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I have given a ruling on a matter which enacts standing order 271 and that goes to those matters. I hereby rule the question out of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. In your ruling on 12 October 2018 you specifically state, 'I am not, therefore, referring consideration of the alleged contempt relating to bribery to the Ethics Committee.' The issue of bribery the CCC looked at is not subject, by your own statement, to the Ethics Committee.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I know what I said and wrote. I appreciate you reading that back to me. Member, it goes to the broader issue of conduct and a matter is before the Ethics Committee. I have ruled that question out of order.

Distribution of GST

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier advise what the Commonwealth's proposed—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry, member; please resume your seat. Members to my right in particular, the question is being asked. I have asked repeatedly for questions to be heard in silence. Member for Thuringowa, please restart your question.

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier advise what the Commonwealth's proposed GST legislation will mean for Queensland and my community, and are there any new developments today?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Thuringowa for the question, because all government members of this House are deeply concerned about the proposed changes put forward by the Morrison government in relation to the distribution of the GST. I attended the Council on Federal Financial Relations meeting in Melbourne and joined with all other states and territories, bar Western Australia, to call on the federal government to make their guarantee law. Quite frankly, under a whole variety of different and very real scenarios that we have lived through in our lives, we could see the GST from the east coast drift all the way to the west coast, leaving our state budgets worse off. That would mean fewer teachers in Thuringowa, fewer doctors in Townsville and fewer police in North Queensland. Quite frankly, we were not prepared to cop that, so we stood united and called on the federal government to introduce a guarantee.

This morning, media reports coming out of the federal coalition party room show that our combined and uniformed efforts have been rewarded. I can report that there is news coming out of the coalition party room that federal Treasurer Frydenberg has brokered a compromise to guarantee in legislation that no state will be worse off through to 2026-27 and have the Productivity Commission review the new arrangements. I welcome that announcement out of the federal LNP party room. However, we will absolutely scrutinise the amendments and the legislation proposed by the federal LNP, because we know we cannot trust the LNP. We know it was Scott Morrison who cut money to training. We know it was Scott Morrison who cut money to the Indigenous housing agreement. We know it was Scott Morrison who cut or delayed funding to Queensland hospitals. Quite frankly, we will make sure that we put the interests of Queenslanders first.

While I welcome the fact that the federal LNP has responded to the united efforts of the states and territories, now it is time for the state LNP to respond to what has clearly been a misappropriation of travel allowances which has come to the attention of the public over the past couple of days. For anyone to think that the member for Oodgeroo should travel to Melbourne to speak at a pro-life rally—

Mr SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier's time has expired. The Deputy Premier will resume her seat.

(Time expired)

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Deputy Premier, I ask that you ensure that your contributions are relevant to the issue at hand. Of course, I hope that we will not see any repeated opportunities for potential anticipation of debate.

Alva Beach Incident, Police Response

Mr LAST: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Corrective Services. I ask: in light of reports about the Alva Beach tragedy, will the minister say whether the 50-minute delayed response to a desperate triple 0 call was caused by the need to seek approval for overtime before police officers were able to respond?

Mr RYAN: This is a very serious matter. It is a tragedy on so many levels. There is an ongoing major police investigation into this matter. In addition, the matter will be investigated by the Coroner. The member knows full well that it would be inappropriate to pre-empt any of the conclusions of those investigations and disrespectful to the coronial process.

Manufacturing

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. I refer to the government's announcement of support for Hyne Timber to create up to 42 new jobs in the electorate of Maryborough for a new laminated timber manufacturing plant. Will the minister advise how Queensland's corporate leaders and CEOs are contributing to growth and economic opportunity, and is the minister aware of any other approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Maryborough for his question and for representing me last Friday at the announcement, alongside Hyne Timber CEO, Mr Jon Kleinschmidt. Mr Kleinschmidt is a great visionary leader of a great Queensland family owned company that has been delivering for the timber industry and the construction industry in our state for a century. When the government was governing from Toowoomba, we saw the same energy and dynamic confidence in great corporate leaders and families such as the Wagners and the Gardners, who are playing a significant role in the economic success of Toowoomba and Queensland.

One group where that sort of leadership is lacking is, of course, the LNP. Yesterday in Canberra, Queensland LNP senators voted to support One Nation's motion declaring that it was okay to be white, which is excellent news for dominant privileged majorities everywhere. Today the LNP leader in the Senate—yes, the producer of the blockbuster 'Dutton for PM'—claimed that the vote was an 'administrative error', just like the member for Broadwater claiming that the election of the Leader of the Opposition was an administrative error. I digress.

While it is okay to be white in the LNP, it is also okay once again to be Campbell Newman. Yesterday I received a copy of an invitation with the photograph of a CEO on the front of it. Who was that CEO? Campbell Newman! What is the topic? 'Why Queensland wasn't ready for the CEO Premier'. I presume that, in that context, 'CEO' stands for 'callous egotistical opportunist'. CEO premier? I have not laughed so hard since I got my Strong Choices Christmas card.

What sort of a CEO tells his workers that there is nothing to be worried about and then sacks 14,000 of them? What sort of a CEO inherits an unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent and then sends it skyrocketing to 6.6 per cent? What sort of a CEO blows \$70 million on a doomed plan to sell public assets? What sort of a CEO closes the Barrett Adolescent Centre against expert advice and without a replacement? What sort of a CEO takes the largest majority in Queensland political history, destroys it in a term and then writes an autobiography crowing about it? What a contrast to the strong, effective and courageous leadership of the Premier. Our Premier delivers for Queensland, each and every day. I table that invitation.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'The Enterprise Forum presents—Why Queensland wasn't ready for the CEO Premier' [1641].

This means only one thing: the great man, Campbell Newman, is coming back. I say this: Queenslanders were not ready for Campbell Newman the first time, but they sure as heck will be ready for him the second time.

Alva Beach Incident, Police Response

Mr WATTS: My question without notice is to the Premier. In light of the recent Alva Beach tragedy and the lack of police resources available to respond to the initial triple 0 call, will the Premier direct the Police Commissioner to urgently review the resourcing of all regional police stations, such as that at Ayr?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. I will not be directing the Police Commissioner, because that is an operational matter. There is something very clear here in terms of the separation of powers and in terms of—

Mr Powell: Will you give them extra police officers?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We will always ensure that the police—

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, you are warned under standing orders. You have been repeatedly interjecting this morning. You are disrupting the speaker, the Premier, who is on her feet at the moment.

Ms PALASZCZUK: What happened up there is an absolute tragedy. I think everybody reading those reports in the paper absolutely feels for all of the families involved. As the Minister for Police made it absolutely clear in this House, there is currently a thorough police investigation underway and there will be a coronial inquest as well. As Premier of this state, I am not going to pre-empt any of those issues. It would be inappropriate for me to do so.

Wine Industry

Ms RICHARDS: 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 progress to develop new wine tourism experiences in Queensland?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. I know that, in this House, she is one of the biggest advocates for the Queensland wine industry. We know that she will tell anyone who will listen that they should be drinking—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, resume your seat. Minister, I know what you meant. I think many would argue that they would lay claim to that title.

Ms JONES: She will tell anyone who will listen, 'If you're going to drink wine, drink Sirromet wines.' She is such a great champion. She knows that we actually do not have to leave Queensland to drink good wine.

Mrs Frecklington: Clovely wine, actually.

Ms JONES: I take that interjection from the Leader of the Opposition. You would think by now that the LNP would work out that LNP members and glasses of wine just do not mix.

Government members interjected.

Ms JONES: I take that interjection. While some chose to travel to Western Australia to taste some wines, members on this side were at the most recent Queensland Wine Awards. This ceremony showcases the best Queensland wines. For example, Balancing Rock Wines 2015 Sagrantino won the

Champion Wine of Show. The Champion Mainstream Red Wine was the Ridgemill Estate Cabernet Sauvignon 2016. This builds on the success of Sirromet's 2013 Le Sauvage that won the best white wine in the world.

Ms Palaszczuk: That's right.

Ms JONES: I know the Premier is very proud of this. The tasting judges in Helsinki said that this was absolutely a world beater.

Unfortunately, there are some members of parliament who do not think we can get a good wine in Queensland and would in actual fact rather use Queensland taxpayers' money to the tune of \$45,000 to go to Western Australia to drink wine. We saw the revelation that the member for Mermaid Beach, the member for Surfers Paradise, the member for Toowoomba North, the member for Gympie, the current member for Warrego, the former member for Warrego and the former member for Lockyer were all over in Western Australia drinking Queensland wine.

Mr Dick: Who paid the dinner bill?

Ms JONES: That is it. The big question is: who paid the dinner bill? Was it another—

A government member interjected.

Ms JONES: I take that interjection. The Queensland taxpayer did. This just shows how completely out of touch those opposite are. It took the member for Mermaid Beach five days to attend a one-day conference. What did he do? Did he swim from Perth to Albany? The member for Mermaid Beach did say he did other business. It is about time that if you are going to charge the people of Queensland the bill that you tell them what you did, member for Mermaid Beach. Were you doing the chicken dance in a Bavarian beer hall? Who knows?

Public Transport

Mr MINNIKIN: My question without notice is to the Premier. When asked at estimates, Queensland Rail CEO Nick Easy could not answer this question. The transport minister also could not answer this question on talkback radio. Is the Premier able to say when Labor's two-year 'rail fail' will end and when confidence in the public transport system will be restored?

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There was an imputation in that question.

Mr SPEAKER: The terminology did not relate to a particular member. However, I will afford the Premier latitude in answering the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Chatsworth for the question. As we all know, under my government we have actually been increasing the number of train services operating on the Queensland Rail network. The minister gave a very detailed comment in his ministerial statement this morning. He talked about strengthening and restoring the resources that were so savagely cut by the LNP government in terms of train driver recruitment, driver schools, guards and making sure that we stabilise the system. The minister was able to report that we have 95 per cent on-time running. We also know that the LNP cut the training schools. That is the legacy of the LNP. We now have drivers being trained. We want to see them out on the network as quickly as possible. We have reduced the driving school training time from, from memory, 18 months to 13 months.

We will continue to implement the Strachan recommendations. We currently deliver 7,828 services per week. That is 241 services a week more than the LNP ever did. That is on the public record. One thing I will say is that I absolutely endorse the decision of the Minister for Transport and the Treasurer when it comes to bonuses. The minister took absolutely the right decision in ensuring that bonuses were not paid. I believe that that meets community expectations. It was the right decision that was made. I stress in this House that the minister is continuing to implement the Strachan recommendations.

Hospitals, Federal Funding

Mr BROWN: My question is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister please advise the House of the outcome of discussions about the Commonwealth funding arrangements for Queensland hospitals at the COAG Health Council last Friday and what they mean for hospitals in Queensland?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Capalaba for his question. It is an important one. After months and months of delay, last week Prime Minister Scott Morrison finally fessed up about how much he would be ripping out of the Queensland hospital budget. That dollar figure is \$156 million. These are

cuts that those opposite have denied are even happening. The member for Mudgeeraba stood up and plagiarised a statement from the federal health minister saying that they were not real until the Prime Minister announced, 'Yes, we are. We are going to cut that'—\$156 million.

Some of this money is for procedures that were performed two prime ministers ago, but because it has been cut this year it has to come from hospital budgets this financial year. It means that mid financial year we need to reduce the budget allocation from the Commonwealth for three years worth of their cuts. The undermining of the hard work of our doctors and nurses by the LNP is just shameful.

I will give members a sense of what it means for some of our hospitals. Here in Brisbane it is \$35 million for the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. It is a \$21 million cut for the Cairns Hospital—Mr Speaker, I know a matter you will be very concerned about.

Do members know who is not concerned? The members for Toowoomba North and Toowoomba South do not care at all about the \$3.6 million being cut from Toowoomba Hospital. Those members opposite are not concerned at all about the \$7.1 million being cut from the Gold Coast University Hospital. Only the member for Gaven is standing up for that hospital. The member for Oodgeroo could not care less about the million dollars being cut from Redland Hospital. I know the Labor members from there are. The member for Oodgeroo likes to make up imaginary hospital cuts. These are real cuts that he could be out there opposing.

Mr Speaker, while the LNP in Queensland continues to let down our hospitals, do you know who will not let down Australian hospitals? It is the LNP in New South Wales, the LNP in Tasmania, the LNP in South Australia—all of whom joined with me to vote at COAG on Friday to invoke the dispute resolution procedures and force Scott Morrison to personally intervene. He refused to delegate Greg Hunt to resolve this issue. Labor states and Liberal states support Australia's hospitals. Those who do not are those who sit opposite and those who sit in Canberra. It is about time they stopped cowering at Scott Morrison's feet and started supporting our doctors and nurses.

Atherton Tablelands, Water Supply

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Schools, businesses and entire communities on the Atherton Tablelands have been severely affected by significant changes to water-testing procedures by this government which were previously already deemed onerous. Can the minister outline what his department is doing to work with local councils to clear boil-water notices in the region?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Hill for that important question. It is a matter that he and I have discussed at one meeting already. I think our officers have been discussing since then and we have a meeting scheduled later in the week. I look forward to working on it further. What I have said to the member on each and every occasion is that, while of course we would prefer to see those boil-water notices not needing to be in place, so long as the scientific advice is that it is not safe for people to drink the water without boiling it then I am not in a position and no politician would responsibly be in a position to overrule that scientific advice.

I believe that in this role we have a responsibility to listen to the experts, to accept the science. While they continue to test bores and identify that water would best be boiled, I will continue to support them in that decision. What I look forward to doing is working with the member for Hill and the affected local governments to, as quickly as possible, get the water to a standard that the scientists can advise us does not need to be boiled. I think that is the responsible thing for Queenslanders who expect us to protect the safety of their drinking water. I do not think there is anything more fundamental to any of us than to know that when you turn the tap on to give your kids a glass of water the water is safe. I do not intend to abrogate that responsibility. As I say, though, I am keen and eager to keep working with the member for Hill to find a solution.

State Schools, Funding

Ms LINARD: My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister advise the House on recent announcements regarding state school funding at a national level, what this will mean for Queensland schools and of any alternative approaches?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Nudgee for that question. I know that she knows how important it is to give every kid a great start and how important it is that we secure long-term additional funding for schools in this state. The Palaszczuk government is committed to giving all Queensland students a great start. We know that high-quality education is a foundation to a successful future and we value the work in all schools day in, day out towards achieving the same.

All we want from the federal government is a fair deal when it comes to long-term education funding. I, as Minister for Education in this state, do not begrudge any sector getting additional money towards education because on this side of the House we know that every dollar spent in education is a dollar well spent. I do not begrudge the non-government sector for one minute for having secured that additional funding from the federal government, including the \$1.2 billion fund in addition to their funding arrangements.

All we want here in this state is a fair go for Queensland students. We want our fair share of any additional funding and we reject the cuts in the funding that we would have got from the federal government had they not changed the formula. I quote their figures, not my figures—the figures of the federal government. We are down \$84 million in funding due to cuts this year alone and we are facing \$182 million in cuts next year. Over a 10-year period we are \$2.1 billion down in funding in this state that we should have received that the federal government has now cut.

I ask Scott Morrison to stand up for Queensland students, I ask those opposite to do the same and I ask the shadow minister to get on the phone and speak to his colleagues in Canberra because we cannot sustain these cuts if we want to deliver a world-class education. Thank goodness for federal Labor who announced \$14 billion in funding over 10 years and an additional \$650 million of that coming to Queensland schools over the period of just three years that they can lock in from 2020. That is an opposition who puts education at the forefront. That is federal Labor and what they mean when it comes to education. I also welcome their early childhood education and care funding proposal which gives us long-term stability in that area.

We cannot do it alone. We need the federal government to step up and give us the funding that we require, to get ready and do a deal. We know that the states are united in this. We only want our fair share. We want the money that they have ripped out of the education system. At the end of the day only Labor will deliver quality education for students in Australia.

Queensland Rail, Annual Report

Mr HUNT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Why did the minister sign off on the Queensland Rail annual and financial report clearly showing \$3.5 million of accrued bonuses to executives when South-East Queensland commuters have been suffering into their second year of Labor's 'rail fail' with no end in sight?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for his question—from a party of course that when they were in power were more interested in segways than railways. That was their priority. That is what we saw. We saw an appalling record. I think it is fair to say that the only transport that this opposition are interested in is the transport that takes them interstate or overseas, whether it is the member for Burleigh's overseas trip while parliament was sitting, not doing his job—

Mr HUNT: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. My question was clearly about why the minister signed off on this report.

Mr SPEAKER: It is not an opportunity to restate your question, member. What is the standing order under which you are seeking to raise a point of order?

Mr HUNT: It is standing order 118, on relevance.

Mr SPEAKER: As I understand it, the minister is answering the question. I will continue to hear his answer.

Mr BAILEY: It is good to see the opposition concentrating on a transport matter related to Queensland, not Western Australia and not Canada. It is very good to see that they are zoning in on the state we are actually in. That is very good to see.

This question is a continuation of misleading statements made by the opposition in relation to the bonus issue. Let me make it very clear. I made a very clear statement: it was an error of judgement of the board. I acted immediately to rectify this with the Deputy Premier. My views on this issue were known in March. I made my views very clear on this as early as March of this year that it was inappropriate that any bonuses—

Mr Mander: Why did you allow it in the annual report then?

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that is about the third time I think you have interjected quite loudly. More concerning is that you are not putting your comments through the chair. It is a general warning to all members. If you do not put your comments through the chair using phrasing like 'you', I will warn you under the standing orders. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr BAILEY: My position on this was made known very early, as early as March of this year, and was reiterated on behalf of the government on multiple occasions. The decision of the board I described as an error of judgement and I stand by that comment. The Deputy Premier and I as shareholding ministers moved immediately on the same day to rectify this issue and we acted.

Let us get to the substance of the question. I refer to the annual report by Queensland Rail. I refer honourable members to page 37. Page 37 has a clear entry of zero under 'aggregate performance bonus compensation paid'. Under the 2018 column there is a dash—a dash—because the decision had not been made until the Friday before 4 October when I was informed. I was informed on that day. I acted on that day to rectify it. I back in commuters' expectation that the bonuses were inappropriate. I know the Deputy Premier and the whole government agrees. We acted as soon as we possibly could.

This is misleading from the opposition. The accrual accounting method—they obviously do not understand what accrual accounting is—is consistent in annual reports over many years. There is an allocation there but it was not paid, and I moved immediately to stop that payment as soon as I was aware of it.

Gold Coast 600; Gold Coast Light Rail

Mrs McMAHON: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister please update the House on travel to support this weekend's GC 600 on the Gold Coast and progress for planning for the light rail stage 3A?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for her question. She is a great supporter of transport infrastructure in that corridor to the Gold Coast. I would like to update the House on the business case for light rail stage 3A from Broadbeach south to Burleigh Heads. It will involve eight stations along a 6.7-kilometre alignment with an expected journey time of 16 to 17 minutes. The business case was co-funded by us and the city council. I thank the city council for its clear support of light rail on the Gold Coast. If it stacks up, and subject to a funding package across all three levels of government, we would be in a position to start building it from 2020 if we can get the federal government to make a decent allocation in relation to it and partner with us and the city council.

We all know that light rail on the Gold Coast was an incredible performer in the Commonwealth Games, with 1.1 million journeys. We would not have had such a successful transport plan without light rail which this government built in 18 months flat. There were no plans to build it when we came into government. We built it and it has been a success for all Gold Coast residents. There is a huge amount of support for it. I can report that eligible ticket holders and event staff for the GC 600 will travel free on light rail, with trams expected to run almost as often as they did during the Commonwealth Games. This is the benefit of the Palaszczuk government's investment in the Gold Coast.

One has to be left wondering what LNP members on the Gold Coast do when it comes to delivering anything with regard to transport infrastructure on the Gold Coast. We already know that the member for Burleigh wants light rail stage 3B to go near his brewery which he has a financial interest in. Maybe he needs to speak with his federal party colleagues—there is a bit of a wake in Canberra at the moment—about getting federal funding. We saw a media report that the Turnbull government had allocated some funding for light rail stage 3, but that was quickly scotched by 'SloMo', the Prime Minister, who quickly quashed that idea. At the moment there is no federal funding for light rail stage 3A.

LNP members ought to get their position together on light rail. The member for Burleigh wants it to go near his brewery. We know that the member for Surfers Paradise opposed stage 1 of light rail. The member for Bonney wants it to go to Harbour Town. The member for Mermaid Beach says that it is an infliction. They are at sixes and sevens on the Gold Coast when it comes to the light rail. The Palaszczuk government absolutely supports light rail stage 3A. We delivered stage 1 and stage 2 as majority funders. Honourable members know that we are interested in Gold Coast infrastructure. It is time the Gold Coast LNP MPs stood up for infrastructure on the Gold Coast instead of being more interested in transport to Western Australian or Canada. The LNP is really just mailing it in on the Gold Coast. It is time they stood up for the Gold Coast.

(Time expired)

Young Workers Hub

Mr BOOTHMAN: My question is to the Premier. Given it has now been exposed that the education minister's senior policy adviser was helping to write the QCU's Young Workers Hub proposal, will the Premier now ask her director-general to conduct a full investigation into ministerial staffers providing advice and coaching to trade unions while being paid by Queensland taxpayers?

Ms PALASZCZUK: The answer is no. From time to time all ministerial staff and ministers talk to different stakeholders. That is a ridiculous question that has been asked.

Fuel Prices

Ms SCANLON: My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Will the minister advise the House of impediments to driving down fuel prices in Queensland?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Gaven for her question. The member for Gaven and all members on this side on the House are committed to ease the cost of living for all Queensland families. In addition to having downward pressure on energy prices all over Queensland, we are now a step closer to enable motorists to find the best fuel price in town. I advised earlier that Informed Sources is firing on all cylinders putting together the aggregated software on our trial. This means that motorists will have the mechanism to shop around and find the best price for fuel in their town.

We are committed to doing all that we can to assist Queensland motorists where the federal government has failed miserably. The Queensland government is pulling all the levers it can to put downward pressure on fuel prices. Let us have a look at the flawed LNP policy—I hear the interjections over there—on its fuel price monitoring trial.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr LYNHAM: What would it have done? It would have increased red tape—a \$20 million bill to taxpayers. It would have harmed small independent operators.

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burnett!

Dr LYNHAM: It would have harmed small independent operators. In this time of drought it would have pushed up fuel prices in regional Queensland, and that is shameful—absolutely shameful. Those opposite have been overtaken, left behind, sitting on the side of the road with their engine overheating. They are the 'Wile E Coyotes' of fuel prices.

What we have seen so far from the federal government is a lot of revving but no acceleration. The Morrison government is no better than its predecessors. The federal government and the ACCC have the power to lower fuel prices nationally. This is a national problem. They have the opportunity to do that, but where has the member for Nanango been on this? Obviously she has not picked up the phone to her LNP colleagues in Canberra or they ignored her. Maybe the member for Broadwater should have been the one to pick up the phone. They would probably listen to him about something like that.

The Morrison government ignores not only fuel prices but also energy prices. We have heard nothing. There is a dire warning: if we do not get action on energy policy by the federal Liberal Party government, the southern states will be feeling the pinch this summer. They are sitting on their hands with energy policy. The only hope for an effective energy policy for this nation is a Labor Party in power in Canberra.

School to Industry Partnership Program

Mr BATT: My question is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development. Each year for the last 14 years, 10,000 Queensland students have benefited from the School to Industry Partnership Program, including students in the Bundaberg electorate. With the government's plans to cut the funding at the end of 2018, will the minister please advise how the government plans to encourage students to pursue careers in agriculture?

Mr FURNER: It was great to be in Bundaberg over the weekend not only engaging with the Bundaberg fruit and vegetable growers for their gala dinner and 70th anniversary but also inspecting some of the damaged cherry tomato plants. I wish those growers all the best in the future in these tough times.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting agribusiness and regional economic development. The Palaszczuk government, through the 2015 food and fibre policy election commitments, funded a range of rural jobs initiatives. The School to Industry Partnership Program also received funding for an additional three years through this package, with that funding agreement to end in December 2018. The Palaszczuk government, through its 2017 election commitments, is providing an additional \$3 million over the next three years for industry to continue the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance and the Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network. The RJSA and QAWN initiatives directly

support agribusiness industries in their efforts to attract, develop and retain skilled workers and seasonal labour, and complement the Palaszczuk government's commitment to growing regional economies and creating jobs.

SIPP as a primary industries educational program commenced in 2004. SIPP has played a vital role in connecting school communities with agriculture. However, the program has limited reach given the large number of schools throughout the state and the cost of extending that reach equitably across Queensland is prohibitive.

Mr Batt: It is just retribution for the vegetation management.

Mr FURNER: Mr Speaker, I listened to the preamble—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, cease your interjections.

Mr FURNER: The evolving school curriculum with an increased focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics and the success of targeted agricultural education programs such as the Agribusiness Gateway Schools to Industry Program also means that SIPP is not as relevant as it was when it was commenced over a decade ago. For those reasons, no funding has been allocated for the continuation or expansion of the SIPP beyond 31 December 2018. I have asked the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to work with the Queensland Agriculture Teachers Association and AgForce to ensure that the biennial Food, Fibre and Agricultural Educators Conference, planned to be held in Brisbane during January of 2019, is a success. I thank AgForce for its contribution to SIPP.

In conclusion, since 2015 DAF has provided \$200,000 per annum, including GST, to AgForce under a collaborative agreement. That expires on 31 December 2018.

(Time expired)

Renting Reform

Ms PEASE: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport. Will the minister please update members on the need for renting reform in Queensland?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Lytton for the question. The member for Lytton is well known throughout her community as an advocate for the housing rights of people in Lytton and right across Queensland. The Palaszczuk government has opened the doors to renting reform in Queensland, and we have done that because half a million Queensland households rent. Most people rent because they have to. Some people rent because it suits them, but most people rent because they have to. That is because of coalition policies that have driven more Queenslanders into casualised work than ever before and more people into insecure work through instances of labour hire and through cuts to things like penalty rates and outdated tax benefits for the big end of town rather than supporting Queensland families.

In fact, 34 per cent of Queensland households now rent, and that number is growing every day. In some parts of the state it is greater than that. In the electorate of Burleigh, for instance, the rate of homes that are rented is at 37 per cent. In the electorate of Southport, that figure is 42 per cent. In Cairns, the figure is 46.3 per cent. In Woodridge, the figure is 47 per cent. In my own community it has grown to 22 per cent.

Renting has changed in Queensland over recent years. Half of Queensland's renters will be permanent renters. This is no longer a stopover between living in your parents' home and finding your own place to own. It is the Palaszczuk Labor government that believes that all Queenslanders deserve a safe, secure and sustainable place to call home, not just people who own that dwelling.

This government has proven, as Queensland's largest property owner and Queensland's largest tenancy manager, that it makes sense to have fair, effective safeguards and fair processes, not punitive measures that see tenants and property owners and managers on different sides of the fence. We will open the doors to renting reform to all Queenslanders so that all Queenslanders can enjoy the benefits of what we have established through our social housing portfolio. I encourage members to advertise the www.qld.gov.au/rentinginqueensland website to their constituents.

We will bring reforms to Queensland, and 30,000 Queenslanders have already told us they want to see reforms that help them reach agreement between tenants and landlords. The question will be where those opposite line up on reforms that bring Queenslanders together. Where will they line up? Will they continue with their politics of division, because that is what we continually see from those opposite? We saw it yesterday in Canberra when members of the LNP voted for a white supremacist

motion. We saw the members of the LNP lie to farmers to drive a wedge between the city and the country in Queensland. We saw members of the opposition claim that there were too many women on Queensland government boards—

(Time expired)

Bribery

Mr JANETZKI: My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney tell the House what is the maximum penalty for a person convicted of bribery under section 60 of the Queensland Criminal Code?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Order, members! Attorney-General, please resume your seat.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, I have called for order three times. I hope we do not see a repeat of that. I would like today to go smoothly. I believe the question is asking for a legal opinion.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The standing order you refer to is correct. In 115(c)(ii) it states—

Questions shall not ask for:

(ii) a legal opinion ...

This is not asking the Attorney's opinion on that particular section 60; it is asking what the fact is, what the penalty is.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, if you had allowed me to finish before taking your point of order, I was going to say that I will allow the question on the basis that it is seeking a point of fact, not a legal opinion. I will give the Attorney-General latitude in answering the question.

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member very much for his question. Let me explain to the member how he would find such information. There is a website called the Queensland parliament website. If he scrolls down to the bottom he will find he can look up legislation. The shadow Attorney-General, who I understand does have legal qualifications, may know where to find the Criminal Code and the Penalties and Sentences Act.

Mr Brown interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, resume your seat. Member for Capalaba, you are warned under standing orders. I ask for a factual answer as well, Attorney-General. I trust you will stay to the question.

Mrs D'ATH: It is very factual. I am just helping those on the other side understand where they can find legislation, even though we are elected to make statutes. One would think they would know where to find them when we make these laws.

The answer is: up to seven years, if the member knew how to look up a piece of legislation. I think it is a damning reflection on the shadow Attorney-General that the person who seeks to be the future Attorney-General in an LNP government does not know how to look up a piece of legislation. He is willing to use time in parliament, to use question time, to ask a question of the government to find something in a piece of legislation because those opposite are either too lazy or too incompetent to look it up themselves. It is a damning reflection on those on the other side when they think this is how question time should be spent, that this is what the community expects of the opposition in utilising question time. It is embarrassing for the shadow Attorney-General, who very rarely asks me a question. I was quite excited today to finally be asked a question, and then it was, 'How do I look up a piece of legislation?'

If the member needs more information I am happy to sit him down with a computer in front of us and show him how to find the Queensland parliament website and how to look up legislation. It is in alphabetical order. It is really easy to find. Even our schoolkids doing legal studies know how to find a piece of legislation on the Queensland parliament website. It will take two minutes—tops. I can help the shadow Attorney-General find that. It will not take up much of his time. I am happy to assist in whatever way I can.

This is embarrassing for the LNP. It is embarrassing that those on the other side would set up their shadow Attorney-General in this way—give him a dixer.


Ms Trad: Jarrod looks happy.

Mrs D'ATH: The Manager of Opposition Business is certainly happy. It is an appalling question; it is embarrassing. It just shows the depths that those opposite—

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.


DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the 35th delegation from the United States of America organised by the Australian Political Exchange Council. We have in the gallery today seven members of the delegation. On behalf of members of the Queensland parliament I wish to offer a very warm welcome to those delegates in the gallery today.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL

Resumed from 22 August (see p. 1966).

Second Reading

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.20 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Queensland is one of only two jurisdictions in Australia that has not amended our laws to recognise that termination of pregnancy is an important health issue. For too long the possibility of criminal prosecution under Queensland law has stopped health professionals from providing a full range of safe, accessible and timely reproductive services. For too long our laws have stopped women from accessing important health care because they live too far away from a city centre or because it is too expensive. For too long our laws have stigmatised doctors and nurses for doing their jobs and women for demanding reproductive choices.

What our laws do not do is prevent terminations. No law ever has. In every country at every point in recorded human history, women have terminated their pregnancies. In places where it is illegal they have faced persecution, botched surgical procedures, jail time. Many women have died, but laws have never stopped terminations because the right to control our own bodies is so fundamental. It is fundamental for men and women, but there are no laws that police men's bodies in this way.

To say that I am against abortion is to say that I believe in forcing a woman to stay pregnant. It is to say that you do not think that a woman's body and life belong to her. It is to say that you know better than she does. Now, I know that as a man I cannot speak for a woman. I do not know better than they do what is right for them. I can say that I believe her though. I can say that I believe women. I believe any woman who says that she is not ready to have children yet. I believe any woman who says that she cannot afford children or cannot manage any more children than she already has or who does not want to have a child with her violent partner. I believe and support any woman who does not want kids because it is not my place to say that I know better, and it is not the place of anyone in this House. But it is my place to stand up for Queensland's health professionals.

As health minister, I meet doctors and nurses every day. They work hard to take care of Queenslanders when we need it most, but only one group of these medical professionals has to do their work in a legal grey area even though their work is no different from any other health professional, which is simply providing the best possible care to their patients. In preparing to debate this bill I spent some time at a Marie Stopes clinic. I went to meet the people who work there and hear firsthand what it is like. I sat in the lunchroom and talked to whomever had a spare moment.

During my visit more and more staff piled into the break room to tell me their stories. I heard heartbreaking accounts of what it is like to do their job. I heard how protesters hound them from their cars to the clinic; how they yell abuse and wave props in their faces and take photos of them without their permission; how protesters upset patients so much that comforting them when they walk through the door has become a standard part of their job.

One 19-year-old nurse told me about how, when the protesters got really bad, she would have to escort women into the clinic—a 19-year-old nurse—and how this scared away women who were not just seeking terminations but also women visiting the clinic for other sexual health services like STI

checks and contraception. She spoke about doctors who were too scared to come to work some days. No-one deserves to be harassed and abused just for going to work, especially not when their job is to provide important health care that women need. Our doctors and nurses deserve better than this.

The Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 will remove the fear, the stigma and the uncertainty caused by Queensland's current laws. It will provide a clear framework about the circumstances in which a termination is lawfully provided, and it will ensure that termination of pregnancy is dealt with as a health issue to be considered between a woman and her doctor.

One of the things that has struck me about this debate is the lengths that those who oppose terminations will go to to deceive women. I have heard recordings of unqualified counsellors telling women that abortions cause breast cancer or that they will impact permanently on their fertility. I have been appalled by the wilful provision of misinformation to women who are making this important decision. That is why as part of a comprehensive implementation plan Queensland Health will set up an unbiased hotline where anyone can get all the information they need about their options when pregnant as well as referrals to doctors, clinics, and, if they wish, impartial therapeutic counselling services run by qualified counsellors. We will no doubt hear some of these misleading claims in the House this week. Some members will try to mislead the House this week, as they have before, so before we start what could be a long debate let us get some of the facts on the record.

This bill will not increase the number of late-term abortions. It will not lead to sex-selective abortions. It will not allow women to terminate their pregnancies up until birth, as has been claimed. Women will not start using abortion as their preferred method of contraception. Here are the facts: 99 per cent of terminations happen well before 20 weeks, with the overwhelming majority before 12 weeks. Terminations after 22 weeks usually involve complex medical circumstances such as the delayed diagnosis of serious or fatal abnormalities or serious and complex maternal illness.

A woman facing a late-term termination usually wants her pregnancy, but her doctor has said that her foetus will not survive because its heart or brain will not work or her doctor has discovered that she has cancer and needs to start treatment immediately. We all wish these things did not happen, but they do. These kinds of severe foetal abnormalities are often diagnosed around 20 weeks. If we were to set a term limit below 22 weeks we would deny a woman—especially a regional woman—the chance to properly consider her options after the 20-week scan. We would force her to rush a heart-wrenching decision. We would be making a law to make her stay pregnant for another 20-odd weeks knowing that the foetus would not live.

Twenty-two weeks was not arbitrarily chosen. The QLRC did detailed research and consultation, and this is the recommendation that came out of that process. Politicians trying to pick another gestational limit on the run—20 weeks, 18 weeks, 16 weeks—would forgo all of that consideration. In fact, to choose 16 weeks, as proposed by the member for Caloundra, could roll back the rights Queensland women have right now under the common law. If accepted, the amendment proposed by the member for Caloundra would deliver some of the most restrictive abortion laws in the country. Any change to the gestational limit ignores the independent evidence based work of the QLRC and would lead to less time for informed decision-making for women. After 22 weeks a second doctor would need to agree with the treating doctor that a termination is the right course of action. Adding the unnecessary requirement for that doctor to physically see the patient would delay treatment for women in regional and remote areas.

I meet with doctors every day. If anyone here thinks that they do not take their work and their profession seriously and would for any reason wave through unsafe or unnecessary terminations post 22 weeks, they are wrong. No doctor does this lightly.

Maternal foetal medicine specialist and obstetrician Dr Carol Portmann says that in over 20 years she has only done terminations post 22 weeks where the foetus will not survive or the woman's life is at risk. Even if members believe in forcing women to stay pregnant against their will, will they go so far as to say they should be forced to carry a nonviable pregnancy or put their own life at risk?

A conscientious objection provision is included in the bill in recognition of the fact that health practitioners have and may exercise the rights of freedom of thought, conscience and religion. To balance the rights of the practitioner, the bill requires that, where a person asks a registered health practitioner to perform or advise about a termination, an objecting practitioner must disclose their conscientious objection. The practitioner must also refer or transfer the woman's care to another medical practitioner who can provide the requested service and does not have a conscientious objection. I note that the member for Caloundra has also proposed deleting these provisions.

We have heard what happens when doctors do not refer. The committee heard in Cairns of a senior gynaecologist who was approached by a registrar about a girl in the emergency department who had been raped and was requesting a termination. The registrar said, 'I don't know what to do. I'm new to Cairns. What happens?' The consultant said, 'Tell her abortions are illegal in Queensland.' That girl walked straight out of the emergency department in front of a car.

Doctors' jobs are to care for patients. Most of our doctors want to do exactly that. Practitioners with a conscientious objection will be able to simply refer women to the new Queensland Health women's health hotline that I have announced today. This ensures they can easily meet their responsibilities to refer women seeking a termination and know that they have taken all necessary steps under the new laws. The hotline will be an especially valuable resource for practitioners and women in remote and regional areas, where specialist services may not be available. The Australian Medical Association considers these provisions consistent with the existing codes of conduct and guidelines for doctors. Why is the member for Caloundra ignoring the evidence he heard himself at the committee hearings and the submissions of the AMAQ?

The provision also accords with the Queensland Clinical Guidelines. These guidelines will be reviewed and refreshed as part of that extensive implementation plan. If this bill is passed, the implementation plan will make sure that doctors know their rights and obligations and that patients will have plenty of information to help them with their decision-making. These materials will include information about counselling services should the woman wish to receive counselling. This is already in the current clinical guideline—counselling if required to inform decision-making and consent, counselling if required prior to termination, counselling if required after termination. The clinical guideline recommends for counselling to be offered not once but three times. For the benefit of members I table a copy of those guidelines.

Tabled paper. Document, undated, titled 'Queensland Clinical Guidelines—translating evidence into best practice—Maternity and Neonatal Clinical Guideline—Therapeutic termination of pregnancy' [1642].

Making counselling mandatory would imply that there is something inherently traumatic about terminations, and that is simply untrue. There is no other law in Queensland that requires counselling for any other procedure. The decision of the state to mandate a treatment for any citizen should not be taken lightly by members in this place.

The Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee has undertaken extensive public consultation, travelling between Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville to hear from people across the state. They did a fantastic job. I put on the record my thanks to the chair, the member for Thuringowa, the committee members and the member for Pine Rivers, who also participated in the hearings.

When you take into account the two parliamentary inquiries last term, the QLRC consultations and report and now this comprehensive committee process and report, this could well be the most considered issue in the recent history of our parliament. I want to acknowledge the Leader of the House, who managed this issue through the last parliament and successfully guided this bill to its introduction. I know how passionate she is to see it passed—as Minister for Justice, as a woman and as a mother.

The first recommendation of the committee was that the bill be passed. The second recommendation was that members be allowed a conscience vote on the bill. I am pleased that the LNP has accepted the second recommendation and allowed its members a conscience vote. I was disappointed that LNP members of the committee felt the need to submit a statement of reservations. Their statement just said that they still had questions. They still had questions after the parliament and committee have been discussing this matter for years. Brave women travelled across the state to tell them their stories and answer their questions. Doctors, nurses and health professionals came to give their best advice based on their medical knowledge and experience—not once but four times: three parliamentary inquiries and a detailed inquiry by the Queensland Law Reform Commission.

The bill implements the recommendations of the QLRC's June 2018 report, *Review of termination of pregnancy laws*. The report is a comprehensive review into modernising and clarifying Queensland's termination of pregnancy laws following an extensive and independent examination by the QLRC. It recognised that safe termination of pregnancy is not a criminal matter. Instead, termination of pregnancy is an important health choice to be made privately, in consultation with a health practitioner.

The bill gives effect to the recommendations of the QLRC by amending the Criminal Code and creating a new legislative framework for the conduct of terminations by registered health practitioners and associated measures to ensure reasonable and safe access by women to terminations.

The bill repeals sections 224, 225 and 226 of the Criminal Code which criminalised terminations. It repeals sections of the law that were written before women could vote and that sit alongside offences such as being gay, defaming a foreign prince, challenging someone to a duel or helping pirates. That archaic law says—

Any person who, with intent to procure the miscarriage of a woman, whether she is or is not with child, unlawfully administers to her or causes her to take any poison or other noxious thing, or uses any force of any kind, or uses any other means whatever, is guilty of a crime, and is liable to imprisonment for 14 years.

In this bill new offences will be created directed to stop unregulated or backyard terminations. They will carry a maximum penalty of seven years imprisonment. These offences protect the health, safety and wellbeing of women.

The bill also amends section 282 of the Criminal Code, which is a defence for surgical operations and medical treatment, and section 313(1) of the Criminal Code, which is an offence related to killing an unborn child. The bill provides that a registered medical practitioner may perform a lawful termination on request up to a gestational limit of 22 weeks. This bill also provides that certain registered health practitioners, including a medical practitioner, nurse, midwife, pharmacist or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner, may assist a medical practitioner to perform a lawful termination.

The bill ensures that a woman who consents to or assists in or performs a termination on herself is not committing an offence. This provides certainty for the woman and aligns with the bill's overall objectives, to ensure women's access to safe and lawful termination is treated as a health issue.

The bill provides for safe access zones around premises that provide termination services. The purpose of a safe access zone is to protect the safety and wellbeing and respect the privacy and dignity of women, staff and others who need to access services or the premises. The bill makes it an offence to engage in prohibited conduct at any time in the safe access zone and to make, publish or distribute a restricted recording of persons in or near termination services. The maximum penalty for these new offences is a fine of 20 penalty units or one year imprisonment. Every woman has a right to access healthcare services without interference and with privacy and dignity.

The QLRC carefully considered these issues in formulating its recommendations, to which the bill gives effect. The bill will provide for a range of consequential amendments to other legislation in order to properly implement the new laws. This includes the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Evidence Act 1977, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995.

The changes to Queensland's termination of pregnancy laws have been subject to extensive consultation. The QLRC conducted a detailed and wideranging 12-month inquiry to inform its report. This included considering 1,200 submissions on its consultation paper from a diverse range of stakeholders. The committee then considered over 6,000 submissions on the bill as part of its inquiry. Key stakeholder organisations and peak bodies participated in the consultation process. I thank all stakeholders for their participation in the committee's inquiry.

The committee heard from many brave women who had experienced the heartbreaking decision to terminate a wanted pregnancy. Women like Zena Mason shared her experience of being informed at 22-weeks pregnant that her unborn child had a life-limiting disease. Zena described the trauma of needing a termination, which was further compounded by learning that termination is an offence under the Criminal Code. Terminating a wanted pregnancy will always be a heartbreaking experience for a woman and her family. We cannot change that, but we can help to make the experience less difficult by removing the stigma that comes from termination being a criminal offence. We can ensure this is a healthcare decision to be made by a woman in consultation with her doctors.


If any member wants more information—unbiased advice from a medical professional—it is not too late. If in considering their position they have further questions this week, I ask them to please contact Queensland Health and organise a briefing, as I have offered in my correspondence to them.

This bill will at last bring Queensland's termination of pregnancy laws into the 21st century. For this reason it is critical the people of Queensland and the members of this House understand the choices we are being asked to make when voting on this bill. A vote for this bill is a vote to reform archaic laws in favour of legislation that is clear and treats a Queensland woman with the dignity and respect already afforded to women in other states. A vote against this bill, though, will not prevent terminations occurring in Queensland. The current legislative framework already permits terminations and will continue if this bill is not enacted.

As the committee heard, rates of termination will not change if this bill is passed. In fact, in Victoria since decriminalisation, the number of terminations has decreased significantly. What will change is the environment in which Queensland women make the often difficult choice to seek a termination. A vote for this bill will create an environment in which women are less likely to be stigmatised, an environment in which medical practitioners are more likely to understand their legal rights and to act with certainty, an environment in which practitioners who conscientiously object to performing a termination have a clear legal right to do so but, importantly, are obligated to ensure their patients still receive the medical advice and treatment they are seeking.

A vote against this bill is not a vote to ban the termination of pregnancy in Queensland. That is not a choice offered in this debate. Members who choose to vote against this bill should do so knowing they are voting to continue a legal framework that is no longer fit for purpose, a framework that stigmatises Queensland women in a way that legislation in most other jurisdictions does not. If members vote against this bill, they should know that they are voting in favour of laws that disproportionately harm women living in rural and remote areas and women affected by physical and sexual violence. History will record that they voted against legislation designed to ensure Queensland women have reasonable and safe access to reproductive health care in favour of continuing Criminal Code provisions that are archaic, cruel and degrading.

This bill was developed based on recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission following extensive consultation and informed consideration. It offers us the opportunity to enact legislation that unequivocally demonstrates Queensland is a modern state—one that understands the importance of addressing health issues, including termination of pregnancy, free from stigma and, most importantly, a state that treats women with care and with dignity; a state that believes women and believes they are best placed to make decisions about their bodies and their health care. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (11.44 am): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. Firstly, I will detail in general terms the key provisions of the bill and then turn to my own views in relation to it, with a particular emphasis on various potential legal implications of the bill. This subject matter—like no other—melds the legal and medical and the shadow health minister will shortly detail some of the health related dimensions of this bill as well as other speakers from the opposition, including the member for Moggill. I trust that the contributions and perspectives of all speakers on this most serious issue will be treated respectfully throughout the second reading debate.

The bill proposes the law relating to the termination of pregnancy in Queensland be radically overhauled. It is proposed that a medical practitioner be allowed to perform a lawful termination on demand during the first 22 weeks of pregnancy and after 22 weeks of pregnancy if the medical practitioner considers that the termination should be performed and has consulted with another medical practitioner who also agrees that the termination should be performed. The matters which a medical practitioner must consider include all relevant medical circumstances; the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances; and the professional standards and guidelines that apply to the medical practitioner in relation to the performance of the termination.

Another medical practitioner, a nurse, midwife, pharmacist, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island health practitioner or other registered health practitioner may assist in a termination of pregnancy performed by a medical practitioner. A medical practitioner may conscientiously object to the performance of a termination of pregnancy. The medical practitioner is required to disclose their conscientious objection and refer or transfer the woman to another health practitioner or health service provider. This provision does not limit any duty owed by a registered health practitioner to provide a termination of pregnancy service in an emergency.

Finally, a safe access zone will apply to an area within 150 metres of the entrance of an abortion facility. New criminal offences for prohibited conduct or taking a restricted recording of a person in, entering or leaving an abortion facility, including the publication and distribution of a restricted recording within the safe access zone, are proposed.

The law relating to abortion has deep and significant roots in the common law and statutory framework over the centuries. English legal jurist William Blackstone expressly recognised that personhood and the right to life existed before birth with a simple and clear legal standard—that is, where life can be shown to exist, legal personhood exists. The adoption of anti-abortion statutory measures from the mid-19th century was the natural progression of the long common law history regulating abortion. The Queensland Criminal Code Act 1899 draws on these centuries of jurisprudence

and lays down three offences relating to procuring an abortion in sections 224 through to 226. Each of these sections refers to the unlawful procurement of an abortion, but it is not defined in what circumstances such a procurement would be considered lawful.

The common law has expounded on the Criminal Code. In 1986 the District Court in the *Crown v Bayliss and Cullen* substantiated the law on abortion. The case involved the trial of medical practitioners who had been operating an abortion clinic. The prosecution led evidence to suggest that many terminations at the clinic were being performed on economic grounds. Judge McGuire extensively examined the law and common law determinations of other jurisdictions, including the 1969 Victorian case of the *Crown v Davidson*. Judge McGuire held that abortion is lawful in Queensland where it is carried out to prevent serious danger to the woman's physical and mental health from the continuance of the pregnancy. Judge McGuire added that there is no legal justification for abortion on demand. This decision remains the current legal basis for exemption from criminal liability for procuring a termination in Queensland.

Against this legal background, we know that there are approximately 14,000 abortions performed in Queensland every year in complete accordance with the common law's interpretation of the Queensland Criminal Code. Many of these terminations are conducted in connection with severe foetal abnormalities that lawfully seek to preserve the mental health of the mother. This is the legal framework on which laws relating to the termination of pregnancy stand today.

The LNP will allow its members to have a conscience vote on this issue to determine on the basis of their personal beliefs and using their individual skills, judgement and expertise as members of this parliament on the appropriate way they will vote. What a stark contrast to the members of the Labor government, who are ostensibly granted a conscience vote here, but this comes just ahead of a motion to be presented to the Labor national convention in December by Labor for Choice, which seeks to remove the ability of state Labor MPs to vote in accordance with their conscience on this issue in the future. I will be opposing the bill.

An incident having occurred in the public gallery—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Members of the gallery, you are not permitted to applaud or make comment.

Mr JANETZKI: Like many of those opposing the bill, I have grave concerns about the 22 week gestation on demand threshold, the lawful potential for late-gestation terminations for undefined social reasons, the lack of a true and complete conscientious objection right for medical professionals and the potential unconstitutionality of the safe access zone provisions. Put simply, the Labor government has not made the case for such an extreme piece of legislation.

No-one in this House would hold the view that a woman should run the risk of going to jail for having an abortion, but it is not right for supporters of the bill to say that this is just about decriminalising terminations in Queensland. It is not. No convictions have ever been recorded in Queensland and in all likelihood never will. As I have outlined already, every year in Queensland thousands of terminations are conducted lawfully. Rather, this bill is all about ideology—an ideology that seeks to divide and turn us against each other.

At 22 weeks, an unborn child waits at the threshold of life. Just last week, my local newspaper, the *Chronicle*, highlighted the miraculous survival of a baby at 24 weeks who today is a thriving and healthy young man entering secondary school. We joyfully celebrate babies born from 22 weeks, 23 weeks and 24 weeks who successfully survive and ultimately thrive in neonatal wards in our hospitals, yet here we have a proposed unlimited termination for any reason to 22 weeks.

I accept that late-term terminations are very rare and in most cases in the most heartbreaking of circumstances of expectant parents often facing the imminent death of their baby from a severe genetic abnormality or other medical condition—terminations already permitted by Queensland law. However, this bill allows the potential lawful late-term abortion of the unborn for undefined social reasons with the approval of two doctors. No matter what supporters of the bill may argue about clinical practice and practical rarity, it remains a legal possibility and, as the Victorian experience proves, it does happen. This possibility takes Queensland into new and uncharted territory and at the very least demands an exploration of the rights of the unborn at law and how this bill ignores them.

Queensland's statute book is awash with legislative references to the unborn and, by corollary their interests, their rights and, arguably, their personhood in a variety of legislative instruments and in a variety of contexts. The Child Protection Act 1999 requires the chief executive to make provision for an unborn child's protection after birth. The Civil Liability Act 2003 allows for potential certain damages in connection to an unborn child of an injured person. The Domestic and Family Violence Protection

Act 2012 sets conditions for the protection of an unborn child. The Industrial Relations Act 2016 requires a female employee to be transferred to a safe job if there is a risk to the health or safety of her unborn child. The Maintenance Act 1965 contemplates orders against putative fathers for maintenance of unborn children. The Payroll Tax Act 1971 requires record keeping on a range of matters, including in certain circumstances regarding an unborn child. The Property Law Act 1974 and the Trusts Act 1973 refer to unborn persons who at birth may become members or potential members of a class and expresses the contingent rights of unborn persons. The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2003 requires the birth of all children born in Queensland after 20 weeks gestation or, if gestational age is not known, weighing more than 400 grams to be registered and provides that a child includes a stillborn child.

There are other state examples and that is even before we come to federal regulation contemplating and protecting the unborn, whether that be in regard to tobacco advertising, or radiation and nuclear safety regulation. Of course, we have the two relevant provisions of the Criminal Code, namely, sections 282 and 313. Section 282 permits a surgical operations and medical treatment defence. Section 313 creates an offence to kill a child about to be delivered or unlawfully assault a pregnant woman.

But for the amendment of these last two sections of the Criminal Code by this bill, the bill would mention 'unborn' only once. Can members imagine a bill for an act about the termination of pregnancy that barely mentions the unborn? Why has the Queensland Law Reform Commission failed to properly address the question of the legal rights—perhaps one could argue the human rights—of the unborn? Why is there no analysis of domestic law in Europe, where abortion law on demand for any reason in Germany, Belgium, France, Norway, Switzerland and Austria is strictly capped at 12 weeks? Supporters of the bill say that the vast majority of on-demand terminations are conducted prior to 12 weeks. Why then does the bill not reflect this fact?

Why, when the Queensland Law Reform Commission report runs to 324 pages, are there no more than seven perfunctory pages dedicated to these questions? Even then, those seven pages were dedicated to articulating international covenants and conventions that the commission essentially concluded deny any rights to the unborn. That is notwithstanding the preamble of the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child that observes that governments are obliged to provide appropriate legislative protection for the child before as well as after birth and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognising that the sentence of death shall not be carried out on pregnant women.

However, there was one brief but notable comment from the Queensland Law Reform Commission on page 248—namely, that 'whilst the fetus or unborn child may be entitled to some protections, it is left to individual countries to provide for any such protections in their domestic laws'. The jurisprudential construction of this bill diminishes the debate because I believe that there are profound legal and ethical interests, including the nature of necessary protections, at stake that have not been properly considered by the commission and those members supporting the bill. The Queensland Law Reform Commission cannot be used as a fig leaf by supporters of this bill while they disown their responsibility to, in the words of the LNP members' statement of reservation, 'ensure the terms of any Bill presented to it'—that is our sovereign parliament—'are in the best interests of Queenslanders'.

In the 1991 UK decision of *Rance v Mid-Downs Health Authority*, it was held that a 26-week-, 27-week-old foetus was capable of being born alive, indicating that the foetus in such circumstance was granted legal personhood. Victoria's Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities arguably recognises that an unborn child obtains legal personhood because it expressly excludes the charter's application to laws relating to termination, which would have been unnecessary had an unborn child not been a person in the first place. This bill before us is based on Labor's Victorian termination legislation.

I ask members to look to societal attitudes towards an unborn child when the child is wanted. We call it a baby. We seek to protect it. Legal rights are enforced if it is injured through assault to its mother. It seems illogical that this child might otherwise have no other legal interest simply because someone may want to end it. Similarly, we demand the highest standards of child safety as we are all rightly appalled by the cruelty all too often inflicted on young children, often by those people whose responsibility it is to care for them. If we require protection for a child from its very first breath, then how can we accept potential suffering inflicted on a child in the last few weeks before its birth?

Science is increasingly demonstrating that the unborn has the capacity for hearing, for feeling, for pain and even memory. At 20 weeks the nervous system has developed with a withdrawal reflex and in the event of early delivery there is evidence of high levels of stress hormones released into the

bloodstream. It is not clear if any consideration was given in relation to this most basic pain management question. That being so, the bill does not even provide the unborn with the protection of the right to a painless death. It is these reasons that, in my opinion, require us at the very least to acknowledge that there is a second interest to be weighed in any termination of pregnancy.

Pregnancy cannot be treated as though it is childless. Once this acknowledgement is granted then it is incumbent on us to be willing to acknowledge and, yes, protect that interest: the right of the unborn. It is because of this second interest that abortion ought to be regulated differently from any other medical procedure. This is because, unlike any other medical procedures I can think of, there are two interests involved and one of those interests is unable to defend itself, instead relying on lawmakers like us to do so. This bill, with its 22-week termination-on-request gestation limit and the potential for terminations until full term for undefined social reasons with the approval of two doctors, is an abrogation of this lawmaking obligation.

I do not think anyone in this House would argue that pregnancy terminations can have a profound and life-changing consequence for women. It is in the failure to address that potential that the bill fails most egregiously. Where are the measures for the protection of women: offering counselling, informed consent, stopping coercion and safeguarding against family violence, overcoming social disadvantage, ensuring the highest possible consumer protection standards, the provision of additional post-abortive support for women, better record keeping and data collection or finally doing something about the appallingly complicated adoption system in Queensland?

I find the failure to address reproductive coercion particularly troubling. It is true that there is evidence to suggest that abusive partners exert control over women through pregnancy, but it is also equally true, or even more so, that abusive partners exert power and control over women through pressure to terminate a pregnancy. This leaves vulnerable women all the more vulnerable. With no protection available they find themselves experiencing a form of domestic violence. Yes, it is domestic violence; let us call it what it is.

Even termination provider, Dr Carol Portmann, has admitted that she and colleagues sometimes perform terminations on women who appear not to be wanting them of their own free will. I had the privilege of meeting Jaya Taki, a young woman who was coerced by her NRL player boyfriend into having a termination through emotional and psychological blackmail. She has been very brave. Her message is clear: all that she needed was someone to say she could do it. She reflected on how the termination clinic counsellor was casual, bordering on flippant, about the procedure. Tellingly, she said that choosing life, the birth of her daughter, positively changed her life—'ending life almost ended mine'.

I turn next to the proposed introduction of safe access zones. I appreciate that many who support safe access zones do so with the very best intentions of protecting women from harassment in what is an extraordinarily difficult time. I share the desire to protect women from harassment of this nature. Across Australia there are hundreds of peaceful protestors gathering outside termination facilities as they have done for decades. I have seen no charges or convictions in connection with violence, harassment or intimidation and if there were such offences being committed I know that they would be dealt with by the Queensland police under the current laws.

Our Criminal Code prevents and punishes violence and there are existing laws that protect the community from harassment or intimidation. These protestors put no-one's safety at risk, they do not endanger their own lives or the lives of police, they are not trespassing on private land but are on public land, they are not chaining themselves to objects, they are not seeking to conduct corporate espionage; they simply hold a view that is different from that of supporters of this bill and that is why what is being proposed is essentially censorship zones, not safe access zones.

The prohibition has been described by academics, including Professor Nicholas Aroney, as potentially unconstitutional. It is currently being tested before the High Court and Professor Aroney has made compelling submissions, arguing that the act of protesting goes to the heart of political communication. This freedom was first recognised in *Australian Capital Television v Commonwealth* in 1992 and has been subsequently affirmed.

The High Court of Australia has also affirmed that the freedom of political communication extends in principle to conduct that conveys a political message such as the physical entry into a prescribed duck hunting area as a means of protesting against the shooting of ducks. Again, no woman should ever have to suffer harassment or intimidation upon entering a termination facility, but the introduction of safe access zones begs one basic question: why are we using the machinery of the state to shut down free speech, deeply held opinion and the right to peaceful protest?

When in opposition it was the Deputy Premier who said ahead of the G20 meeting in Brisbane, 'I support the right of citizens to demonstrate peacefully and I am sure that there will be some demonstrations associated with the G20.' In opposition, the Deputy Premier, speaking in relation to an Industrial Relations bill, commented, 'It stifles freedom of political expression and is a curtailment of participation in our democratic system.' When in opposition the Premier said, 'To stifle freedom of speech is to apply a gag to the very core of our society. It tramples important history.'

When in opposition the Premier said, 'This is about curtailing fundamental freedoms of association, freedom of expression and freedom of speech in Queensland.' However, on the basis of the bill before the House, it appears the Labor government is more than happy to apply a gag or curtail fundamental freedoms when it comes to concern about causes it supports by creating zones of exclusion while arguing elsewhere for inclusion, by requiring the police to arrest people for simply expressing an opinion, by legally leaving the door open to a late-term termination for social reasons yet potentially criminalising a conversation between a mother and her daughter within 150 metres of a termination facility, a mother who may be speaking love and offering support to help with her daughter's pregnancy.

One can draw no other conclusion than that the authors of the bill do not understand what constitutes conscientious objection. In my opinion, the conscientious objection provision qualifies as a compulsory participation provision. It mandates a health practitioner with a conscientious objection to in fact do something that they do not want to do, and non-medical professionals, such as cleaners or administrative staffers, are excluded from the opportunity to exercise a conscientious objection. A health practitioner will technically be lawfully obliged to refer women for terminations regardless of the state of pregnancy, risks or reasons. It does not facilitate doctor-patient care autonomy as it may potentially force them to work against their perception of what is in the best interests of their patient. One need only recall the Victorian case of Dr Mark Hobart who risked deregistration for refusing to refer a couple seeking a sex-selection termination to a non-objecting practitioner.

One cannot form views on a topic as important as this bill in a vacuum. One must hear the experiences and stories of women who have been there and faced the decision. It is a profound decision that they and their families will reflect on for years to come. We all have friends and relatives who have gone through the agonies of the choice of whether or not to proceed with a pregnancy. Some have chosen to proceed with their pregnancies while others have not. Over the last six months I have quietly spent time with women from both perspectives and lobby groups supporting and opposing the bill. I also spent precious time with a dear friend of mine who chose to unexpectedly reveal her termination and, with it, the raw emotion that she has carried for 40 years. I honour her courage and thank her for trusting me with her story. She is loved by so many.

Another remarkable woman, Madeleine Weidemann, has courageously shared her story over the past few years. Madeleine has been a courageous advocate for women to receive full and frank information about foetal development and the need for young and vulnerable women to understand the risks that might be associated with a termination. Madeleine has called for a coherent and unified body of research that takes into account the many stories not just of the impact of an abortion on women's lives but also of the loss of any child in utero to miscarriage and stillbirth, and the grief that flows therefrom. Madeleine reflects deeply on her loss and the loss felt by her sister and mother through miscarriage, and my own wife does too.

Finally, and in an atmosphere where the community is evermore distrustful of promises made by us as elected representatives, I affirm the position of the LNP membership. The grassroots members of my party have repeatedly debated termination laws and have repeatedly concluded that there is no reason to change them. I also affirm the position of the parliamentary wing of the LNP, which, prior to the state election in 2017, gave a commitment that they would not amend the termination laws in Queensland. I will not walk away from that commitment to the Queensland people or the people of Toowoomba South, who have inundated my electorate office with their concerns regarding this bill, overwhelmingly so by the ratio of 100 to one.

My wife and I have been blessed with three precious children. Yesterday I missed the 10th birthday of my daughter. We knew their gender and had them named by week 19 or 20 of my wife's pregnancy. Nothing compares with hearing the heartbeat of your child for the very first time. Sadly, this bill fails dismally in searching the heart of this parliament's responsibility to care for the most vulnerable—in this case, the unborn—while maintaining appropriate supports and protections for women facing the most challenging decision of their lives. As Jaya Taki says, women deserve better.

In 1986, Judge McGuire expounded the legal framework by which lawful terminations are conducted in Queensland today—around 14,000 of them. He confirmed that this state, Queensland, has not abdicated its responsibility as a guardian of the silent innocence of the unborn. I profoundly hope that we in this House do not abdicate that responsibility to the unborn today.

A further incident having occurred in the public gallery—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order! Members of the gallery, there is to be no applause. This is your second and final warning. There is to be no applause either in the House or in the gallery. Before continuing, I ask all members of the House to keep the chatter to a minimum. If you need to have conversations, please go outside. That also goes for those in the gallery.

Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (12.12 pm): As chair of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, today I rise to wholeheartedly support the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I believe this is an historic moment in the Queensland parliament as we debate legislation that will finally, after a century, provide women in this state with the right to choose on a matter that is deeply personal for the woman, her GP and her family, that is, her decision to seek a termination of pregnancy. As we heard from many women, this journey has spanned two terms of parliament. It has indeed been a journey as, in my time as a member, this is the third iteration of a termination of pregnancy bill considered by a parliamentary committee, albeit the two previous bills were never debated in the House.

I take a moment to pay my respects to the former chair of the health committee, the member for Nudgee, Leanne Linard. I acknowledge her work and thank her for setting the respectful tone for me to follow in my role as chair of the committee that considered the Termination of Pregnancy Bill that is before us. Our committee found that the decision to terminate a pregnancy is certainly not an easy decision for a woman to make and divergent views were expressed on the matter. As a participating member of the former parliamentary committee and chair of the current health committee, I feel that going forward this important issue needs a sensible and, importantly, respectful debate; not one that is emotionally charged or led by those in our community who have certain and incorrect views.

I want to share my reasons for supporting this bill, which come from 25 years experience as a paramedic during which I attended and treated women in a range of dire situations. I have treated rape victims, some of whom may have had to make a difficult decision around what to do with an unplanned pregnancy, and I have treated pregnant women who were the victims of domestic violence. I have delivered preterm babies that were not viable and, yes, I have treated women who attempted to self-abort. Many years ago, I attended a woman following a failed abortion attempt by someone practising backyard abortions, which left some women in life-threatening situations. I too have a deeply personal experience. My wife and I lost an unborn child in tragic circumstances, about which I will not go into detail today. Needless to say, that experience remains with us. With all my experience, I find myself of the view that this is a health issue and not a criminal one.

Today, I hope to clarify some of the misconceptions that we heard by presenting facts, evidence from direct experience and results from other jurisdictions and medical professionals. I also wish to place on the record the respect we have for the incredibly brave women who shared their personal stories with us in public hearings. It is abundantly clear that the decision to terminate a pregnancy is never an easy decision. It is deeply personal and, beyond doubt, it is a decision that should rest with the woman, her GP and her family.

From the outset I say that, as the Queensland Law Reform Commission found before us, this issue belongs in the Health Act—where it always should have been—and not in the Criminal Code. I understand what former members have tried to achieve by simply attempting to decriminalise abortion in the state, but the legislation needed much more in relation to gestational periods, conscientious objection and the establishment of safe zones so that women and treating staff can freely attend a clinic without fear of being publicly shamed or embarrassed for their decision or their work. As I said, it is not an easy decision to make and the last thing a woman needs is to be abused for seeking services for the termination of a pregnancy.

The bill seeks to achieve its objectives by allowing women in this state true equality and choice, which in my view means that a termination should be a decision entirely for the woman, her doctor and her family. I wish to thank and acknowledge the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Health for their courage in bringing this bill before the parliament and supporting its intent, which is that this issue belongs in the Health Act. At its very heart, this issue seeks to clarify and support through the Queensland parliament—as in most other Australian jurisdictions—the legalisation of abortions in Queensland. For many years we have been behind on this issue. If this bill is supported, Queensland can proudly step out of the shadows and allow women the right to choose.

I put it to members of this parliament that now is indeed a time to demonstrate their own moral courage, values and beliefs in what is a moment of significance, which is a true vote for all members of parliament on the back of our committee's second recommendation. It is fitting to commend the LNP for allowing its members a free vote—a conscience vote—on this important issue before Queenslanders today. Should the bill be supported, their decision will help to finally give Queensland women true equality with their peers in the nation on the issue of termination of pregnancy.

Because the previous bills were not debated, this matter was referred to the QLRC. I thank and acknowledge them for their significant work on the draft bill that was prepared for the parliament, which provided the current committee with much of the information we needed to prepare our report for the parliament. I thank the 10,000 submitters, through both parliaments, who informed us of their views. I thank the medical professionals who provided facts in relation to the termination services provided in Queensland. Queensland Health provided clear clinical guidelines on what occurs in both medical and surgical abortions. They are the health professionals who support women who make the difficult decision to terminate a pregnancy.

It is timely to commend Ashleigh, Zena and Melanie from Harrison's Little Wings who sat in this chamber and shared with our committee their deeply personal stories about making the difficult decision to terminate a pregnancy at 22 weeks gestation due to severe foetal abnormalities. Again, those decisions were not easy. Each member of the committee was moved by the incredible emotional journeys those women shared with us.


It surprises me to see the deputy chair's amendments, which were distributed earlier in the House, which seek to reduce the gestational limit to 16 weeks. The deputy chair, the member for Caloundra, sat with me at those hearings and heard that morphology scans occur at or around the 18- to 20-week gestational period, which on clinical advice is where clear foetal abnormalities can be identified. If we were to move to the 16-week limit as proposed it would not allow women to be informed of any foetal abnormalities. I ask the member to stay the course on the clinical advice given to us and our recommendation supporting the 22-week gestational period, which is supported by many in the medical arena.

We heard on a number of occasions that should this bill be passed the floodgates shall open, there will be more late-term abortions and overall termination rates would increase. I say to those who oppose this, 'That is wrong. Listen to the facts.' On page 19 of our report we provided clear information on the rates of termination in Victoria decreasing from 17 women per thousand in 2008 to 12 women per thousand in 2018. That is significant. They have a decade of experience and we certainly appreciated them sharing that. This also aligns with countries around the world with 20 years of data showing a reduction in terminations worldwide in developed regions. This is explained on page 18 of the report. This information was supplied by the Guttmacher Institute.

We also heard from women in regional and remote Queensland about the lack of services and access to services and the need to travel great distances or even interstate to seek termination services. It surprises me that the member for Traeger, Robbie Katter, made certain comments that KAP were not intending to support this bill. I look forward to hearing why when women from western and regional Queensland came before us and wrote about the issue they face.

In essence, the QLRC report, which follows on from the considerable work done by the previous health committee, drafted a bill. That bill tackles the issues of safe zones and conscientious objection. I think it certainly provides the detail required to get this bill before us here today. I look forward to everyone's contribution.

It would be remiss of me not to very quickly thank the entire health committee—some of whom shared their own deeply personal experiences—and the secretariat. At some stages we had 14 people working on that report. I urge people to read the report. I urge people to be informed. I urge members to support the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.22 pm): There is no more difficult or divisive issue than abortion. When I say 'divisive', I do not simply mean that this issue turns parties and people against each other; it also divides us as individuals. Our feelings are torn when we try to balance the rights of women with the rights of unborn babies. The arguments on all sides of this debate are powerful and they are highly emotive.

If you cannot understand both sides of this debate then you are not looking hard enough. If you are not moved by the arguments of both sides, you are not listening hard enough. Given this issue is so emotive and so personal, the discussion often descends into animosity. I do not want to divide

Queenslanders. I do not want to divide men and women. I want to bring people together, not drive wedges between them. I believe any government that decides to raise an issue as divisive and emotive as abortion reform should have a convincing and pressing case for doing so.

The government's case is weak. It argues that this bill is simply about decriminalising abortion in Queensland. The implication is that women in Queensland in 2018 risk punishment for having an abortion. That is simply not true. Women's rights are not under attack from the police or from the courts, and suggesting otherwise may stop some vulnerable women from seeking the help they need.

Terminations supervised by doctors and carried out for medical reasons are entirely legal in Queensland. That has been the law under both a Labor and an LNP government. As the Law Reform Commission report states, as many as 14,000 terminations are performed in this state every year. No woman has been convicted of terminating a pregnancy. If vulnerable and desperate women were being dragged before the courts then I would be the first to defend them. This bill is not about protecting women from persecution.

Why is this legislation before the House? It is before us because of politics—pure and simple. After the last election the left faction took control of Labor and Labor controls parliament. We now have the most ideologically driven government Queensland has ever seen and it is determined to destroy the consensus that has emerged on this issue over many years. Political posturing and politic advantage is what matters to the left.

As the first woman to lead the LNP, I have been consistently and cynically targeted on this issue, but I have not reacted to those taunts. My position has always been that the LNP party room would consider the bill after it had been examined by the committee. At that meeting I moved a motion—a motion that was unanimously supported—that the LNP members be given a conscience vote on this bill.

My own view is that medically supervised terminations for medical reasons should be remain legal. I believe that it is essential that terminations are medically supervised to protect women from serious risks to their physical and mental wellbeing. I do not believe that abortion should be available on demand. As a woman and a mother, I could never support abortion on demand at 22 weeks. That is almost the end of the second trimester, which is a time that experts say a baby is fully formed and growth continues.

I remember the joy that Jason and I felt when we had scans when I was pregnant with each one of my children. I remember watching our babies moving on the monitor, seeing their heartbeat and feeling them kicking inside me. Nothing was more precious to me than feeling those tiny kicks grow strong, knowing that a new life was growing.


I cannot go along with the pretence that abortion at 22 weeks should be coldly regarded as a simple clinical procedure. I certainly cannot support provisions that will allow abortion for social reasons between week 23 and full term. That is what this bill will allow. I am sure the bill's supporters will say that late-term abortions would be exceptionally rare. That is not what this bill states. My conscience cannot allow me to support it.

Instead of allowing termination in the final trimester of pregnancy, we should be offering more support to women. The government's framework does not provide any counselling services. It includes absolutely no protections against women being pressured into having a termination. The framework supposes that every woman will somehow have all of the information and all of the support she needs to make an informed choice and that women are never pressured into abortion. Those assumptions are wrong. This framework is flawed. This badly crafted bill seems to push women towards terminations. Once taken, that decision can never be undone.

Although I cannot support this bill, I am not in principle opposed to reform. I would support extra provisions for counselling and greater safeguards against abortion coercion. They would require much wider consultation that has not been undertaken by this government. In fact, the consultation we have seen has quite simply been inadequate. It is unacceptable that this government has relied on the committee processes for the examination of previous private members' bills—bills that were not even debated in this House.

There are other aspects of the current framework that could be reviewed, including amending the Criminal Code to explicitly protect medically supervised abortions for medical reasons. I have also been appalled by the conduct of some individuals around abortion clinics in Queensland. No-one seeking medical treatment should be harassed or intimidated. However, there are serious questions about the validity and the appropriateness of the proposed access zones. A better approach would be to consider offences aimed at preventing the harassment of anyone seeking medical support.

In summary, I believe this bill has been flawed from the beginning. Its aim has never been to help women, doctors or babies. Its aim has been to create a political wedge and to sow division in our community. Sadly, it may just have that effect. Hopefully, it will never become law. I urge all members to think hard, carefully and calmly before reaching their own conclusions.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (12.30 pm): I would like to begin by praising the Attorney-General for asking the Queensland Law Reform Commission to review and investigate the modernisation of Queensland's termination of pregnancy laws and I commend the QLRC for the comprehensive review that it has undertaken. The Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 represents the culmination of a substantial body of work undertaken by both the 55th and the 56th Parliament, canvassing professional bodies, interstate government departments, health practitioners, churches, women's support and community groups as well as individuals. These experts have all contributed to this bill. I praise the Palaszczuk government and the Minister for Health for addressing this important women's health issue.

I acknowledge the work of the committee secretariat, the many submitters and witnesses and my fellow committee members. I thank the secretariat, who provided outstanding support to the committee. I thank my parliamentary colleagues: chair, member for Thuringowa, Aaron Harper; deputy chair, member for Caloundra, Mark McArdle; member for Maiwar, Michael Berkman; member for Pine Rivers, Nikki Boyd; member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt; and member for Rockhampton, Barry O'Rourke. I list them all because I would like to thank them for their respectful consideration and thoughtful deliberations and discussions in the committee process. I would also like to thank the many submitters and witnesses who have shared their views and stories with us. May I also take a moment to thank my electorate staff for their professionalism and commitment to the constituents of Lytton and to thank each and every member of my community for contacting me with respect to this bill.


The legalisation of terminations is today a vexed topic, but it is worth noting that termination of pregnancy has been widely practised throughout history. Its illegality, however, is a more modern construct. A 1500BC Egyptian medical text describes the use of plant fibres covered in honey and crushed dates to induce abortion. During the Middle Ages, most religious scholars accepted abortion up to the 'quickening', which is about four months into a pregnancy. In the US, up until the early 1800s, abortions were not only legal but widely advertised. By the end of the 19th century, however, laws in the Western world had been introduced to outlaw deliberate terminations, including in Queensland in 1899. These laws were designed to protect women from unsafe procedures, but they had unintended consequences where many desperate women turned to illegal practitioners. I mention the history to indicate the changes in society over time. Nonetheless, legalising terminations is still today controversial and, unfortunately, it is a debate characterised by misinformation and polarisation.

In reaching a position on this bill, the committee has heard a range of views from legal commentators, medical professionals, scientists, politicians, theologians, feminists, social scientists, community groups and individuals. In gathering these opinions we have heard diverse opinions from both sides of the debate, including extreme positions. On the one hand, we have those who believe unequivocally in the rights of the foetus. On the other hand, we have those who argue women should always have autonomy over their bodies.

I do not want to focus on those who take extreme positions because I believe that we can find common ground among the opposing sides if we choose to do so. For example, no pro-choice advocate would see abortion as a routine means of birth control or, for that matter, a tool to be used for gender determination, nor that abortion is a casual event undertaken without a moment's thought or respect for the potential life that is being ended. If we put aside the explosive opinions from the extreme camps and look for common ground, we can address this controversial topic in a more rational, productive and less divisive way.

I am asking all of those in the House to consider this bill from the perspective of the woman who seeks a termination. There is a woman out there right now considering one, and that woman's decision will be made in the context of her own complex and possibly conflicting social, moral, religious, political and economic values. We can try to put ourselves in her shoes but she does not have our lives, our problems, our options, our values or our experiences, so her decision is bound to offend or confound some of us whatever decision she reaches.

For all of those in the House today, my advice is to trust the woman. Trust her to make the right decision. Trust her to make the decent decision. Trust her to make the wise decision. I believe that she is capable of knowing what is right for her at this time in her life. I respect her and I respect her decision. This legislation allows women—women who are best placed and living the experience—to make appropriate health decisions about their body and their family. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.36 pm): I stand here today to speak strongly against the Annastacia Palaszczuk government's abortion bill. This bill is one of the most significant that this House will ever debate. This is a bill that is literally about life and death. This is a bill where every member's vote will be recorded forevermore.

This bill before the parliament is flawed in many, many respects. In my opinion, it is also morally wrong. I would like to begin my argument against this bill by dispelling a couple of myths that have been promoted by those who support the passing of this bill. The first myth is that this is a woman versus man issue. It is wrong to say that all women are of the same opinion on this issue. In fact, the vast majority of people who have contacted my office both for and against this bill are women. Women who oppose this bill—women who are mothers and sisters—have as much validity as those women who support the bill, and we should remember that. Many of them recognise the unborn as human beings and they view these laws as nothing short of legal killing.

The second myth that needs to be dispelled, which has already been mentioned by the opposition leader and the shadow Attorney-General, is that safe termination of pregnancies is legal and available now. Termination is currently lawful if a health practitioner is satisfied that the continuation of a woman's pregnancy poses a serious risk to her physical or mental health. That explains why there has been literally tens of thousands of abortions in Queensland over the preceding decades without a single conviction. They are not labelled as criminals, as argued by those on the other side. Why? Because they accessed the abortion legally. Many of those opposite have constantly criticised those who are pro life for misleading statements when, in fact, this is one of the many that they propagate.

There are many things that I believe are wrong with this bill: abortion on demand up to 22 weeks gestation; abortion after 22 weeks for social reasons; no clarity around what 'consult' means with regard to getting a second opinion for late-term abortions; and no opportunity for nursing or support staff to express their conscientious objection. Unfortunately, time will allow me to address only two issues.

The first one is this: I believe, as do hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders, that a foetus in a womb is a baby. It is a human being. This is not a religious view; this is a scientific fact. Because of this, it is just wrong in my opinion to allow a perfectly healthy baby to be killed on demand up to 22 weeks gestation. Allowing this to occur contradicts the current laws and practices of this state in so many different ways. Only two months ago a violent man named Brock Wall murdered his pregnant partner on the Gold Coast. Wall was convicted of murder of not one person but two people. The courts recognised that the 10-week foetus in the womb of this pregnant woman was a human being and, therefore, the murderer of the mother should also be charged with the murder of the baby in her womb.

I have been written to by many constituents about this issue. On this issue I want to read a letter I received from one of my constituents which states—

About 10 years ago, my wife and I were in a car accident when she was 14 weeks pregnant. She was given an ultrasound to see if the baby was OK, and she was—in fact she was playing with the umbilical cord. Our daughter was obviously a living baby, and to a fair observer even at that age deserves the recognition of personhood in the law ...

The law of this country allows in other ways the recognition of foetuses in the womb. In the state of Queensland a stillborn baby born after 20 weeks requires both a birth certificate and a death certificate. The state recognises a baby at 20 weeks is a human being that deserves a fitting burial. This Palaszczuk government bill allows abortion up to 22 weeks. How can one reconcile this obvious contradiction? Laws are wrong when they contradict other laws, and I believe laws are wrong when they do not recognise that a foetus in the womb of a woman is a human and should be treated as, and have the same rights of, any other human being that has left the womb.

The second point I want to raise is about protecting women. There are no protections in this bill for women who experience reproductive coercion. The Palaszczuk government, with bipartisan support from the opposition, quite rightly has implemented many policies to tackle domestic violence, but despite all those efforts a form of domestic violence that the Palaszczuk government is ignoring in this bill is those women who are threatened or coerced into having an abortion right up to birth. I will read another email from a constituent which states—


I have experienced the dire results of an abortion on a family member. She was forced to have an abortion by an ex boyfriend, but told doctors she was doing it of her own free will. She has since told me it was not the case and he threatened to push her downstairs so she would lose the baby if she did not proceed. To this day, she wonders if that was the little girl she has always longed for ...

but never had. There are thousands of vulnerable women in this situation every day, and this government's words about domestic violence mean nothing when there is nothing in this bill protecting vulnerable women against threats and coercion to abort their baby.

Through this debate we will hear many speakers say that this is the hardest decision a woman has to make; that there is incredible anguish in making a decision as to whether to terminate their pregnancy. For those couples whose baby in the womb has abnormalities so severe, I can totally understand that anguish. However, the vast majority of abortions in the past and in the future will be on completely healthy babies so I ask: why is there anguish to terminate a pregnancy in this situation? If you do not believe that this foetus is a human and only a lump of lifeless tissue, surely any termination is just a clinical procedure, an unemotional visit to a doctor like getting your appendix out—but, no, there is anguish, there is heartache, there is lifelong guilt, there is bitterness because innately a woman knows that deep down in her body is a baby and she is terminating the life of that baby.

I also support this bill, as the shadow Attorney-General has mentioned, because this is the policy of the LNP. When I came into the LNP, if this were not our policy I could not have committed to the party, and so I also want to honour those thousands of members.

I now finish with a personal plea to the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk. Premier, is this the bill and legacy that you want to be remembered by—that perfectly healthy babies safe in the womb of their mother yet to see the light of day can be terminated for no medical reason whatsoever? Our society is better than this, and I ask each and every member to search their conscience and remember that your vote will be recorded in the annals of Queensland history.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (12.46 pm): Many people my age in Queensland do not have a practical understanding that it is a criminal offence for a person in Queensland to terminate their pregnancy. It is a very distinct memory for me when I realised that termination of pregnancy is a crime in Queensland. I was a teenager with an assignment to complete on a topic of my choice and free reign in a library. It was shocking to discover that what I thought was a fundamental choice—a freedom that I thought I had—was not enshrined and protected but a loophole. I was then and I remain now appalled by this situation, and 20 years later I am determined more than ever to be part of repairing this oversight in our state's legal framework.

Our judges have been several decades ahead of this parliament in realising community expectations and it is time for us to catch up. Access to safe, regulated, high-quality abortion services is a significant women's health issue. We must entrust women with the autonomy to make one of the most important decisions they will ever make—when they will have children. Our legislation evolves and changes with the society that it is designed to govern.

This legislation, now 119 years old, is in no way reflective of modern medical practice, representative of us as a free society or realistic in the age that we live in today. In England in 1899 Queen Victoria aged 80 was in the 62nd year of her reign. The Bore War commenced and the first successful transmission of a radio signal occurred across the English Channel. At that time women were not entrusted to vote, to hold public office or to build an autonomous professional career. These old laws have long fallen out of favour as we embrace modernity and so now we must embrace women of our state having agency over their own bodies.

The current criminalisation presents as a serious health challenge for Queensland women. Uncertainty and deep stigma exists for both women and health practitioners. This legislation provides for safe, accessible and timely health services for women and a clear, reliable framework for medical practitioners. I have read every submission made and attended every public hearing through this committee process. After the Premier's pleas for a respectful debate, it was both sad and sickening to see the vile images, extremist language and inaccuracies submitted to this process, presented to members' offices and circulated in the wider community.

Throughout the committee's inquiry during the last parliament I was a woman who had just had a miscarriage. I have faced this process as a pregnant woman. I can assure those few on the other side of this debate that the foul vitriol that has been sent to my office has done nothing but strengthened my resolve to create a better environment for all Queensland women. We need a Queensland where women cannot be harassed, intimidated and abused outside health facilities, one with much less stigma, judgement and aggression. It has provided me with a deep appreciation for the resolve and commitment of the health practitioners and staff working in this space. One should not be subjected to abuse in their workplaces.

Many of us in this place have experienced the abuse of the extreme fringe firsthand. It is part of our job and I am sure we are all accustomed to it. However, health practitioners and those accessing their services are not policymakers and this experience could be considered intimidation. Workers and patients must have rights, and I defend their right to go about their work and seek medical assistance free from abuse and intimidation.


To our health practitioners I say: thank you for the work that you have done in the face of adversity. To my own staff I want to say: thank you for the many times you have shielded me from the abhorrent material, abusive calls and unacceptable behaviour of the extreme fringe in this debate. I also commend the bravery of the women who appeared before the committee speaking of their own personal circumstances, often tragic circumstances in their pregnancies. To Ashleigh, Zena and Melanie, I say you are inspiring and amazing and I am in total awe of your strength. These cases demonstrate that every woman's journey is different and unique. Above all else, it is their own journey and it should be theirs to determine.

Our society expects a basic set of freedoms. The most fundamental of these relate to our health care, our property and our families. We expect our parliament to champion these freedoms, so I am proud to support the removal of yet another ancient restriction and enshrine in our state's laws a well overdue freedom.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE

Correction to Record of Proceedings


 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.51 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. During the delivery of my speech I inadvertently said that I support the bill. I meant to say that I support the shadow Attorney-General's position on LNP policy. I rise to correct the record. Obviously I am against the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Thank you very much for clarifying the record. I am sure we can have silence in the House for the last speaker before lunch.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (12.51 pm): I rise to speak on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 before the House. This is an incredibly divisive bill which deals with an emotional and complicated issue. The subject of termination of pregnancy creates strong emotional reactions and I have tried to keep my own emotional reactions towards this issue separate from this debate. It is my sincere ambition to make a contribution to this debate which is respectful.

The decision of the LNP to allow a conscience vote is in line with our party's belief that matters about the creation or ending of life are treated as matters of conscience. In understanding the emotive nature of this debate, we as a party made the decision to allow members a conscience vote. I think every member of parliament deserves the right to be able to walk into parliament and freely vote according to their conscience on this issue. I am pleased that we as a party were able to unanimously come to this decision.

Unfortunately, Labor have not been as transparent with their ambitions to allow a conscience vote on this matter. During the committee's consideration of the legislation, LNP members raised concerns with the absence of direct or indirect reference to allowing a conscience vote on this matter. Additionally, at the time the bill was introduced the government failed to put a motion to the House for the committee to consider a conscience vote and has failed since then to do so. In either case the government would have had the numbers to pass the motion. Clearly, the government saw implications in taking that course of action.

I would begin by saying that I believe that a woman needs to feel safe and in control of her body, and I think our laws should allow a woman to make this deeply personal decision about her health, her future and her family. As a nurse and as shadow minister for health and women, I realise the importance of women being able to access terminations of pregnancy safely. As such, I do support removing the termination of pregnancy from the Criminal Code. I agree with the 81 per cent of Queenslanders who

believe termination of pregnancy should be decriminalised. The Criminal Code is not the appropriate vehicle for regulating the provision of termination of pregnancy. As it stands, the Criminal Code currently makes it a crime to unlawfully—even lawfully—terminate a woman's pregnancy.

Whilst I accept that no practitioner or patient has been convicted, the current state of the law has created uncertainty among doctors and healthcare professionals. The possibility of prosecution of health professionals and women also potentially impedes provision of a full range of safe, accessible and timely reproductive services.

Termination of pregnancy should be regulated, as are all other medical services, under existing healthcare legislation. There is no case for singling out a termination of pregnancy procedure in any area of legislation. This was the central recommendation of the Queensland Law Reform Commission report, and I share their view that generally termination should be treated as a health matter, not a criminal matter. Unfortunately, my support for this bill ends here.

There are several details contained within the bill that have compounded my doubt and prevent me from offering my full support, specifically the provision which will allow on-demand terminations up to 22 weeks. I am aware that there is an array of deeply difficult and complex circumstances that may lead a patient to need termination of pregnancy care at this late stage of pregnancy. However, I am unable to support this without full consideration by Labor as to whether the gestational limit of 22 weeks is appropriate. In my view it is not appropriate.

The 22-week limit for a termination with no required reason is far too late. By then a pregnancy which has no diagnosed genetic abnormalities would be likely to continue to full term. We know that babies have survived when born at 22 weeks. In Queensland, babies born prematurely under normal circumstances are given every opportunity to survive in a neonatal intensive care unit. Currently, termination of pregnancy clinics can obtain a licence to perform terminations up to 20 weeks gestation, and terminations past 20 weeks are performed in public hospitals for foetal abnormalities and serious health risks to the woman. Additionally, I take issue with the provision of on-demand termination of pregnancy up to 22 weeks. The request to terminate pregnancy up to 22 weeks is often referred to as 'on demand' in this bill. In this instance 'on demand' means without the need for explanation, justification or medical need.

I do not support legalising termination of pregnancy up to 22 weeks gestation for 'any reason' and then 22 weeks until birth under loose criteria including social circumstances. This provision falls outside of industry recommendations and ethical best practice frameworks. The Northern Territory, Western Australia, South Australia and New South Wales prohibit termination of pregnancy on demand. It is my view that the current requirements for an explanation, justification or medical need to be given should remain and the loose criteria around 'social circumstances' should be better defined.

Women who have had a termination of pregnancy say it is not the easy way out. It is a painful and difficult decision made in consideration of what is the right thing to do for the mother and the child. It is a decision that often remains with the woman for the rest of her life. However, as I said, I am unable to support the bill as it seeks to allow on-demand or on-request termination of pregnancy outside of medical grounds.

Another aspect of this bill preventing me from offering my support is the complete lack of acknowledgment of nurses in the conscientious objection provision. There is no detail outlining what steps can be taken if a nurse, who is required to assist with a procedure, has a conscientious objection. This lack of detail and foresight is alarming. One of the first procedures that a student nurse or a student perioperative nurse fly solo on as a scrub nurse is a dilation and curettage or a dilation and curettage with suction. These are performed for miscarriages and terminations. Nursing staff should be able to conscientiously object to scrubbing, scouting or even doing anaesthetics for procedures of this nature.

As a former anaesthetic nurse, I have been in theatres for all manner of tragic conclusions of pregnancies, including losing a mother and a baby due to catastrophic events occurring in labour. I have been in theatre for terminations and miscarriages from the first trimester to the last trimester. I have witnessed the anguish of mothers, whether they wanted the child or not, who still had to undergo surgical interventions. It is never a simple, straightforward situation, as appears to be painted in this legislation and the ensuing public commentary.

The view that a termination of pregnancy is a relatively minor procedure is a myth; it is false. Apart from the emotional aspects of the decision, whether termination is performed because the foetus is unviable or for other reasons has for my mind, as a nurse, been portrayed too simplistically in this debate. Late-term terminations of pregnancy involve induction and delivery. It is not a case of a patient putting a mask over their face and waking up in recovery no longer pregnant. It is a brutal procedure

on the foetus and is generally not performed in a midwifery unit. For the patient's own emotional wellbeing, it is normally performed in a female surgical unit so that they are not in earshot of crying newborns.

Even when well informed, a patient consenting to this procedure actually goes through labour to deliver. It is hard on the patient and equally as difficult for the nursing staff. I have witnessed these procedures go wrong, where retained products remained in situ and the woman then had to go to theatre. I have witnessed the distress of parents who were expecting a healthy baby, only to be told late in the pregnancy that the foetus is not viable. I have wrapped dead babies in blankets for their parents to mourn. I have also witnessed parents who could not bring themselves to view the baby, and the child was then put in a dark room to expire as the baby was not compatible with life. I have no issue with decriminalising abortion in this state. However, the current safeguards in place are there for a reason and should remain so as a health issue. The lack of serious consideration of the real-world implementation of this important piece of legislation has been a theme throughout the process.


I have consulted with residents in my electorate, including all of my churches. Overwhelmingly, the response from residents has been that the bill goes too far. No-one has an issue with removing the criminal offence of terminating a pregnancy, but they share my concerns about late-term abortions and the social reasons for terminating a pregnancy that are given in this bill. In a poll, 70 per cent of Gold Coasters were not asked if they support termination of pregnancy on demand or over 22 weeks for social reasons, and to attempt to portray that they do is false and misleading. Whilst as a nurse I do not offer my support in this vote, I wish for it to be noted that I am not voting against the decriminalisation of termination of pregnancy; I am voting against a poorly thought out bill. For me this legislation is a bridge too far, and I cannot in good conscience support this bill.

Debate, on motion of Ms Bates, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Storms; Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): We are used to extreme weather events in South-East Queensland—in fact, all over Queensland—and in the electorate of Nanango, but last week's wild storm was something else. The community felt the fury of a supercell, and its impact will linger for a long time. Federal agriculture minister David Littleproud and I inspected the damage immediately after the storm hit. Shane Francis' farm lost 95 per cent of its remaining peach crop. They still had 75 per cent left to pick, and north of Murgon Peter Enkelman lost a whole irrigated wheat crop. We saw heartache and bravery in equal measure.

My thoughts are with the Creagh family after little Connor was critically injured during the clean-up at his grandmother's Hodgeleigh property. On behalf of the opposition we wish him and his family all the best, and we particularly wish Connor a full recovery. The immense bravery of Fiona Simpson shielding her baby daughter from serious injury was extraordinary. As a mum, of course we know there is nothing more precious than our kids, but Fiona also had her grandmother in the car. Fiona really did put her body on the line.

Fiona's was not the only story of bravery. I visited Kumbia State School, where the teacher had to shield children from flying glass and ice after hail shattered all the windows in the classroom. Children had to line up underneath tables on the other side of the room. The next day when I visited the school the kids talked to me with excitement about the hail storm. One little boy had to shield his best mate's sister Penny and protect her from the hail. They talked about hail hitting them in the arms, legs and heads, but guess what? They were back in class again in another classroom on Friday. I want to pay tribute to the kids and teachers of Kumbia State School for their resilience and bravery. That is just one story to come out of the supercell storm.

I also want to pay tribute to the emergency services for their brilliant work. The community pitching in to help their neighbours is one thing, but we will be forever thankful for the help of those who responded in our time of need. We know that we are a resilient bunch. Crops will recover and damage will be repaired, but the coming months will be tough for my electorate as the massive recovery effort continues. We must also remember the major fires around Woolooga and the Somerset. I urge everyone to look out for each other, and of course together we will get through this.

The past few weeks since we were last here in this parliament have shown that the Labor government is one of hubris, cover-ups and secrecy. That is why the Palaszczuk government took the appalling step of dumping 75 reports late on a Friday night as Queenslanders were preparing for the grand final long weekend. Labor went to the last election promising transparency and accountability. The deliberate and calculated decision to dump 75 reports late on a Friday evening was anything but accountable. It was anything but transparent. Those opposite hoped the public would not be properly informed about those reports, but they were wrong.

While the Labor government failed to be transparent, journalists and the opposition took it upon ourselves to inform the public. News reports that weekend read, 'What transparent government really doesn't want you to know: rail dysfunction, child crime revolving door and a \$23 million stadium black hole are just some of the secrets buried in a brazen late-night report dump.' That is how the media reported it. Labor's bid to keep this information under wraps failed. They succeeded in showing Queenslanders how hollow, arrogant, out of touch and secretive they really are. This government treats the Queensland public with utter disdain.

In relation to rail, the reports show that entire departments are in crisis. There has been an horrendous waste of taxpayers' money. The report into Queensland Rail shows that, despite more than 10,000 applications to a recruitment program for trainee drivers and guards, QR achieved a net increase of only 40 additional drivers. They have had 10,000 applicants but they have only achieved 40 additional drivers. The report shows that QR is plagued by problems and Labor's rail fail is here to stay. There are 470 fewer services, and the minister and the Premier cannot even give a date when they are going to get it right and fix it up. It is a joke.

The transport priorities of this Labor government are twisted. It does not matter if commuters cannot catch a train as long as the unions are happy. It is no wonder the Premier's hand-picked QR chair has resigned. There are clearly fundamental problems at Queensland Rail, and Labor's incompetence is at the heart of it. We need to undertake an external recruitment of drivers.

It is not just Queensland Rail that is in crisis. The report dump shows that Queensland Health is failing to meet basic treatment efficiency targets, but Labor's health minister is more focused on renaming the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital than fixing issues like ambulance ramping or the closure of regional maternity units. Kids are having chemo treatment in kitchens. Our children's hospital needs more beds, not rebranding. Meanwhile, the health minister sends out his bureaucrats to answer questions about serious health problems at Queensland Health. The health minister does not show up himself. It is obvious that Labor's health priorities are twisted. The LNP has thrown its support behind the campaign to boost the state's meningococcal vaccination program. We need more action to save lives and less focus on the names of hospitals.


Then there was the annual education report, which shows that we are not hitting any reading, writing or numeracy benchmarks. In fact, we are not even close. The report also proves the lie around front-line services, with over 20 per cent of the education department not being teachers or teacher aides. What is the education minister doing? We have seen the secret review into IPS. We now know that the union movement is throwing their rot right down the throats of children in years 10, 11 and 12 whilst the Premier and education minister support it. This was built and designed in the education minister's office. It is obvious that their priorities are wrong and it is obvious they are very out of touch.

Instead of fixing our transport, health and education services, the Labor government is intent on wasting taxpayers' money by spending \$4.6 million on overseas travel. It is not Labor's money that is being wasted; it is taxpayers' money. Taxpayers want their money spent on better schools, hospitals and police, not luxury breaks to the Bahamas and the Maldives. As Queensland debt soars to \$83 billion our focus should be on ensuring that public money is spent responsibly. The buck stops with the Premier. This Premier is meant to lead by example, but instead the Premier hides from scrutiny. It is not everyday Queenslanders that the Premier cares about. When the Premier does emerge it is for a meet and greet with a celebrity.

The Premier must stop planning her next international jaunt to chase celebrities and start tackling the problems that matter to Queenslanders right here at home. Queenslanders want answers about when their rail services will be fixed. They want answers about when their health system will improve. They want answers about when their education and student results will turn around. Importantly, Queenslanders want answers around when our police will be given the resources they need to tackle crime across this state.

When the Premier is faced with tough questions she says, 'I'm more than happy to look into that for you,' but we never hear anything else. Queenslanders are tired of the Premier looking but doing nothing. The Premier is running a government in crisis. It is dragging departments, industries, farmers and Queensland families down with it. The Premier's priorities are wrong. Labor is arrogant, secretive and out of touch with Queenslanders.

Cyberbullying; Training

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.10 pm): I stand to welcome the actions of the Palaszczuk government to create a safer and more confident future for the young people in my area. In particular I welcome the actions to counter cyberbullying and the initiatives to deliver the training that young people in my area need to get jobs. My area has some of the largest concentrations of young adults and children. North Lakes State College has 3,000 students. Bounty Boulevard State School, the largest P-6 school in the state with over 1,400 students, will soon be the second largest P-6 in the state after Mango Hill State School, just five minutes drive away. Deception Bay State High School specialises in VET courses and has seen a 10 per cent rise in enrolment in recent years.

I know that for local parents and families education is a core value. What they want most is for us to provide a fair and decent education for their kids. Today, on behalf of those parents, I congratulate the Premier on her firm and decisive leadership on the issue of cyberbullying and congratulate the Leader of the Opposition for her bipartisan approach. I can point out to local parents and students the practical actions we are taking to counter cyberbullying. These actions are allocating \$500,000 for grants for young people to develop anti-cyberbullying initiatives. For example, young people could apply for grants to run education sessions for parents and carers about the social media they use and provide a young person's perspective on how best to support children on the issue of cyberbullying.

There will also be \$2 million over two years, as noted by the Premier this morning, for awareness campaigns. In January 2018, \$60,000 was allocated to yourtown, which operates the Kids Helpline and Parentline, so it can respond to growing demand on this issue. The government has taken leadership of the Bullying No Way! website. Most importantly, 100 per cent of Queensland state schools participated in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence in March 2018.


The Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce report has recommended a range of reforms. I am very proud that the Palaszczuk government has accepted or accepted in principle all recommendations. These actions will have a huge beneficial impact on the lives of young people in my area. Families are genuinely concerned, worried or stressed by the prospect of cyberbullying, but these actions by the Palaszczuk government help remove a barrier from them and help them to get on and build a better future.

Also removing barriers and helping people to build better futures are the Palaszczuk government's actions to deliver the training needed by young people. The Palaszczuk government is supporting Queensland students and workers with a \$777 million investment in a range of programs in vocational education and training. This includes the further investment in Skilling Queenslanders for Work and free TAFE for year 12 graduates. We know that these programs are working. Eighty-three per cent of our school students who undertake a VET program while at school transitioned to further education, training or paid employment. More than 80 per cent of Certificate III Guarantee graduates have transitioned to work or training. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is a huge job-creating success throughout Queensland. Over \$5 million has been invested in 25 community driven projects in Bancroft under SQW. To date, 683 people have been assisted by programs in Bancroft, and at last count 514 people have gained jobs as a direct result of participating in Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

The Palaszczuk government committed \$420 million over six years to Skilling Queenslanders for Work, from its reintroduction in 2015-16 to 2020-21. It will support 54,000 Queenslanders into work. We know that Skilling Queenslanders for Work is delivering long-term benefits. A recent survey showed that more than 73 per cent of participants who completed a work project in 2016 were employed or engaged in further study at the time of the survey. I have not even touched on the free TAFE program for those who complete a senior certificate. When they graduate this year they can access free TAFE in 160 career-making courses.

Young Queenslanders face many challenges as they transition to a career, to higher education and to working life. What we need to do—and what we are doing through these actions—is remove some of the barriers in their lives, whether it be the prospect of cyberbullying or the lack of opportunity for training and education. I stand proud as a member of the Palaszczuk government.

Racing Industry, Point-of-Consumption Tax

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): I rise to talk about one of the new taxes that the Palaszczuk government has introduced in this term of government. Before the election we were advised that there would be three new taxes. Now quite early in this term of government we realise that we have five new taxes—five new taxes that will bring \$2.2 billion into the government's coffers.

The tax I want to focus on in this short speech is the point-of-consumption tax for the racing industry. This tax was announced two days before the election, so it did not undergo the scrutiny that most initiatives would have during an election campaign. Most people would not have even realised that it had been committed to. At the time it was estimated that this tax might bring in \$30 million per annum. Now reality has hit. We now know that the point-of-consumption tax is in place and will bring in between \$70 million and \$100 million a year. The tax is set at 15 per cent, and a threshold of turnover as low as \$300,000 will make you eligible for this point-of-consumption tax. The industry is up in arms about this tax for a number of reasons.

Mr Krause: It is a big betrayal.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. They feel betrayed. The executive director of Responsible Wagering Australia—a name that would be very well known by those on the other side of the House, a former comrade—Stephen Conroy, said—

The Queensland Government's decision to pursue a significantly higher 15 percent Point of Consumption Tax will make it the highest effective wagering tax rate in the world.

This punitively high tax rate poses immediate and significant risks to the already parlous state of racing in Queensland.

Not a truer word could be said. This is a \$1.2 billion industry that employs tens of thousands of people across Queensland. This is an industry that at the moment is on its knees. This is an industry that has to suffer from the lack of competence of the Labor government. This is an industry in which the premier racing track, Eagle Farm, is out of action. It is really uncertain when it will be come back into play. Although they are promising that it will be before Christmas, nobody has any confidence about that whatsoever.


This is a tax which is also uncompetitive compared to the other states. Victoria has an eight per cent point-of-consumption tax with a threshold of \$1 million, and New South Wales has a point-of-consumption tax of 10 per cent with a threshold of \$1 million. The huge difference between those governments and the Queensland government is that those interstate governments recognise the value of the racing industry and recognise that if you take money through this tax then the industry deserves to get something back.

What has this government promised? Out of that \$70 million to \$100 million the government has promised \$20 million to go to a couple of tracks—a harness racing track and a greyhound racing track. That greyhound racing track has been promised for about the last 10 years. Not only that, it has been good enough to decide that it is going to write-off a debt as well. The thoroughbred industry, which contributes more than 70 per cent to the revenue that comes from gambling through racing, gets absolutely nothing. This has led to unprecedented threats. The industry is saying that if it does not get a fair deal from this government it will go on strike during the Melbourne Cup Carnival. That is unprecedented in that those in the industry will lose money by doing this, but that is how angry they are and how betrayed they feel.

An opposition member: They're desperate.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection; they also feel desperate. Our appeal to the government for the racing industry is do the right thing and give the right amount of money back to the industry. Some \$40 million is being promised by the New South Wales and Victorian governments to be given back to the industry. That sounds like a good place to start. Let us see some action.

Domestic and Family Violence

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.20 pm): When we think of the work being done in our communities to stamp out domestic violence, we usually think of the great work being done by our front-line services like the police and ambulance officers who attend domestic violence incidences and the work being done by domestic violence advocacy organisations providing shelter, counselling and support services to women and children escaping violent domestic relationships. We do not always think about the great work being done in our community to shift cultural attitudes and behaviours that

tolerate and enable domestic violence. Today I want to talk about some of the work that is being done by the Domestic Violence Action Centre, or DVAC, in helping to change prevailing attitudes towards domestic and sexual violence through its fantastic high school education program, *Being Heard*.

DVAC is a community organisation committed to preventing and eliminating domestic and sexual violence in Ipswich and surrounding regions. Its high school program, *Being Heard*, is crucial in educating students about domestic violence and healthy relationships at an age when they are impressionable to ideas about what constitutes acceptable relationship behaviour. DVAC has created this program because it understands that young people are an incredible force in helping to change social norms that can lead to the elimination of domestic and sexual abuse in our society. DVAC is also well aware that many young people live with domestic and family violence and sexual abuse themselves but do not know who to turn to for help or where to find information on how they can help stop the cycle of abuse.

Research done in recent years also shows that many young people still hold unhealthy attitudes towards relationships and women and that they also lack knowledge and clarity on what constitutes domestic violence and sexual abuse. For instance, research has found that one in three young people do not think controlling someone is a form of violence, one in four young people think it is normal for guys to pressure girls into sex and one in four young people do not think it is serious when guys insult or verbally harass girls on the street. These figures are very worrying in light of the rising number of domestic violence protection orders we are seeing in Queensland and the increase in calls by women to DVConnect, not to mention the unacceptably high number of women tragically killed at the hands of their partners each year in Australia.

Ipswich itself has seen a worrying rise in DVO applications, DVO breaches and strangulation offences over the past five years. There is obviously still a lot of work to be done when it comes to shifting cultural attitudes of violence towards women, so I am grateful for DVAC's *Being Heard* program for reaching out to young people and enforcing the *Not now, not ever* message. *Being Heard* is a semester-long domestic and sexual violence program that reaches over 2,000 students in years 10, 11 and 12 in local high schools in Ipswich and surrounds. Through lessons, workshops and activities, students learn and reflect on how they perceive domestic violence and sexual abuse.


The success of its pilot program in 2017 has allowed the program to branch out to a larger number of schools in 2018, effectively doubling the number of students the program is reaching out to. Some 249 students this year also took up DVAC's intensive domestic and sexual violence education workshops held weekly over two terms and 61 students participated in a student devised production of *Being Heard* which they performed in July this year at the Ipswich Civic Centre. I have to acknowledge the extraordinary work of Sinead Cunningham, a former high school drama teacher who now works for DVAC and who really was the driving force behind this production. She is quite an extraordinary woman.

Minister Di Farmer and I had the great pleasure in attending the *Being Heard* production in July and it was wonderful to see students from various schools in Ipswich and surrounding regions unite on stage to showcase their stories reflecting on their own experience of domestic and sexual violence. Through education, activities, workshops and performance, the message is getting across to young people that domestic and sexual violence is not acceptable and should never be tolerated. I am very proud to be a member of the Palaszczuk government which has put this issue first and foremost in its first term and into our second term.

Indeed, DVAC surveyed the students who participated in the program and found that *Being Heard* is definitely having a successful outcome in terms of increasing students' overall knowledge about domestic and sexual violence. Students are increasing their understanding about what constitutes domestic and sexual violence and they are increasing their knowledge on what to do if they or a friend or family member ever found themselves in a violent relationship.

When the program finished in July, 83 per cent of students said that they now felt very knowledgeable and informed about domestic and sexual violence compared with 17 per cent at the beginning who said they only had some knowledge. No students at all came out of the program saying they had very little or no knowledge at all. For a semester-long program, this is a remarkable turnaround. It is important then that this program continues each year so that the message of zero tolerance for domestic and sexual violence can be firmly established in the hearts and minds of young people. That way, our young people can be the cultural change we need to eliminate domestic and sexual violence from our society.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Young Workers Hub

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.25 pm): Today we saw another bungle by the education minister—not only a bungle but also a cover-up. In July this year the education minister with the Premier said that the state Labor government had no intention at all to implement the Queensland Council of Unions Young Workers Hub—no intention. In fact, do members remember the press conference where she got so angry because the journalist had the hide to ask her about it? She stormed off after saying that she was not going to guarantee anything about this program but at the time made representations to the people of Queensland that the government knew nothing about this. It was all news to the minister, although in the afternoon she had put out three separate press releases endorsing the program, retracting from the endorsement and then semiendorsing some elements of the program. We had three different positions by the education minister in one afternoon on this union program.

Of course the education minister in the state of Queensland—this education minister—is going to support a program by the Queensland Council of Unions considering she is a former union heavyweight of the Queensland Council of Unions. It is no surprise. What was a surprise was when the education minister said she had no knowledge of this program. She said that no proposal had been put forward to the government. Not only that, on 19 July the Premier said that no proposal had been put forward to the government. As was revealed today on the ABC early in the morning, that was not the truth. It was a complete fabrication in July when the Premier and the education minister said it. Not only did the government know about the Young Workers Hub union program; it helped draft it. A senior policy adviser in the office of the education minister was consulting with the Young Workers Hub at the QCU on how to make the program better, and the minister says that she does not know anything about it!

The response—this is how those opposite treat the media and the Queensland public with such arrogance—the minister's office gave last night to the ABC journalist was that this was a junior staff member quite a long way from the minister. What are we talking—hallways and corridors? It is a senior policy adviser. If it was the Minister for State Development, I would understand that because he keeps his staff as far away as possible from him in his ivory tower. The senior policy adviser goes by the name of Giau Nguyen. This is one under the chief of staff. When the chief of staff is on holidays, the senior policy adviser acts up in the chief of staff's position. The education minister tells the media today, 'It was just a junior person. They were probably out on a limb, probably doing their own thing.' Come on! Queenslanders did not come down in the last shower. We know the minister is misleading Queenslanders. There is a whole page of emails where the minister's office is going back and forward with the Queensland Council of Unions suggesting changes to the presentation of 'Your Rights'. It even says here—

When you get to the union slide, the wording 'join a union' might come across as subtle messaging

That is not from the Queensland Council of Unions; that is from the senior policy adviser to the education minister.

The education minister would have Queenslanders believe that she knew nothing about the program. As I have said, the Premier says, 'I see nothing, I do nothing, I know nothing, I hear nothing.' This issue takes that to another level. In fact, only a few hours ago during question time, despite the fact that the Premier still says that no proposal was put forward to the government, she said that the education minister did not tell her that they had received a proposal. The Premier does not correct the record. She stays to the excuse that she gave in July this year.

The reality is that this was a proposal. If a union is corresponding directly with the senior policy adviser of a minister's office, we cannot say that that is not a proposal. Whether the members opposite like it or not, it is a proposal. The emails, which I tabled earlier today, state, 'Once you've had a look at this, let us know your suggestions. We'll change it and then get us a meeting with the department.' That is what happens when a proposal is put to the government. There is then a meeting with the minister, then with the department and then it is implemented. That is the process and that is exactly what has happened.

The government, in its arrogance of hiding behind the misleading statements that both the Premier and the education minister gave, is trying to fool the people of Queensland. Queenslanders will not be fooled. This is a union proposal that is supported by a union education minister.

(Time expired)

Thuringowa Electorate, Road Infrastructure



Mr HARPER (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.30 pm): I am pleased to report to the House that one of the most significant pieces of infrastructure in Thuringowa, which has taken nearly two years to complete, is now open to the public. Fellow members, I am talking, of course, about the infamous Riverway Drive stage 1 duplication. It took a committed and hardworking Labor MP to firstly get the funding—after I was elected in 2015—and then get this thing built.

For just a moment, let me put this \$35 million project into perspective. This project was promised in 2014 by the then LNP member, Sam Cox, who even went to the trouble of installing a big billboard with the word 'delivered' on it. I can show the former member what the word 'delivered' means. His proposal was that the LNP would build the road if the public re-elected the LNP and if the public agreed to flog off the port. Of course, that did not happen. The people of Townsville could see right through that. They got rid of him after one term. They saw through his deceiving ways of, 'I'll promise you this if you deliver that.' The good people of Thuringowa put me in—a really committed local—to get the job done and they did that again in 2017. The former member took his bat and ball and went to stand as a One Nation candidate in the Burdekin electorate, where he lost again.

I am very proud to say that, on the back of delivering the \$7.2 million Hervey Range Road upgrade in 2015—my first road project—which was delivered under Labor, in 2016 the planning phase of the Riverway Drive duplication project was started by Labor and is in its practical completion phase. People are driving on it. Again, that project was delivered by a Labor government that knows how to get the job done.


Under our buy local procurement plan, a Townsville company, BMD Constructions, which has been operating in the city for 25 years, has done a stellar job. It got this challenging job done and did so by employing 120 locals. I say 'challenging' because Townsville's main water pipeline from the Ross River Dam sits underneath that road and we all know how important water is to Townsville. This project is another Labor success story. The old pipeline under Riverway Drive was also built 30 years ago by the then Thuringowa city council. It was through careful engineering that BMD Constructions was able to complete this project. Over those 30 years, the suburbs of Condon, Kelso and Rasmussen, which is where I live, have grown in population to over 25,000 people and every day 20,000 cars travel along Riverway Drive. This duplication means so much. Daily, locals would sit in their cars on a single-lane road trying to get to work, or trying to get their kids to school.

This project has become a catalyst for development proposals by Geon Property and East Coast Invest. I love this. Between them they have submitted to the Townsville City Council nearly \$100 million worth of development applications for two major shopping centres—one an upgrade to an existing shopping site and one new site. These DAs are now both subject to council approval. As a local MP, I can tell members how much I appreciate the level of investment displayed by both of those groups. I thank the owner of the existing centre, Charlie Manolis, and Ben Griffin from Geon Property for their vision in applying for this \$40 million major upgrade off the back of these roadworks to the existing Riverway shopping precinct. I also extend my appreciation to Matt Southwell from East Coast Invest for his \$55 million development application to the Townsville City Council.

Should those projects be approved, they will support hundreds of jobs in construction and retail and hospitality. To my mind, that is a massive investment and truly cements the saying, 'Build it and they will come'. In terms of jobs in the future, stage 1 of the Riverway Drive duplication has truly paid off. I look forward to seeing the results of those development applications.

I secured the money for the Riverway Drive duplication project from the Deputy Premier through the State Infrastructure Fund. I have told her and the Premier that I will be back, because I want us to deliver Riverway Drive stage 2 before I finish in this role. There is another four kilometres or five kilometres of duplication to go, but I think the people around the area of the road have roadworks fatigue. We will give them a break and start on the Townsville Ring Road stage 5, which is a \$36 million funding commitment that I received in this year's state budget. We are waiting on the federal government to stump up. So far there has been silence. In terms of partnering on the construction of that last piece of the Townsville Ring Road, we have heard nothing. This is a Labor delivered job. We need the federal government to get on board. I ask the federal government to come on board and get the job done for Townsville.

Rural Fire Brigades

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.35 pm): As shadow minister for fire, emergency services and volunteers, it is my pleasure and a privilege to join in the Yellow Ribbon Day celebrations to honour Queensland's more than 36,000 rural fire brigade volunteers. Our rural fireys play an invaluable role in protecting and serving Queensland's rural and regional communities, such as Blackall, Longreach, Boulia, Emerald and Blackwater, which I represent in the vast outback electorate of Gregory. With more than 1.7 million square kilometres to manage right across Queensland, through their commitment and professionalism, our rural fireys keep us safe. Our rural fire brigade volunteers are out there fighting the good fight and focused on protecting rural Queensland, which represents 93 per cent of the state's land area. That is a big job in anyone's language and they deserve all the support we can provide them.

Yet while Queenslanders are preparing their homes and businesses in case of fire, the Labor government has failed to take the necessary steps to protect Queenslanders from bushfires. The Labor government has shown that, while it is happy to don the yellow ribbons to support our rural fireys, when it comes to keeping Queensland safe, it is not willing to implement the policies that support them. This government's failure to fully action and implement the Auditor-General's 2015 report and recommendations to keep Queenslanders safe from bushfires is putting Queensland communities at risk. Of the seven sensible recommendations, which were accepted fully by the government, not one has been fully implemented, putting Queenslanders' lives at risk—for more than three years.

Queenslanders know better than most that bushfires are terrifying and devastating events. We also know that bushfire impacts can be mitigated and managed through responsible and proactive planning, including back-burning. Put simply, it is easier to light a fire than it is to put one out. Why is the Labor government not taking basic precautions to protect us from bushfires, especially as we head into an even drier than normal season with an increased fire risk? The simple answer is the radical Greens and environmentalists within the Labor government are putting trees ahead of protecting human life. Under their influence, when it comes to preventing and mitigating bushfires in this state, the Labor Party is putting ideology before human life. Any rural firey will tell us that it is much easier and safer to fight a fire in an area that has been back-burned.


How can this government expect our rural fireys to do their job when it has failed to take the necessary steps to mitigate against bushfires? How can this Labor government stand by the fact that 47 per cent of this state is without an evacuation plan? How can this Labor government stand by the fact that 37 per cent of Queenslanders are unaware of the fire warning scheme and that schoolchildren in high-risk areas are not being provided with the appropriate support to prepare for bushfires? How can the minister not be concerned about his department putting Queenslanders at risk?

In 2015, the former LNP government committed to implementing the Auditor-General's recommendations, but here we are in 2018 and we are yet to see any of the recommendations fully implemented. I do not understand why the Labor government has not taken the basic and necessary safety precautions to ensure the safety of Queenslanders. It is extremely concerning that the Labor government has not taken those precautions.

Queenslanders have been quite rightly outraged at the Labor government for dropping the ball when it comes to ensuring their safety from bushfires. Despite this government's failure to get real and serious about delivering bushfire safety for Queensland, our rural fireys continue to put in the hard yards and quite rightly should be celebrated on Yellow Ribbon Day. The courage, the selflessness, the skills and the local knowledge that these volunteers bring to the difficult and often dangerous work they undertake deserves the admiration of every Queenslanders. I believe each and every volunteer firey deserves to be honoured and I am pleased to see Yellow Ribbon Day providing that public recognition. I grew up seeing my father in the rural fire brigade and I think I understand how vital these volunteers are. They are the backbone of these communities. It is the very fact that they are local volunteers that allows them to be agile and responsive to local needs.

Our rural fire brigades are not just about fighting bushfires. In my electorate the Bluff Rural Fire Brigade not only serves a large area of rural land but also takes on partial urban responsibilities. There are brigades such as Blackwater, whose dedicated members are often our first responders when it comes to accidents on our major highway knowing they may possibly face dangerous chemicals and fuel spills, fire and even human fatality. There are brigades such as the Anakie Rural Fire Brigade, which has the unique challenge of combining traditional bush brigade responsibilities with keeping the residents in the gemfields safe. I make special mention of the network of 2,600 rural fire wardens who bring to the Queensland's service extensive local knowledge and take on added responsibility.

Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Project

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.40 pm): It was exciting news that broke last week about a contract signed for the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Project by Singapore-Taiwanese company Wei Chao. This is another positive step forward in the revitalisation of Great Keppel Island and a huge boost of confidence to the entire Central Queensland region. While we still have to do our due diligence on Wei Chao, it just goes to show our decision to invest in the Great Barrier Reef islands is the right one.

Last week I met with the investors, Isabella Wei, her husband CK and business partner Candy, alongside Mayor Bill Ludwig, Knight Frank's Pat O'Driscoll and Capricorn Enterprise CEO Mary Carroll. I take this opportunity to thank and congratulate Mayor Ludwig, Pat O'Driscoll and Mary Carroll for their tireless efforts to make this deal a reality. It is true to say that Isabella, CK and their business partner Candy are passionate to grow tourism on Great Keppel Island. They told me that they want to work with the traditional owners, the existing businesses on the island and the entire community to develop the island in a way that we can all be proud of.

The first stage of the project will be to develop key infrastructure, including a marina, airstrip and services infrastructure together with a beachfront resort. Ms Wei said she could not wait to unlock Great Keppel Island's potential. Isabella grew up in Australia and said she fell in love with the island when she visited it—as we all do. I am also pleased that Ms Wei has confirmed that the major contractor will be an Australian company and, where possible, all subcontractors working on the project will be local too which will boost our local economy and grow jobs. I am also pleased that they want to help local jobseekers into work on the project and the company plans to work with the existing businesses on the island to help them expand.

The announcement has already buoyed locals and is beginning to drive confidence in our region. On the very same day as the announcement, businesses in my electorate told me about the positive reaction they have experienced. Real estate agents tell me they have already seen an increase in sales enquiries. Carli at Two Sisters Coffee Bar at Cooe Bay said the good news just seems to keep on coming for our region at the moment. Similarly, Wendy at local children's boutique Crooked Cubby said that the news is awesome for the region and Geoff Mercer from Great Keppel Island Hideaway said for the first time in 10 years he is optimistic about the island's future.

Great Keppel Island is the jewel in the crown of our region and the Palaszczuk government is proud to be investing \$25 million into the supply of power and water to the island in order to grow tourism and jobs across the entire Central Queensland community. I committed to this funding at the 2017 state election and the Palaszczuk government is delivering on that commitment. We know that investing in infrastructure drives economic development. Investing in infrastructure facilitates investment, increases accessibility to markets and helps attract and retain workers. It is a fundamental driver of productivity and growth.

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, like the Great Keppel Island Revitalisation Project. It is great to see business owners from Great Keppel Island in the *Morning Bulletin* recently describing the investment by our government as 'fantastic' and 'essential'. Shane Bonney from GKI's Tropical Vibes said to the *Morning Bulletin*, 'For this island to go ahead, we need power and water. I'm all for it.' I table a copy of the newspaper article for the information of the House.


Tabled paper: Article from the *Morning Bulletin* online, dated 6 September 2018, titled 'GKI business owners share perspectives on power and water' [[1643](#)].

The Palaszczuk government is 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 \$25 million on the table for the Great Keppel Island infrastructure project, together with the opportunity for a slice of the \$36 million Growing Tourism Infrastructure Fund. In Central Queensland the Queensland Labor government has been a driving force in developing tourism infrastructure and our investment is starting to pay dividends. The future is looking brighter and brighter for Great Keppel Island.

Together with the state government investing in infrastructure, the Wei Chao group's investment and passion to develop a new tourism offering and also to work together with local businesses and the traditional owners, we can develop something that we are all so proud of. I have offered my support to the Wei Chao group because I know the community wants to see something happen on Great Keppel

Island. We want a whole new generation of tourists to fall in love with our beautiful island situated only 12 kilometres off the Capricorn coast, a half an hour journey by ferry, with 17 beautiful white sandy beaches, clear blue water, snorkelling, reef fishing—I caught the biggest Spanish mackerel of my life just off the beach of Great Keppel Island. It is just an amazing place to visit. I look forward to the project progressing to construction and to working with Isabella, CK and Candy, together with traditional owners and island business owners, to continue to grow tourism on Great Keppel Island.

Hinchinbrook Electorate

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (2.45 pm): I rise to shine a light on a topic that is on everyone's mind in Hinchinbrook. We need jobs and ways to retain our youth in the north. We need jobs and we need them now. How do we achieve this? We need government to work with new businesses and for ideas to come to fruition. We need investors who want to work with our community to unleash the sleeping giant that is the north. For far too long I have seen missed opportunities in the north. Too many good ideas have gone by the wayside.

Before I entered this House I cut my teeth in business. I entered the tourism industry with a new tourism venture. I learnt how to run a business and I eventually sold my business. In this time I dealt with every conundrum I could think of in the tourism industry. The most difficult battles were during the start-up phase—the endless amount of green and red tape when applying for permits to operate would have pushed most entrepreneurs away from the idea. As Hinchinbrook moves into a new era the time is right for locals and government to unlock the potential tourism goldmine which is the Hinchinbrook way.

Since I took on the impossible task of being a candidate for Hinchinbrook I have been an advocate for new and exciting ways to attract people to stay, play and spend in our region. As the member for Hinchinbrook I see my new challenge to ignite ecotourism in our region. This is a sleeping giant and I am proud to be getting behind the state government's plan to help see these ideas come to life. For tourism to work in our region we need critical mass. Visitation needs to be dramatically increased to ensure the industry builds.


One of the greatest natural assets that we have is Hinchinbrook Island and I am excited to be sharing this beautiful national park with the world. The Thorsborne Trail will be the centrepiece that will invite guests to enjoy this natural wonder. In the coming months we hope to attract the right proponent who will be willing to take on the commercial operation of this new ecotourism product that will be supported by the necessary infrastructure to provide glamping style accommodation with long and short-term stay activities. Tasmania has successfully led the way in developing clean, green, low-impact tourism ventures that are conducted in national parks and it is now Queensland's turn to have a go. As they say, watch this space.

Crime is rampant in our streets. Every afternoon good, hardworking people, taxpayers who fund this parliament, are packing up their job sites, places of work and for some their businesses for the day. They tidy up and lock up, close the tills and activate their alarms in a bid to save themselves from the criminals that lurk in the dark of night. As home owners wash up and lock up their homes of an evening, they hide their car keys and their wallets in a safe spot in a bid to protect themselves against what lurks in the night and what might come. Every morning I wake up wondering what devastation happened last night—is my car still out the front and who will call me today to tell me their business has been broken into.

I am standing here to put the government on notice that the people of Hinchinbrook do not care how it fixes this property crime problem; just fix it now. Build a new prison, legislate for harsher penalties and take away the rights of the people who keep taking away the rights of the good taxpayers of this state. When the government took away people's rights to protect their own property with force and to retaliate against perpetrators, it took on the responsibility of protecting those people. Our police force is doing all they can with the tools they have, but they need more.

Why are the offenders out on bail? Why are they getting a slap on the wrist? Why are they reoffending? Those questions are asked of me daily. I am aware that, as legislators, we have the powers to make the changes that are required to stop this. It is time to change policy and it is time to change the lives of the people who depend on us the most—that is, the people who pay our salaries and put us in here to represent them. Every Queenslanders has a right to feel safe in their own homes. It is time to put a stop to the break-ins or the reality is that the people will ultimately put a stop to this governance.

Mackay Electorate, Regional Skills Investment Strategy

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.50 pm): The Mackay regional unemployment rate is the lowest in the state, thanks to the Queensland Palaszczuk government's great economic development and management. Mackay needs skilled workers. I am very proud of the work of the Minister for Training and Skills Development. She has listened to our needs and has chosen Mackay to announce the state government's \$2.8 million investment in the Regional Skills Investment Strategy. The strategy will develop skills training opportunities in eight areas.

Avril Curtis is working with the Mackay Regional Council and employers who are looking for skilled workers now and into the future. Mackay is one of the first regions to receive this funding. Representatives from target industries such as mining, engineering, agriculture and community health care will determine our skills priorities. The Regional Skills Investment Strategy funding of \$350,000 into the Mackay region will enhance promotion and engagement activities. It will also assist with the implementation of local training solutions that are identified as part of the project through the government's annual VET investment plan.

The Mackay engineering sector is under pressure to find enough tradespeople. Boilermakers, electricians, fitters and turners are all in demand. A lot has been said about the automation of the mining industry, which has scared some young people away from a trades career. When one industry starts to grow, it puts another regional industry under pressure as they compete for the same pool of workers. For our sugar mills, this happens every year when the mining services industry is on the rise. The continued economic development of the Mackay region is dependent on having a supply of skilled workers. Avril will help coordinate local jobseekers, businesses, employers and other stakeholders to ensure that our region has access to quality training opportunities for the industries that need more skilled workers now. She will also help industry to connect with already suitably skilled workers.

Horticulture trainees Britney Cock and Meg Hayes are just two of the workers employed under Avril's program. They are both studying for certificates in horticulture. Britney believes that her horticulture certificate will have a positive impact on her career into the future. Meg is pleased that she is able to upskill in an industry that she believes in. That is important for all workers and they should take advantage of opportunities to stay relevant as demands change, especially as new equipment is developed. As automation and artificial intelligence move into different employment sectors, she is confident that upskilling will move workers into new pathways of employment.

In a few short weeks, we will see the graduation of our senior class of 2018 from high schools across the state. The students will have their first career opportunities waiting for them after their end-of-year celebrations. To ensure our young people have opportunities to continue their education and training, we are offering free TAFE courses. Our local employers are keen to tap into the potential of the pool of skilled workers. Some have already offered placements for apprentices and trainees. The Labor Palaszczuk government is again offering free TAFE for all year 12 graduates for the first calendar year after graduation. CQUniversity delivers TAFE in Central Queensland. It has courses for apprentices and trainees in a range of traditional trades including carpentry, bricklaying and plumbing, as well as certificate programs in automotive, horticulture, hospitality and community service—all preparing year 12 graduates for jobs of the future. Currently, CQU is running 30 free courses for our 2017 graduates.

At the Mackay Engineering College, I was able to speak to some of our students doing certificates in trade related industries while at school. Pioneer State High School students completing VET courses at the college are ready to take up traineeships and apprenticeships. Jayden Quinn has already secured an apprenticeship in the Navy. Stephanie Honan is looking forward to doing civil engineering. Malakai Togo and Turan Brennan are keen to continue developing the skills they gained in the VET sector while at school, in order to get a trade. Already, 40 per cent of the students attending the Mackay Trade Training Centre have secured apprenticeships for next year.


(Time expired)

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 2805, on motion of Dr Miles—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.56 pm): In my electorate, in the local media a lot has been said about the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018, which is before the House. I have received many form

letters and also many heartfelt letters penned by constituents telling of their personal stories, both for and against legalising abortion in Queensland. I thank the community for their participation in the debate. This is what democracy is all about.

Any termination of a pregnancy is a sad and traumatic decision for the woman and her family. I do not believe that any woman who has had a termination or will seek a termination in the future should have held over her the threat of possible prosecution. For this reason, abortion needs to be removed from the Criminal Code. I believe that women and medical practitioners have the moral and ethical capacity to make the correct decision about reproductive health. A woman, her partner, her doctor and, if she has faith, her god should be the only ones present at the consultation; there should be no room for a police officer.

I have listened to and read information from a wide range of people in the community such as Therese from the Mackay Women's Health Centre and Dorris, Jean, Jan, Carmel, Mary Anne, Therese, Angela and Coline from the CWL. I thank them for their thoughts and prayers. Letters, emails and phone calls were well organised from the Cherish Life group. A frank and honest meeting was held with Bishop Mike and Father Don. I thank all those I met for their honesty. All options are to be heard.

When I vote, it will be for the women who have had terminations and told their stories. Dianne was raped at 21 and still carries the emotional scars, 30 years later. Nicola was coerced into a termination by her partner only to find out that the real reason was that he did not want his mates to know about the pregnancy. Wendy's much wanted baby's little body and development let it down right from the beginning. Wendy was told that the medical term was that life was not compatible outside the uterus.


Forty years earlier, Louise's baby had the same diagnosis as Wendy's baby. Louise told me that she was told that it was her moral duty to carry her child to full term, even though it was not going to survive. She said that that was the cruellest thing that had ever happened to her and for her and her husband to have to endure. She already had three small children who needed her care. She wanted to be able to give birth to her child, grieve for the baby and take on the care of her little ones, who really needed her. It was a difficult time for her. She said as she went out day after day those who were well meaning would inquire about her pregnancy: 'When is your due date?' 'What are you hoping for?' There was all of the excitement that one would normally have around a birth, but she knew that she would not end up with a baby.

In a perfect world all pregnancies would be without medical issues or personal tragedies. Voting against this bill will not put an end to terminations. The estimated 10,000 to 14,000 terminations in Queensland will continue. This bill will put protections and guidelines in place for women and practitioners.

As a community we must ensure that there is a supportive environment in which to raise a child and we all have a responsibility as a member of the collective village to raise the child. Governments must also have policies and legislation to support children to have a safe upbringing and to allow them to participate fully in society.

I was talking recently to Christine who is frantically trying to find a full-time job. Her son turns eight shortly and her support for him will be cut. She has only been able to find short-term casual work. There should not be a cut-off point for a child. When a child is precious and wanted we should support them until they grow up. There should be no policies that limit the number of years that a family can stay in public housing.

Women who choose to go ahead with their pregnancies are brave so they deserve our support. There are opportunities for everyone in our community to support the raising of children, such as becoming a foster carer, even if it is for short-term respite; donating and volunteering to women's groups that are keeping women and children safe in their own homes; standing up to domestic violence; and ensuring that our children understand what a respectful relationship is so that little girls can demand a respectful relationship and boys understand what one looks like. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (3.01 pm): I rise today to speak to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. At the outset let me say that in my view the current legislation governing the termination of pregnancy in Queensland requires reform. However, in my opinion the bill before the House is not the solution.

I recognise that this issue is an emotive one for many in our community and I, like others in this House, have been inundated with representations from constituents who felt compelled to make their views known to me in relation to this issue. The overwhelming amount of correspondence that I have received has been in opposition to this bill. I acknowledge that many in the community believe that

abortion should be decriminalised. However, it is also clear that the majority of residents in my electorate have reservations with respect to how this bill deals with the issue of late-term abortion. In my opinion, abortion should only be performed by a medical professional and only for medical reasons. While I am receptive to some of the arguments addressed by this bill, I cannot support the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 because, when viewed as a whole, the bill does not adequately address my concerns.

Specifically, I am concerned with the manner in which the bill addresses termination of pregnancies post 22 weeks and the fact that a pregnancy can be terminated for any reason up until 22 weeks gestation. While the Queensland Law Reform Commission report provides some context as to the reason that the 22-week time frame was used, I do not believe the report and the subsequent bill adequately considers this aspect. In arriving at the 22-week threshold, the Queensland Law Reform Commission rely on a number of studies, including studies from 2004 and 2005.

It is clear that medical intervention is required for a premature baby to survive at 22 weeks. However, logically as medical technology and techniques improve we would expect to see an increase in the number of babies who are able to survive at or before 22 weeks gestation. I note a study published in 2015 looked at more than 5,000 babies born before 27 weeks gestation and found that babies of 22 weeks gestation had a nearly 25 per cent survival rate with treatment. If a baby has the capacity to survive at 22 weeks, I cannot accept that such a baby should be aborted without a sound medical reason.

I have considerable concerns about provisions within the bill for termination post 22 weeks due to social circumstances. The bill does not adequately clarify what social circumstances would meet the requirement and provides scope for termination on demand to extend beyond 22 weeks gestation. I am concerned that the legislation does not adequately consider the welfare of the foetus and instead focuses exclusively on the welfare of the mother. Under existing Queensland legislation, foetal abnormality does not constitute grounds for termination of pregnancy unless the mental or physical welfare of the mother is impacted. This is unacceptable and any reform of abortion legislation needs to consider the best interests of the foetus in addition to those of the mother.

I note the Queensland Law Reform Commission report addresses the issue of the moral status of a foetus. I believe that any legislation should consider the rights and welfare of the foetus. In many respects such a judgement is already implicit in this bill whereby a distinction is drawn in relation to what grounds a foetus may be terminated depending on the stage of gestation.

My view in this regard is not based on a religious belief. Rather I believe we must consider the fact that as a foetus develops it increasingly takes on the capabilities of a person. Given that a child is regarded as having the right to life, surely there must be a point at which a foetus that would otherwise be viable outside the womb should also be considered to have rights.

There is a lack of medical consensus on the point at which a foetus is able to feel pain. Some studies conclude that a foetus can experience pain from at least 20 weeks after conception while other studies consider the neural pathway is not developed until later in pregnancy. My view is that we should take a conservative approach and hence I believe that the use of the 22-week threshold in this legislation is flawed.

To that end, it is appropriate that I address the amendments circulated by you, Mr Deputy Speaker McArdle, which would amend the 22-week threshold to 16 weeks and which removes the social circumstances as a reason for termination post that period. While on face value such amendments may be considered to assuage some of the issues I have with the bill, I am concerned with the second order effects any changes to the drafting of this bill may have on the bill as a whole.


I would now like to address the issue of safe access zones. I abhor the idea of women being harassed while seeking medical assistance, particularly when seeking assistance for a matter as significant as the termination of a pregnancy. I am aware of instances in Queensland where a 15-year-old girl, who had been raped by her own father, was harassed by protestors and told she would go to hell for seeking an abortion. Surely no-one in this parliament or elsewhere within Queensland thinks that that is acceptable.

It is for this reason that my initial inclination was to support the provisions within this bill to allow the establishment of safe access zones. I will not however be supporting those provisions in this bill in that regard because of the serious questions raised by Maurice Blackburn and Professor Aroney in relation to the constitutional validity and application of the proposed provisions.

Before I conclude I would like to address the manner in which some members from both sides of this House have sought to use this issue for their own political interests. While I do not doubt the sincerity of those members' views on this emotive issue, seeking to politicise the issue of abortion law reform through question time rants, opinion pieces in the *Courier-Mail* or Twitter tirades does not do the issue justice.

Similarly, the approach taken by the government members of the parliamentary health committee in seeking to direct a conscience vote demonstrates that this bill has been used as a political tool by some of those opposite. It is difficult to reconcile such an approach if the government and the proponents of this bill truly wanted to engage in good faith with all members of the House.

I cannot in good conscience support a bill that does not reflect the views of my community and does not adequately address my concerns in relation to the welfare of a foetus. I recognise that abortion is sometimes required for medical reasons and I support its removal from the Criminal Code in that context. I implore those opposite to cease using abortion as a political wedge to divide Queenslanders and instead work respectfully and in good faith to remediate the genuine concerns that exist for the good of all Queenslanders.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.09 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I would like to acknowledge the work of the current Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, the Queensland Law Reform Commission, the Attorney-General and the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. I would also like to thank the very high number of people in our community who have an interest in this issue and who have taken the time to engage in the various consultative processes.

In my electorate, just as it is across the entirety of our community, there are very deeply held views on abortion. As a member of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, I spent nearly a year working with other members including your, Mr Deputy Speaker McArdle, as we considered the private member's bill put forward by the former member for Cairns. I want to particularly acknowledge the members of that committee and our parliamentary support staff. It was a very challenging time, but the level of genuine inquiry, impartiality and support was greatly appreciated. No doubt the committee held widely differing views but the inquiries were handled sensitively and respectfully.

I want to place on record that in my experience the interactions I have had with members of parliament have been respectful. Regardless of the views of other members, I have felt in all interactions that other members were simply providing me with the support and the space to form my own views on this very difficult issue while probing my thoughts and understanding as well as challenging my thinking on certain aspects of this issue.

My views on this matter were not well formed or informed when I started the committee process. My views changed on a number of aspects of this issue during that 12-month period and have changed since that time. I have worked hard to converse respectfully with people in my community about this issue and I sincerely thank all of those people who have given me the opportunity to discuss this issue, and I apologise to those who I have not had the opportunity to speak to personally.

Based on these discussions with my community, it would seem to me that the majority of people would hold the following to be true. They believe women should have the right to make decisions about reproduction. They believe that if a woman chooses to terminate a pregnancy she should have access to safe health services and professionals. They believe that, as a pregnancy progresses, the rights of the foetus should be given more consideration. They believe that the government should be doing more to support women and all people when they are making decisions about reproduction. They believe that the government should be doing more to reduce the number of terminations being performed without impinging on the rights of an individual to make reproductive choices. They believe that healthcare professionals should not be forced to ignore their conscience and perform procedures that go against their moral values.

We currently use a combination of the Criminal Code and common law decisions to regulate termination in this state. The community clearly would not tolerate criminal convictions of women seeking abortions or health professionals providing them. While some may receive comfort from the fact that abortion sits in the Criminal Code as it sends a societal message about the view of society at large to abortion supposedly, from a practical perspective this regulatory approach serves no purpose in preventing or reducing the number of abortions being performed in this state. What it has done is create great uncertainty in the minds of health professionals and in the broader community about the lawfulness of termination. What it has done is impede the capacity of health professionals to offer a full range of sexual health services to women. This falls particularly hard on women from regional and

remote areas; women who are Indigenous; women who speak English as a second language or not at all; women affected by domestic violence; teenagers; women affected by mental illness; women who are disabled, particularly intellectually disabled; and women who are impoverished.

It is my view as a clinician, based on evidence received during the hearings, that if we regulate abortion in a different way it will be possible to work towards reducing the number of terminations occurring in this state. I do not hold clinical experience in this area, but I do know that formulating a strategy to ensure that all women have access to a full range of sexual health services is possible and should be done. I know that it is possible to use the principles of public health to formulate a plan to reduce the number of terminations. This must initially involve the collection of accurate statistics—something that is not currently done to assist in formulating a plan. A plan might involve relationship and sexuality education. It might involve provision of contraception, particularly long acting contraception. It might involve better training for health practitioners to support women who are making decisions about reproduction. It might involve many other things, but I would leave that to the experts. I have raised these issues with the minister and will continue to pursue these issues regardless of the outcome of this debate.

Under our current regulatory framework, technically abortions can be performed at any point. There is no requirement for the involvement of two doctors and there are no specific arrangements in place for conscientious objection. Many of these issues are dealt with in policies, codes of ethics and regulatory arrangements which are often not primarily or specifically aimed at these matters. As such, there is often a lack of clarity or understanding about these matters. This legislation will succinctly legislate these issues in an appropriate and enforceable manner.

I am also extremely pleased that the bill ensures that only doctors and registered health professionals can perform or assist with terminations. Like many constituents in my electorate, I was concerned about terminations occurring at later stages of pregnancy. After reading many of the stories, talking to many women, families, doctors, midwives and nurses, I changed my view on this very difficult issue. I found no credible evidence of people getting to 20-plus weeks in a pregnancy and simply changing their mind. What I did find was a range of people dealing with very heartbreaking and tragic situations—people often trying to save a pregnancy, having to make extremely difficult decisions, decisions that I would never want to have to make. As a clinician, I felt it would be wrong not to provide these individuals with the option to terminate a pregnancy.

I do not personally believe that we require term limits. I believe that women and, if appropriate, their partners and their health professionals should be able to determine whether or not to continue a pregnancy. However, I accept the recommendation from the Queensland Law Reform Committee because it is based on good clinical evidence.


Finally, I wish to discuss fetuses that are diagnosed with congenital abnormalities like Down syndrome, spina bifida or even a cleft palate. Our capacity for in-utero diagnosis is improving constantly. Many constituents and some of my friends provided me with anecdotal evidence that would suggest there is a bias amongst healthcare professionals which is probably a reflection of a broader societal bias against people with disabilities.

I have spent a lot of time working and volunteering with adults with intellectual disabilities including many with Down syndrome. The impacts that Down syndrome can have on an individual are extremely varied. I have known people who are fully independent and have jobs, relationships, hobbies, and religious and political beliefs. I have worked with people who need high levels of care due to cognitive, physical and behavioural issues. I have also worked with many people without Down syndrome who could be described in both of these ways. It has been my experience that, with the right supports, every individual can lead a meaningful life. Again, I have raised my concerns with the health minister. I believe we need to do further research to determine if in fact a bias does exist and develop strategies to deal with that if it is true. We also need to ensure that women and, if appropriate, their partners are provided with good support and information when they are advised that a foetus has a congenital abnormality. Again, I will pursue this issue regardless of the outcome of this bill.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to thank you for the amendments that you have put forward and the manner in which that has been done. It has certainly given me much to consider and I will give them due consideration. Due to the recency of their tabling, I cannot comment on them in my speech, but I will take them into consideration.

I support this bill because it improves the way in which abortion is regulated in this state. It will provide the opportunity to improve access for all women across this state no matter what their situation to a full range of sexual health services. I will provide the capacity to work towards reducing the number of terminations. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Before calling the member for Nicklin, I want to acknowledge Bonny Barry, the member for Aspley in days gone by. Bonny, welcome back. It has not changed much.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (3.17 pm): I rise to speak against the Termination of Pregnancy Bill before the House. I want to begin by thanking the committee members and secretariat staff who worked on this bill. This was not your ordinary, everyday, run-of-the-mill process. Staff were required to read through thousands of submissions—some of them quite distressing, some of them abusive, some of them had the potential to cause trauma to staff. I understand that support was offered to staff and the secretariat concerned. I recognise their efforts and professionalism under difficult circumstances. This emotional issue has also seen our electorate staff required to read material which may have been distressing to them. I encourage all members to recognise that potential and to look after their people as I am sure they will.

It should be noted that we are not debating whether or not pregnancy termination should be legal in Queensland. Whatever members' opinions on this wideranging moral question are, they are not relevant as we currently have around 14,000 lawful terminations in Queensland each year. I have heard it said that if anyone is against the proposed bill then they are saying that abortion should be a criminal matter in the Criminal Code. This is a distraction by those wanting this bill passed, to categorise those who have issues with this bill itself and the reforms it seeks to introduce as crazy people who want to lock up women. Those comments and such like them are ridiculous hyperbole which takes the debate nowhere. We are not debating whether or not the laws around pregnancy termination need to be reformed. We are debating the actual proposed reforms that the government has brought to the House as to whether these particular laws are suitable for our community.

It is fair to say that this is a controversial, emotional and divisive bill. The government and opposition have both called for a respectful debate on this issue. Through the committee process and here during the parliamentary debate I continue to have that in mind as I offer my contribution here today. In my contribution what I will avoid is judging anyone who has a different view from me. I will not be categorising them into any convenient character traits to suit my argument but will be debating the bill before the House on the merits of the bill itself.

During the committee process we heard from young women devastated by pregnancy dreams crushed by serious foetal diagnoses often late in their pregnancies, some of whom made the difficult decision to terminate and others who went to full term. I am not here to second-guess the difficult decisions that families make in those similar situations. I have never been faced with that decision and I honestly do not know what I would do. Under the current law in Queensland, however, these women did have access to services. They made submissions around having more time to contemplate their position, sometimes feeling rushed due to gestational period rules and the extra safeguards for unborn children late in pregnancy, but the current bill before the House does not necessarily change much in this space. Indeed, evidence of clinical practice provided by various medical professionals suggest that these late-term pregnancy terminations are always dealt with carefully with extra consultation and are a specialist service provided under specialist care. This will continue regardless of these new laws.

There are various levels of objection in the medical community and the community at large to these laws. Some members of the community would prefer no abortion at all while others see a 22-week gestational limit by request as extreme. The whole debate, however, comes down to one simple point of view or question that we must as a community and a parliament ask ourselves, and that is: at what point does an unborn child have value worthy of protection? People's views of these proposed laws, and my own views on these laws, are informed by the individual's personal answer to this question or, in other words, by their conscience. The answer is clear for some and on a large spectrum for others. That is why a conscience vote is appropriate, and I support every member's right to answer this question for themselves.

The starting point along the spectrum of value we need to start with here is the 22-week mark proposed by these laws. These proposed new laws offer no protection and recognise no value in an unborn child up to 22 weeks gestation. To my conscience, this is not acceptable. I am not comfortable with 22 weeks. In fact, I am not comfortable with the day before that, or the day before that, or the day before that. I find it difficult to find a time that I am comfortable saying, 'At this point the unborn child does not have value worth protecting.' However, I am not being asked to come up with a gestational period I can vote on. I am being asked to vote on the bill before the House which is termination of pregnancy by request, no questions asked, up to 22 weeks.


The bill seeks to at least give some value to an unborn child post 22 weeks gestation by requiring consideration be given to a number of factors, so at that point the unborn child is at least provided some protection. How did we come up with 22 weeks? Generally, the reasons provided are that a baby is viable outside of the womb from that stage. I have never really been able to reconcile that argument in my mind whether or not a baby at that stage of life requires life-preserving conditions provided by the mother's womb or after birth requires oxygen and feeding after the process of birth. It seems to me to be just different requirements for life at different stages of life.

The law is an educator. It reflects our values as a society. Whether or not the current law in the Criminal Code and the current operation of those laws, relevant precedents and medical practice reflects current values of our society is certainly a debate worth having. My conscience tells me, however, that the reforms proposed here are not good reforms and that as a society we should at least have some indication in law that a child in the womb has a human value worthy of protection. I believe that 22 weeks gestation is a long way past the point at which consideration should be provided to the child in the womb. At least some form of protection needs to be provided in our legislative framework, whether that be in the Criminal Code or other statute.

I appreciate having a free, conscience informed vote on this bill. I can stand here and say, 'No, I will not participate in this. I will not vote in legislation that completely erodes any rights of the unborn child.' This same privilege, however, has not been afforded to medical practitioners, which is another issue I have with the bill. They can object to taking part but are then obliged to assist the patient concerned to ensure the procedure can occur by seeking out an alternative practitioner they believe will perform the procedure and refer them on. This, like several clauses in the bill before the House, is a step too far.

I want to finish by asking all members to contemplate that all of us in this House have been a baby in the womb at 22 weeks gestation. At that stage we had our brain, our eyes, nose, ears, hands and feet. Essentially, for all intents and purposes, apart from our geographical location, we were a functioning little human being. I want to ask members to consider at what point along that gestation period which everyone in this parliament has been through did we become a valuable life worthy of protection? At what point should consideration be given to our rights as a human being? And what message are we declaring in this parliament about the value we place on a baby in the womb?

What I do know is the message I want to declare for the parliamentary record. The member for Thuringowa and chairman of our committee said that this is an historic moment, and that is true. Indeed, it is. Let history record that I value a baby in the womb and believe they deserve some sort of legislative protection. I will be voting no to this bill.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (3.26 pm): I rise in this House today to speak to the importance of the potential historic change to the 1899 Criminal Code before us. This for many is a long-awaited change to archaic legislation that has for over 100 years criminalised the termination of pregnancy and a woman's right to choice over her own body. In recent weeks I have had many emails to my office from constituents on both sides of the debate, divergent and deeply personal views and many powerful conversations. The most powerful, though, has been a conversation with my own mum and I will talk more about that later.

For those in my electorate, firstly I want to thank everyone who has taken the time to share their views and their beliefs in a respectful manner. I understand the deeply held personal beliefs and the emotions stirred in this debate, and, again, this has come from both sides. I think that it has been, and will continue to be, important to lead by example in how we carry ourselves in this debate, and as we head back to our communities respectful communication is critical.

I do want to clear up some of the myths, though, which I have seen spread over the course of the debate in my community. This bill before us today has been before the experts in both law and medicine. This bill has their support. To be clear, from a medical and legal standpoint, experts have put their support behind this bill. For me, of the two biggest myths spread one was that legalising termination services was going to lead to more abortions. In fact, what we know from evidence in other Australian jurisdictions and internationally is that indicators are that the number of terminations is very unlikely to increase.

The second was that a woman would be able to choose to have a termination at any stage of pregnancy, including at full term. This, as we know and we have heard today, is simply not true if she is more than 22 weeks. Should a termination be required for a woman more than 22 weeks, the bill only permits it if at least two doctors agree that the termination is appropriate. In making a decision, the doctors must consider all relevant medical circumstances and the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances. Again, let us be honest about this: a woman terminating a

pregnancy after 22 weeks is not doing so because the pregnancy is unwanted; it is genuinely for much sadder and heartbreaking reasons. It is uncommon for a termination to be performed at this stage of pregnancy.

This bill before us states that the termination of pregnancy will be treated as a health issue and no longer will be a criminal matter. That is how it should be in a modern and educated society. No longer will there be uncertainty surrounding terminations of pregnancies in Queensland from a health and wellbeing standpoint for both women and the medical profession. Women will be able to safely access—and I reiterate the importance of safe access—the information and the help they need to make the right choice for them.

I want to reflect on the last 50 years of pregnancy terminations in the form of some stories shared with me and members of my community over the past weeks and months, both for and against. I am going to start in 2006 with the story of a young constituent. This story she shared was one of support for the bill. She had experienced a contraception failure at the age of 20. She knew she was not ready to be a mum and fortunately had full-time work and access to a GP who assisted her to access a termination. She felt relief back then and is still grateful today that she was able to access a termination. She has no regrets.

However, her experience on the day in terms of access was one of distress: strangers who believed it was their right to judge another, to be abusive before and after the procedure, people prepared to stoop as low as to spit on her—such poor behaviour on a day that was already very difficult. I am sure most would find behaviour like that unpleasant to say the least, but it has continued to be acceptable behaviour when it comes to access to termination. It speaks to the importance of the safe zones that have been proposed within this bill.


Stepping back a decade to 1996, this constituent emailed me only this weekend just passed. Today she still regrets the decision to have a termination and, in her words, has not been able to forgive herself. She does not support the bill. I am yet to meet and speak with her, but I hope to do so next week when I am back in my electorate. What I want to tell her is that she deserved better back then when making the decision and that my vote in support of this bill will ensure that going forward all women have access to the support and health care that is right for them.

My constituent deserved more back then: better access to advice and to be able to talk about her own circumstance with whomever she needed. Terminations legislated as a criminal activity impeded her access to quality health care and wellbeing advice. She should have been able to access the health care and advice she needed. As has been the experience for many women in Queensland and Australia seeking terminations, the conversation has been pushed underground to the realms where women were considered to be suffering from mental health conditions if they considered such a procedure. It is a matter that simply has not been spoken about. All women have the right to seek advice and health care that should come safely and with a considered approach and not the shame and stigma that others wish to impose.

Going back further from 1996 to 1976 my constituent, who is in the gallery with us today, has been at the coalface of the fight for better termination legislation in Queensland and she fully supports the bill. She wishes only that the law reflects the majority of community sentiment and, importantly, reflects the actual on-the-ground reality of terminations: the 14,000 that occur annually in Queensland today. In 1976 she had a termination as a 24-year-old. She faced an unwanted, unplanned pregnancy. For her there was no question of continuing the pregnancy. She was a student and she was involved in many things that precluded motherhood at the time. There were no clinics operating in Queensland. It was a year before the first Brisbane clinic opened in 1977, so she had to fly to Sydney to access the termination. What concerned her was that the law forbid her from accessing this simple, safe procedure in her home city.

Finally, I want to finish on the most personal story. It is deeply personal. It was over 50 years ago in 1963. It was my mum. My mum is allowing me to share this story for the first time today—it has never been shared before—in the hope that no woman will ever experience what she did and that we change this legislation. This legislation is as archaic today as it was back in 1963. My mum, then a young woman in her late teens, with a young man whom she went on to marry, my dad, had an unplanned pregnancy just like many of the other constituents I have talked about. At the time my mum and dad both knew they were not socially, emotionally or financially ready to be parents and that they had two choices: for mum to be sent away to the country or to access a termination. They decided to access the termination. In those days—as is still the case in many parts of Queensland—it was a backyard termination. It was just that. Without going into the details and the damage done, let me tell honourable members that my mum was very lucky to have escaped with her life.

For the many reasons I have outlined, I support a woman's right to safe access to health care and wellbeing, advice and services, those that every woman needs and deserves when they are pregnant. I support a woman's right to privacy, to dignity and to choice regarding her own body. I support changing laws that are as outdated today as they were 50 years ago. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.34 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I address this House today not only as a member of the Queensland parliament but also as a specialist physician and as a father. Like many Queenslanders, I find the issue of abortion personally distressing and deeply confronting. This is not a remarkable statement to make and nor should it be condemned. Too often in our history whenever termination of pregnancy is debated by legislators and stakeholders, the moment it is acknowledged that abortion is a complex issue, the moment that the risks involved with termination are mentioned or that the rights of the unborn are raised, there is immediate and swift action to dismiss such concerns and/or shut down debate. Sadly, we saw this time and time again in the lead-up to this week's parliamentary debate.

Those who support both the rights and health of women and the rights of the unborn child will not be silenced. From a health professional's perspective this issue can be, and is, often very complex and challenging. As a doctor, I have discharged my duty of care and professional obligations to all patients facing such difficult and complex situations and I have done this to the best of my ability. Honourable members can well imagine some of the difficult and complex clinical situations I have seen as a specialist physician treating or assisting patients with a range of alcohol or drug dependency conditions with respect to unwanted pregnancies that have arisen via sexual assault, rape, incest and/or criminal gang related violence. The bill before this House ignores the rights of the unborn, is not in the true interests of women's health and does not afford adequate conscientious objection rights to both clinical and non-clinical staff. I accept that terminations occur in Queensland and that terminations need to occur safely and be accessible in Queensland. I also have to say that I am not against reform, including decriminalisation.

Much has been made by proponents of this legislation that it is all about women's rights and women's health; that it is a woman's issue, a woman's choice and a woman's healthcare decision. This legislation is certainly about women's rights and their health, but this bill fails on both counts. The debate thus far has been marred by an attitude of 'you're either with us or against us', that to vote against this bill is to be anti women or anti women's health care. I absolutely disagree with this and I categorically reject this view. How is it that it is in the best interests of women's health to not explicitly address in this legislation important safeguards such as mandatory counselling, cooling-off periods and ensuring domestic violence coercion has been properly protected against, dealt with and assessed?

It is irresponsible in the extreme to not adequately care for and support women and their partners who are considering one of the most difficult decisions they will have to make. It is a consideration that other jurisdictions, to their credit, have made as they have legislated in this area over the years. For example, in Europe mandatory waiting or cooling-off periods are applicable: in Germany, three days; Belgium, six days; Netherlands, six days; and France, one week. In addition, counselling is mandated in Germany and Switzerland and must be offered in France, and the availability of pregnancy terminations is restricted after 12 weeks in almost all European jurisdictions. By comparison, what safeguards will there be for the women and the unborn in Queensland? Virtually none.

The women of Queensland have been abandoned by the Palaszczuk Labor government in its ongoing pursuit of an unbalanced agenda. Under this bill terminations will be legal for any reason up to 22 weeks and, yes, that includes sex selection, as sex can well be determined on ultrasound scans well before 22 weeks. After 22 weeks and until birth, abortions will be able to be performed for 'social reasons'. Most alarmingly, the provision in this bill that deals with terminations after 22 weeks, part 2 clause 6, is little more than 160 words long—just 160 words between life and death.

After 22 weeks terminations will require two approving doctors, but this is nothing more than a tick-in-the-box requirement. The second doctor will not be required to consult with or see the woman or even read her clinical file. How can anyone argue this is a safeguard or is an adequate provision for the health and wellbeing of a woman? How can anyone seriously argue this is about women's rights and women's health when the termination of unborn females will be made so readily available? What about their rights or their health, or do the rights of girls and women only count once they are born?

This parliament has previously heard about the practice of late-term abortion in Queensland. Specifically, on 26 October 1994 the then opposition health spokesman, Mike Horan, then member for Toowoomba South, rose to speak on abortions on demand. He tabled the following, which was a public lecture given by Dr David Grundmann, medical director of Planned Parenthood of Australia and of the

Bowen Hills abortion clinic, to a bioethics conference at Monash University on 30 August 1994. At that time Mr Horan outlined Dr Grundmann's partial birth abortion technique for, and including, social reasons.

To help all honourable members gain a technically correct understanding of the cranial decompression abortion procedure—also known as partial-birth abortion, which would be permitted in Queensland under the bill before us—I considered tabling medical illustrations that were used on the floor of the US Senate by Senator Rick Santorum in 2002 when the Senate passed the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act 2003. I considered this for reasons of parliamentary transparency and accountability, but I decided against it given the distressing matters contained within those images.

Before considering legislative reforms to decriminalise abortion, strengthened safeguards and enhanced checks and balances need to be in place to ensure due diligence and accountability with respect to women's health and their clinical care. Regarding the word 'decriminalise', a significant amount of focus in this debate has been on the decriminalisation aspect of taking this out of the Criminal Code. The way in which proponents have positioned their arguments in favour of this bill, you could be forgiven for thinking that women in Queensland who seek to have terminations do so in constant fear of being arrested and charged, but we know that to be absolutely false. With close to 14,000 terminations taking place in Queensland each year, one can hardly argue there is difficulty in seeking and obtaining a termination in our state of Queensland. To decriminalise and remove termination of pregnancy from the Criminal Code within the context of an already fundamentally flawed and loose clinical system without ensuring appropriate safeguards and proper checks and balances is an abdication of the responsibility of any government to the welfare of its citizens and future generations.

Not only is this bill fundamentally flawed but the committee process which occurred was a farce. What other way to describe a process by which, in lieu of a senate—in lieu of a house of review—the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, which was tasked with holding inquiries and examining the bill, made the deliberate decision not to accept certain forms of submissions and, in some cases, censor submissions that were made. To begin the investigation process by proudly stating that the committee, dominated by Labor and the Greens, had resolved not to accept images of fetuses or the outcome of medical procedures showed what a sham this entire process was and that the committee was unwilling to, in an open and transparent manner, assess the clinical and medical reality of what is to be implemented in Queensland.

I want to comment on one particular submission. In relation to AMA Queensland's unbridled zealotry to appease certain practitioner members, the current AMA leadership has completely abandoned the dignity and welfare rights of the unborn as well as those of women, the vulnerable and marginalised, particularly those affected by domestic and family violence and at risk of abortion coercion. By supporting those who have admitted that they and colleagues sometimes perform abortions on women who appear not to be consenting of their own free will, the AMA has obliquely endorsed domestic violence coercion. In recent times the Australian Medical Association has purported to champion the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, particularly children on Manus Island and Nauru, but when it comes to the refugees we are talking about today—those unborn refugees on the border of life—the current AMA leadership have recklessly abandoned them.


It also has to be said that the Law Reform Commission has not been independent or impartial in its deliberations, and I concur with the comments of the shadow Attorney-General in relation to those matters.

Finally, this is why elections matter. Who you vote for and who you put into the Queensland parliament matters. Time and again we have seen that those opposite will say one thing during election time and do the complete opposite once in government. On this issue in particular the Premier was not up-front with Queenslanders at the last election. The Premier was directly asked about supporting a change to pregnancy termination laws during the election debate, and she refused to answer with a clear commitment or definitive answer.

It is for all of these reasons and many more that I in good conscience cannot and will not support the Palaszczuk Labor government's abortion legislation. With respect to my conscience and decision, I have also given careful consideration to the LNP's endorsed party policy position, the views of the broader LNP membership, the diverse views of my constituents in the electorate of Moggill and the significant number of professional medical colleagues who have contacted me about this legislation.

The mantra of many of the loudest proponents of this bill has been that it is 2018, not 1899. That is exactly the point. It is 2018 and in this, the 21st century, the constituents of Queensland deserve a parliament that enacts laws that have been carefully drafted and considered without fear or favour and that can be freely and openly debated without demonisation. I am sure that I will be vilified by some after this contribution.

In conclusion, I want to say that the rights of the unborn matter. Real balance and accountable health care for women is vitally important. Mothers matter, fathers matter and families matter. I would say to many members of this House that there will be an opportunity to stand up for the rights of the unborn and to ensure that balanced, accountable health care is delivered for all in Queensland.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (3.44 pm): I rise in the House today to support the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. The Termination of Pregnancy Bill brings into sharp relief for all of us in this place that, along with the privilege of serving in this House, our deliberations are associated with great responsibility. It is in moments like this when reform is bound to emotion, when opinion is framed by ideals and when debate is linked to beliefs that we get the most unobstructed view of the character and value of this institution and those members who comprise it. Shorn of its partisan fervour and its adversarial temperament, it finally comes down to this: members of parliament are also citizens. They are subject and respondent to the laws they pass. They are people with their own experiences, their own values and their own consciences. Parliament is an expression of humanity governing itself—government of, by and for the people. More so than in most debates, today we are a parliament of the people.

This bill—because it is for so many so personal—must be considered with civility. Some will distinguish themselves in this debate by the respectful manner with which they engage those whose opinions they do not share. Not without diminished passion for the cause, not with less fervour or conviction, but in recognition that through a conscience vote in a representative democracy each member of the House comes to this debate on a course set by their own education, learning and life experience, their own moral compass, their own sense of what is right and wrong. Conscience, after all, means inner sight, and in matters of conscience individuals are ultimately answerable to themselves.

The Australian Labor Party has for many decades supported conscience votes on matters such as the bill before the House. Votes on the basis of conscience have been a defining and unifying principle of our party on great moral questions like those before the House today. The Premier has never wavered in her belief that matters such as those contained in this bill should be subject to a conscience vote for members of the state parliamentary Labor Party. This accords with our party's history, conference resolutions and rules. She has been strongly supported in this position of principle by the Deputy Premier, Jackie Trad.

I also want to commend Kate Jones, the member for Cooper and Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development, for the thoughtful opinion piece she wrote published in the *Courier-Mail* on 4 September this year supporting the need for all members of this House to be able to exercise a free vote on this bill guided only by conscience. It is a privilege to serve in the cabinet with ministers and members of parliament of the calibre of the Premier, Deputy Premier, the Attorney-General, Yvette D'Ath, and Minister Jones. Their strong support for a conscience vote for our parliamentary party on great moral questions like those before the House and this bill speaks volumes about their own consciences and integrity.

I support this bill because I do not believe that terminations of pregnancy should be regulated under the provisions of the Criminal Code. I believe that women should be able to access safe, legal termination of pregnancy services. That is why in 2009 when I served as the Queensland Attorney-General I introduced changes to the Criminal Code to ensure that medical professionals who provide medical terminations of pregnancy are afforded the same protections as medical professionals providing lawful surgical termination services. It was also why when I served as health minister in the first term of the Palaszczuk government I ensured that funding was provided to Marie Stopes International so that women in regional Queensland cities like Townsville and Rockhampton could continue to access termination services in their community and would not have to travel to Brisbane or, worse, other parts of Australia. I did those things without fanfare. I did so because I believed they were the right thing to do. I did so because they were the right thing to do for Queensland women. That is the Labor way: delivering genuine reform to improve the lives, health and rights of Queenslanders.

I do not believe that the sanction of the criminal law should hang above the heads of women who choose to terminate a pregnancy, for whom the experience is already in many cases painful, challenging and deeply personal. I believe it is a decision for women and doctors, not lawyers and

judges. This week it is a decision for members of this House. We are reminded by this debate that what we do matters for many people, most of whom we will never meet, in real and profound ways. While we may come to the debate as products of our own experiences, the decisions we make this week will have enormous consequences for the experiences of others. We will each be guided by what we think is right, but that should at least be tempered by what we think is right for them.


Individual sovereignty, the capacity to decide for oneself, is a human right and is fundamental to the democratic tradition. If we want to hold individuals to account for their decisions, we must give them the freedom to decide. The right to choose, the liberty of personal action, is part of what it means to be human. No-one should arbitrate for a woman what is in her own deeply personal interests. A woman may be advised and a woman may be counselled but it is that woman who must decide, and that woman should not be prosecuted for it.

One woman who had a profound impact on me on my own journey was one of my constituents, Zena Mason. Zena travelled from her home in Woodridge all the way to Cairns to share her story with the members of the parliamentary committee examining this bill. This is no small effort for a mum with a beautiful young son and who works full-time. The decision Zena and her husband made to terminate the pregnancy of a long-wished-for child late in Zena's pregnancy still echoes in Zena's words and in her heart. It will no doubt echo for some time to come. Listening to Zena's story, which she told me in a quiet and respectful way after walking in the Queensland heat to my office pushing a stroller, reinforced for me the heartbreaking decision many women and their families have to make to bring pregnancy to an end and that their decision should not be further weighed down with the additional burden of possible criminal sanction.

I spoke earlier about the importance of civility in this debate. Freedom of speech and association, however, do not include freedom to intimidate and harass. I believe that the provisions of this bill that guarantee safety zones around clinics and protect the privacy of women seeking the services of those clinics and their family and supporters are a sensible, important and necessary step.

Because the law has a human dimension, it frames a moral purpose. It is a guidebook for civil society—even more important for the overwhelming majority of our community who follow the law's tenets than for the few who are inclined to breach them. The rule of law is humanity's most civilising accomplishment, which is why we should always ask when we are considering the Criminal Code just who it is we are seeking to punish. I do not believe in all conscience that young women, in fact any woman, making choices about their own bodies and lives should be numbered among them.

There are some participating in this debate who will be troubled by it. For some, matters of personal faith and deep belief make its subject matter problematic, but there is nevertheless something elevated in its prosecution—each member standing up for what they stand for, making their own contribution according to their own values, according to their own conscience, and in doing so expressing that most powerful evocation of the most fundamental right of a free society: 'This is what I believe.' I, for one, believe that the bill should be supported and commend it to the House.

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (3.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I start by acknowledging the work of the committee comprising the members for Thuringowa, Caloundra, Maiwar, Nicklin, Rockhampton and Lytton and the work of the committee secretariat, Hansard reporters and all others who assisted the committee in considering this bill. I thank those who came before the committee in person and those who provided submissions on what is a highly emotive and deeply complex issue. I thank also the officials from the Department of Health for their contribution to this bill. As a first-term member of this parliament I cannot imagine a more sensitive and challenging bill for a committee to consider, and on behalf of myself and the Pumicestone electorate I thank the members for their work.

I begin with comments made by general practitioner Dr Heather McNamee during her evidence to the committee. She said—

I would rather no Australian woman ever had to have an abortion ever again, but contraception is not perfect and lives are far from perfect. In fact, there is a lot of chaos in women's lives.

I wish to thank Dr McNamee for this succinct and rather powerful remark, which has helped me to consider my position regarding the details of this bill.

The primary objective of the bill asks us to consider enabling reasonable and safe access by women to termination of pregnancy and to regulate the conduct of registered health practitioners in relation to terminations. As deep and divided as honourable members' beliefs may be in regard to the termination of pregnancy, I hope to make a contribution in a manner that will not diminish or inflame

those feelings. From my perspective, the issue of whether or not we agree with abortion becomes almost immaterial if we are to accept, as we are asked to do by the Minister for Health, the premise that termination of pregnancy is a health matter and therefore a matter between a woman and her medical practitioner. We are asked to consider the health and wellbeing of a woman, which we as legislators should always do. By virtue of this, we are also asked to not consider the rights of an unborn child, as the full provisions of the bill imply that this right has not yet been established by birth. I cannot and will not support this premise.

For me personally, being raised with strong Catholic beliefs has, I am sure, shaped my views on matters of life and death. That being said, the last thing that we as Catholics would ever seek to do is impose our values, beliefs and ideals or their consequences upon others. I do know that my life journey is not representative of all women, and a termination of pregnancy is something so far removed from my world as an individual. I have considered this deeply in my reflection on this bill and its objectives. I also know the irrefutable fact that what makes abortion safe is when it is available on a woman's request and is universally accessible and affordable. On this point, I believe that the laws as they stand in sections 224 to 226 of the Criminal Code Act 1899 that establish it as unlawful to attempt to procure a termination of pregnancy, except for some vague saving clauses that allow abortion in certain circumstances, make sense only for punitive and deterrent purposes, but they have failed on both counts.

I lean towards the views of the World Health Organization, which states that restricting legal access to abortion does not decrease the need for abortion. If we are to accept that abortions, whether we agree with abortion or not, will continue regardless—as they continue to do right now in Queensland—then maintaining the criminalisation of abortion within the Criminal Code is no longer, in my view, fit for purpose. The current laws also place medical professionals in a treacherous position because of the very murky uncertainty of the illegality they are clinically confronted with. On the grounds I have just outlined, I support the provision of this bill that seeks to decriminalise the termination of pregnancy. I do, however, add a caveat to this support—that is, abortion will continue to be performed in Queensland and the status quo will be as it has been for many years, regardless of the debate today and despite the successful passage of this bill or otherwise.

Other provisions set out in this bill to achieve its objectives in good conscience I will not be supporting. I do not support there being no adequate safeguards against the termination of potentially healthy babies in very late-term abortions, including abortions of babies up until full term.


What I have found to be conflicting in all of this is the current provisions in the laws around stillborn babies, and please allow me to explain. Queensland Health issues an information sheet about what happens when your baby is stillborn. It states that if your baby is stillborn at 20 weeks or more or weighed 400 grams or more at birth or died after birth, the law in Queensland requires a burial or cremation. It goes on to say that your baby's birth and death must be registered with the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. I am conflicted by this on a number of levels.

If we approach this more cynically, then one could draw from this that the life of a stillborn baby is more valuable than the life of an aborted baby, even if they happen to be at the same gestation of 20 weeks or more. It is inconceivable to me that this bill seeks to enable terminations up to 22 weeks without a woman needing a reason and beyond 22 weeks with the permission of a medical practitioner who consults another and agrees, yet there remains a different set of rules for an unborn aborted child than for a stillborn of the same gestational period. The regulations surrounding a stillborn baby from 20 weeks gestation onwards recognise the life of a child, yet there is no recognition for the aborted, even up to full term. This in my view leaves a sharp and inhumane distinction in the value of life between a stillborn child and one who has been aborted.

There is one other aspect of this bill that I will touch on, and that is the lack of safeguards and permission for younger girls—minors—who seek termination of their unwanted pregnancies. Unless I have missed something in my readings—and I am happy to stand corrected—both the bill and the committee's report are silent on this. Apart from noting that a woman means a female person of any age, there appears to be no distinction between a child who seeks an abortion and an adult seeking an abortion.

I would like to hear from the minister with regard to this, as I believe there would be a number of young girls—minors—in Queensland with unplanned pregnancies seeking abortions. What are the protections for them? Must a parent be notified before an abortion is performed? Must a parent consent before an abortion is provided to their child? Do the same provisions of no reason up to 22 weeks apply? What happens to a child who seeks a later term abortion after 22 weeks? What are the

protections for minors and why has such an important issue as this been left unaddressed in this bill? I respectfully ask those who support the bill to bear this in mind and not sweep minors under a dirt pile of legislation at all costs. This is too important.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.02 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the bill and against the amendments to be moved by the member for Caloundra. Currently in Queensland women and doctors can be criminally prosecuted for unlawfully accessing or providing abortion. The Criminal Code currently makes it a crime to unlawfully terminate a woman's pregnancy. I support this bill because I want termination of pregnancy to be a health issue for women to address with their doctor, not a criminal one.

The current law in Queensland negatively impacts the accessibility and availability of termination services by causing fear and stigma for women and reluctance by some health practitioners to provide such services. This law also disproportionately impacts women who are already disadvantaged, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women in rural, regional and remote areas and women in low socio-economic groups. All kinds of women seek termination of pregnancy. These women include religious women, mothers, grandmothers, young women, older women, single women, women with children, married women, unemployed women, employed women and women who were against abortion before they knew they were pregnant. None of these women take this decision lightly and to suggest otherwise, as some of the outrageous emails that I have received do, is offensive and sexist.

Women make this decision as the expert in their own life, considering their situation carefully and understanding what will be the best decision for them at this point in their life. I support this bill because I believe that women should have the right to self-determination, the right to reproductive autonomy. Women with reproductive autonomy can control whether and when to become pregnant, whether and when to use contraception, which method to use, and whether and when to continue a pregnancy. Women in Queensland do not currently have reproductive autonomy. Autonomy is one of the ethical foundations of many of the moral and political rights we take for granted today. It should not be taken lightly.

Failing to permit someone to act autonomously is failing to respect something essential to their humanity. I believe that we have a duty to respect the autonomy of others and of ourselves. To take Stuart Mill's words and feminise them, 'For anything that is not anybody's business but hers, her independence is, in fact, absolute. The woman has sovereignty on herself, her body and spirit.' When we disregard or limit a woman's reproductive autonomy we undermine her ability to control one of the most intimate spheres of her life. A woman's reproductive autonomy undoubtedly has a profound impact on the course of her life, and decisions about whether or not to reproduce are among the most momentous choices that we will ever make as women. Reproductive autonomy and freedom is integral to living a good, happy and fulfilling life, whether a woman chooses to reproduce or not.

No choice has a more profound impact on a woman's life than her decision whether or not to give birth. Crucial to her personal wellbeing, definitive of her social persona and predictive of her economic horizons, reproductive decisions are very personal and unsurpassably important. Bound up with sexuality and gender identity, choices about child-bearing and motherhood are emotionally gripping and socially pivotal. Reproductive autonomy affects everything about a woman and her life—the social, mental, physical, emotional and economic spheres of a woman's life.

Depriving a woman of control over her own reproductive system—control over her own body—significantly interferes with her capacity to live her life according to her own beliefs and practices. How can anyone deny a woman the right to live her life according to her own beliefs and practices? Every woman should have the right to choose if and when she has sex, if and when she uses contraception, and if and when she has a baby.

While unplanned pregnancy and abortion are common, they are even more common for women who experience violence and control. Reproductive coercion is a form of domestic violence. Domestic violence can come in many forms and a woman's sexual and reproductive health can be affected. The relationship between domestic violence and poor reproductive health outcomes is well established. As well as other outcomes of domestic violence for women and children, it has a particular reproductive health context. The World Health Organization reports that intimate partner violence may lead to a host of negative sexual and reproductive health consequences for women, including unintended and unwanted pregnancy, abortion and unsafe abortion and pregnancy complications. There is evidence that unintended pregnancies are up to two to three times more likely to be associated with intimate partner violence than planned pregnancies. Reproductive coercion may be the one mechanism that helps to explain the known association between intimate partner violence and unintended pregnancy.

Reproductive autonomy entails demanding not only the right to choose not to procreate but also the right to respect for decisions to procreate. The sense of dignity, the importance of feeling valued and having some say and control over one's life and body are critical to an individual's feelings of being a human being like other human beings. We must give women the choice—the choice to determine what happens to our own bodies, to make decisions about what happens to us and to make decisions about our lives and our bodies. Reproductive control and bodily integrity are implicated in the formation of women's identity as being critical, quite literally, to counting as human beings—people with broader aspirations and needs rather than merely as female reproductive bodies, rather than just being a vehicle for procreation.


Reproductive autonomy is a fundamental right and women must be free to choose contraception, termination and pregnancy without coercion or pressure or threat of prosecution. It is fact that women in rural and regional Queensland, including women in my electorate, are disproportionately affected by the current laws. During the committee's consultation women located in western, regional and remote Queensland raised the issue of lack of access to termination services, including having to travel great distances or even interstate due to the current laws being within the Criminal Code.

Women in my community have told me about the lack of access to termination services and how they have had to spend thousands of dollars to travel to access services. One woman in particular told me about how she had to make the heartbreaking decision to terminate a wanted pregnancy because the foetus was diagnosed with a significant heart deformity at the morphology scan at 20 weeks. No doctors in Queensland would perform a termination, even though the foetus would not survive after birth, so she was required to travel to Canberra at significant expense to have a termination at 22 weeks.

It is stories like this, told to me by women in my community, that reinforce to me the need to have safe and accessible termination of pregnancy services available to all Queensland women. That is why I am voting in support of this bill and against the amendment circulated by the member for Caloundra.

The archaic abortion laws in Queensland need to change. This bill is not about whether you support abortion. It is not about whether we as women members of this place would or would not have an abortion. This bill is about whether we, as the parliament of Queensland, give women in Queensland the right to reproductive autonomy—whether we, as the parliament of Queensland, believe in equality and giving women the right to choose.

Members who vote against this bill are, by voting no, saying to Queensland women that the termination of pregnancy should remain a criminal issue, that if they terminate a pregnancy they will commit an act that is specified in the Queensland Criminal Code. Members who vote no are saying that if a woman is pregnant she should not be afforded the right of self-determination to make decisions about her own body—regardless of any foetal congenital conditions, regardless of her mental or physical health, regardless of whether she was raped or a victim of domestic violence. We will not have fully achieved equality in Queensland until such time as women are afforded control over their own bodies. Queensland women—and, indeed, women everywhere—deserve respect, dignity, choice and control over their bodies. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (4.10 pm): I rise to speak in absolute support of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill. The Greens have always supported bodily autonomy and choice for women. This reform reflects my long-held view that abortion should be safe, legal and free.

This has become a complex debate on what is undeniably a controversial issue but, at the same time, at its core there is an exceedingly simple proposition. Abortion is a fundamental element of reproductive health care. It cannot remain a crime. The complexity emerges when we as legislators seek to create a framework to replace the archaic and unconscionable criminal sanction against abortion. To do our job well, we must be guided by the evidence. In this regard, the QLRC is the best basis for legislation that we could hope for.

The debate becomes controversial because all too often religious interest groups or individuals fail to recognise that we are a secular society. As legislators, we must look past divisive moralising and base our decisions on evidence. The reality is that abortion happens in Queensland. It will continue to happen. We do not need to like that reality, but we simply cannot deny it. I doubt anyone here would suggest that abortion is inherently good or desirable. In an ideal world, every pregnancy would be planned, but that is not the world we live in and we cannot be content with circumstances where a person's decision about fundamental reproductive rights amounts to criminal conduct. It is not my place and it is not our place as legislators to tell women that we know best.

To say that this law reform is long overdue is an understatement. In recognising how long awaited it is, I want to acknowledge the many decades of work done by campaigners, advocates and clinicians to achieve this reform. These people were providing healthcare services right through the era of Joh's police state, when the criminalisation of abortion gave rise to very real risks to their safety and liberty. It is simply not possible to acknowledge all of those who have campaigned for abortion law reform in Queensland, but I must take a moment to acknowledge the work of Beryl Holmes. Beryl founded Children by Choice and has been campaigning for women's reproductive rights for nearly half a century. Beryl is a resident of Maiwar and it has been a genuine honour to meet with her in recent months, to hear the stories of her tireless efforts and, as her local member, to vote for this law reform.

I want to address some of the issues raised in the opposition committee members' statement of reservation, some of which are now reflected in the amendments circulated in your name, Mr Deputy Speaker McArdle. I believe that I have already addressed this, but the first issue raised in the statement of reservation questions whether there is a sound basis to remove abortion from the Criminal Code. In the interests of clarity, the criminalisation of abortion denies reality and denies the fundamental reproductive rights of pregnant people. Contrary to the assertions already made by members of the opposition in this debate, women routinely get abortions, particularly in the early stages of pregnancy, in circumstances that are not currently lawful. Whether or not abortion is accessible under current Queensland law, this should not be criminal.

The committee heard powerful evidence from mothers who had made the difficult decision to have abortions later in their term of pregnancy because of severe or fatal foetal abnormality. All too often the current law requires these women to justify the decision that they have made under the false pretence that their mental health is at risk. The committee heard a firsthand account of this.

The member for Toowoomba South and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have both suggested that the law need not change, because all abortions in Queensland are conducted lawfully. I honestly do not know how anyone can claim with a straight face that each of the more than 10,000 abortions performed in Queensland each year is necessary to protect the physical or mental wellbeing of the mother. It is certainly the case that abortion providers have developed systems of patient sign-off and justification to protect themselves and their patients from charges under the existing law. It is naive to think that abortion on request is not happening, but that 1899 law requires everyone involved to maintain the farce that it is not.

The criminalisation of abortion has much more far-reaching negative consequences than just the need for additional paperwork or process. It is also clear that a number of facilities and clinicians decide not to provide termination services at any stage of pregnancy because of its criminality. The committee had the privilege of speaking directly with the Victorian Public Service and experts about their experience following the decriminalisation of abortion in 2008. It is clear that the rates of abortion among Victorian women have dropped significantly. There has been a reduction of more than 25 per cent from 2008 levels. It may seem counterintuitive, but this evidence should guide every member who wants to see a decrease in the incidence of abortion in Queensland. Better reproductive health care will lead to fewer women seeking abortion and decriminalisation is the way to achieve that.

Antichoice groups lament the apparent increase in the number of later term abortions performed in Victoria since decriminalisation 10 years ago, but they routinely ignore the fact that women regularly have to travel interstate to access superior health care, simply because it is not available in their home state. At one clinic alone—the Maroondah clinic in Victoria—clinicians estimate that about one woman from Queensland attends the clinic for a termination each fortnight. Nobody should have to travel interstate to access health care.

The second issue raised in the statement of reservation relates to the bill's gestational limit of 22 weeks, after which two doctors need to sign off on the termination. Again, we see proposed amendments without any sensible evidence base to lower this figure to 16 weeks. The QLRC's rationale for choosing the 22-week limit is clear and draws on all the available evidence about the point at which a foetus might survive outside the womb.

Another critically important factor in this limit is the timing of morphology scans, which others have mentioned, of around 20 weeks, which any parent will remember well. For too many expectant parents, that is when they receive devastating news. Serious medical complications and potentially fatal foetal abnormalities are generally not detected until this point. The 22-week limit is appropriately set to allow parents in those circumstances to work through excruciatingly tough decisions without the need to rush to avoid the additional barriers that exist after the 22-week limit. At that stage of pregnancy, the

procedures are very serious and the decisions are time sensitive. With each passing day and week, the clinical procedures can become more complicated, more expensive and more difficult to access. The committee heard evidence directly from mothers who felt rushed in making this heartbreaking decision. It is clear that lowering the gestational limit would only exacerbate this.

The statement of reservation takes issue with the circumstances in which a medical practitioner, in consultation with a second practitioner, can lawfully perform a termination after 22 weeks gestation. The concerns are specifically that the bill does not define what it means for the second doctor to be consulted and that the factors that these doctors must consider are too broad. Taken together, these two concerns do not make much sense and each one is effectively the answer to the other. Clause 6(1) makes it absolutely clear that both the first and the second consulting medical practitioner must be able to form a considered view that, in all the circumstances, the termination should be performed. The consultation with the second doctor must be comprehensive enough that they give consideration to all the broad-ranging circumstances set out later in clause 6. These include all relevant medical circumstances; the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances; and the relevant professional standards and guidelines.

The mandatory considerations in that section are cumulative. That is, no one consideration can be taken in isolation and none of them can be ignored. That applies to both medical practitioners. These considerations are deliberately and appropriately framed in broad terms to reflect the breadth of circumstances that are relevant to abortion services and should be considered by medical practitioners.

Clause 6 read as a whole makes it abundantly clear that the second consultation cannot be a 'tick and flick', as some would insinuate. It is plainly offensive to any medical practitioner to suggest that their consideration of an abortion after 22 weeks will be cursory or dismissive of any of the circumstances.

The amendment proposed to remove the consideration of social circumstances, apparently modelled on antichoice rhetoric, is deeply disappointing. It buys into the completely false assertion that the decision to terminate can be based on purely social reasons. It cannot. This claim is entirely baseless if one makes any genuine attempt to read the wording of proposed section 6 of the bill.

If social circumstances were removed from the bill, on what basis might medical practitioners consider homelessness, domestic violence in the relationship or reproductive coercion? This shameless pandering to antichoice groups is ill considered and just muddies the waters as to what doctors can consider in the unique and often complex circumstances that surround each unwanted pregnancy. All the circumstances are relevant and women, in consultation with appropriate medical support, must be recognised as the best people to make decisions about their own lives, their bodies and their future.


Time constraints prevent me from addressing conscientious objection and mandatory referral for counselling at this point. I will hopefully address them in consideration in detail. Abortion clearly is a health issue. There is no rational basis for keeping it in the Criminal Code. Opponents of the bill will have every right to make the choices best for them when it comes to their own health care, as they should. A society that respects women is one where all options are freely available in pregnancy and where none of them are criminalised, stigmatised or put out of reach by unnecessary barriers.

In closing I thank my fellow committee members and in particular the secretariat for their tireless efforts behind the scenes. Most sincere thanks go to those who gave evidence at all three committee hearings and particularly those who shared their deeply personal experiences.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE


Comments by Member for Moggill

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.20 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. In an earlier contribution from the member for Moggill, the member referred to what I would consider private deliberations of the health committee by saying in this House the Labor dominated committee did not allow certain materials to be published. Without disclosing the work of our health committee, I say these assumptions are incorrect and I ask the member to check the wording and correct the statement in the House.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p 2831.

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (4.21 pm): I rise today to make a short contribution to the debate of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill and show my support for the bill. I acknowledge the member for Maiwar's contribution. I found his contribution well researched and well delivered in a concise way. I commend him on his work also in the committee process. That is why it saddened me that the newly re-elected senator for Queensland, Larissa Waters, in a contribution to the federal parliament yesterday in a matter of public interest in regard to abortion decided to play politics with this issue and decided to have a massive overreach in regard to this very important bill. In the contribution, senator for Queensland Larissa Waters said—


I note that our Greens bill before the Queensland parliament would help. It certainly would decriminalise abortion and would help address those access issues and those issues of unbiased counselling.

To my knowledge there is one private member's bill before the parliament from the Greens member for Maiwar and that bill goes to electoral funding. I do not see how that can relate to or help decriminalise abortion. It is a shame that Queensland senator Larissa Waters would have a political overreach in which she would claim that a bill prepared by the Attorney-General—the second reading speech was delivered here today by the health minister—was theirs and try to score some cheap political points. Senator Wong has written to Senator Larissa Waters and asked her to correct the record. To my knowledge that has not happened. I say to Senator Larissa Waters: let us not play politics on this. Let us correct the record and make sure that we are not engaging in cheap political pointscoreing.

I want to move now to my own journey and experience and thank all those within the electorate of Capalaba who have approached me on this issue. I have tried to organise times to meet with each of those constituents, to ring them back or to discuss this in the street at mobile offices—I even went out of my way to have a two-hour meeting with the member for Oodgeroo's wife in the previous term of parliament in regards to this issue—because I want to hear all sides. I want to make sure that their voices are heard. Whether I disagree or agree with them, it is important that they have that opportunity to talk to their local member. I have even sat down with the father of my old high school, Iona College, Father Twigg, who I had the honour of asking to baptise my child. We sat down and had a discussion. It was great to hear his views. Our views differed on this. It is appreciated that this debate has been civil and put forward the points of views in a way in which we can be proud of this parliament. I hope it continues on for the rest of this debate.

Finally, the member for Toowoomba South was relying on Justice McGuire as the authoritative law in regard to this. We have an 1899 law made by a parliament full of blokes. The authority for the present law is a bloke, Justice Frederick McGuire. He was also uncertain about this. That is why he indicated in his decision way back in 1986 that the present abortion law in Queensland was uncertain and that a more imperative authority, either the Court of Appeal or the parliament, would be required to effect change to clarify the law. We are not the Court of Appeal but we are the parliament, and that is what we are here to do today. We are here today to do the job which the Queensland people have elected us to do. We should not be relying on an authority that is not relied upon.

There have been many mentions of the 10,000 to 14,000 abortions that happen each and every year. That was precluded from the judge's decision in that case. That is why we do need to come into this place and ensure that we are clarifying the law in which doctors and women can have certainty about their health care, their reproductive health care and not have the stigma that is placed unfairly on them by having this in the Criminal Code. I will be going against the member for Caloundra's amendments with regard to this. I believe they have not been well thought through or researched and have not been given the due consideration that the Queensland Law Reform Commission report, which forms the basis of this report, has. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (4.28 pm): I rise to make a very brief contribution to the debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I, like all members in this chamber, have been inundated with emails and phone calls from the constituents of Condamine wishing to express their views on this legislation. In my time as the member for Condamine this bill has resulted in the largest amount of correspondence received through the office, which highlights the interest and deep feeling that this proposed legislation has evoked. An overwhelming number of those emails have been opposed to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill. Some of the concerns raised were around the fact that an abortion would


be granted on demand at up to 22 weeks. Almost all submitters felt that 22 weeks was too far into the pregnancy and I share this concern, particularly given the fact that if a baby is stillborn at 22 weeks it requires a death certificate and a funeral.

Also of concern is the fact that a termination could be granted after 22 weeks because of the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances—whatever that means. The legislation would also require a medical practitioner who has a conscientious objection to performing an abortion to refer the client to a medical practitioner who will perform the termination. That would have a significant mental health impact on the doctor and also on the nurses and other medical staff involved. Granted, there would need to be agreement between two medical practitioners, but that does have the ability to be abused.

I also have concerns about the exclusion zone around a facility conducting terminations. That would be at odds with vigils held by other organisations, such as unions and green activists. Why do we have to introduce legislation to target an old lady holding a silent vigil, yet we allow unions to threaten workers crossing a picket line?

I was appalled at the committee report recommendation that there be a conscience vote. That is a straight-out abuse of the committee system. The role of a committee is to investigate a relevant bill, not to give instructions to the opposition on voting intention.

At a recent party room meeting, members of the LNP voted unanimously to have a conscience vote on this issue as it is a vote on life and death. That means that I do not need to vote on party lines or on a party platform, if I so wish. While that may be so, I was elected to this parliament to be the voice of the voters of the seat of Condamine. Conscience vote or not, if I ignore the overwhelming view that has been relayed to me I would fail in my duty as the elected voice of the constituents of the seat of Condamine. Therefore, I will be opposing the bill.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.31 pm): Today I rise to speak in favour of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill. At the outset, I thank my wonderful electorate staff, Rachel, Kristin, Hamish and Molly. Like many other electorate staff throughout the state I am sure, my electorate staff are to be absolutely commended for their wonderful and compassionate approach to the many constituents who came through my door to meet and speak with me about this issue. I am incredibly proud of them.

If there is one thing that this debate has shown me, it is to never make assumptions about another person's past. You do not know if the woman to whom you are describing a foetus at 16 weeks has experienced the heartbreak of losing children of her own. Similarly, many times people have questioned my own reproductive history or that of my mother, and there is really no need for that. I thank my parents for providing their wise counsel and life experience in this matter. I have had discussions with family, friends and my partner, who is a GP and one of the wisest and kindest people I know.

First and foremost, I state that this bill is underpinned by the need to remove termination of pregnancy from the Criminal Code. Constituents I met with, whether they identified as pro choice or pro life, were almost all united in acknowledging that women should not be treated as criminals for seeking a termination. That viewpoint is reflected right across Queensland. Their choice is difficult enough without the possibility of seven years imprisonment hanging over their heads as they make their decision.

At this time I thank the many constituents who came to see me about this issue. I met with countless locals about this highly emotive issue, some for and some against. I thank each of them for taking the time to speak with me about the issue. Many of them shared their personal stories with me. I do not feel right sharing their stories today, but I will be sharing my own. In those meetings many constituents pointed out that having a termination can be an upsetting experience, and I agree. It is a serious medical procedure and making an informed choice is paramount.

That is why clinical guidelines, as spoken about by the health minister today, require that counselling is offered not once, not twice, but three times, including following a termination. We need to create a safe space for women to talk openly with their health practitioners about their concerns and considerations when they are deliberating over a pregnancy. That will allow health practitioners to better detect when a woman might be experiencing pressure or reproductive coercion from outside forces. Therefore, I am very pleased to hear about the decision by the Minister for Health to set up an unbiased counselling service to assist women in making their decision. Having all the facts is key. Such a service is something that many constituents who visited me, from both sides of the spectrum, were keen to see established.

In my research, I was keen to understand better why late-term terminations occur and the circumstances in which they might be happening. In Queensland, there are around 150 late-term terminations every year. Sadly, as we have heard, each and every one of those terminations has occurred on wanted pregnancies, much to the heartbreak of families who were looking forward to welcoming a new family member.

Some constituents also raised concerns that the bill would result in more terminations. Therefore, I looked to Victoria, where abortion has been decriminalised for 10 years now. As abortion is a legal procedure, the Victorian government has been able to accurately capture statistics on the number of women accessing terminations, but with one key distinction: their data captures all procedures, including those performed in case of miscarriage or in utero foetal death. Many women would be only too familiar with the need to have a D and C due to miscarriage. I am no different.

In 2010, shortly after the birth of my daughter, I found I was pregnant again. Although unexpected, I was delighted to give my daughter a sibling. I was due on my own birthday, which I thought was the best present ever. Everything seemed to be fine. I was healthy—in fact, I felt fantastic—but something just was not right. I did not feel pregnant. The symptoms I had had before were just not there. There was no fatigue, no nausea, no mood swings—nothing. I was so concerned that I took another test at 11 weeks, which said that everything was fine—until it was not. I began spotting at work and my compassionate boss sent me straight to the emergency room. I had a scan and the technician asked me if I could have my due date confused. I was adamant: I was due on my birthday. Sadly, I had the all-too-common blighted ovum. A friend whose mum was a midwife recommended that, for my own safety, I have a D and C procedure. Therefore, I understand firsthand what the member for Mudgeeraba referred to about the strangeness of waking up in a different room, knowing everything is not quite right. I did not enjoy the procedure and I do not know any woman who has. It is certainly not something that women and their partners would want to use as contraception.


In Victoria, the 10-year trend shows that legalising abortion reduces the rate of abortion. The statistics show a reduction from 16.8 procedures per 1,000 women in 2008 to 12.2 procedures in 2017. The evidence is clear. The committee report prepared by the health committee, and I commend them and the secretariat for their excellent work in that space, notes other factors that can reduce the need for terminations, including long-active effective contraception options such as Mirena and Implanon.

We need to have these conversations, because these decisions do not occur in a vacuum. One thing I can say clearly from consulting with my community right across the spectrum, and I think it is something that in this House we can all agree on: as a community we want to see fewer terminations. We also want to show that we trust women to make the decisions that are right for themselves and their families. The way to achieve both of those things could not be clearer: we need to do what 81 per cent of the community wants, and that is to vote to decriminalise termination. I commend the bill to the House.

Interruption.

PRIVILEGE


Correction to *Record of Proceedings*

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.38 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. In my speech earlier, I indicated that the Labor and Greens dominated parliamentary committee resolved to not accept certain material. It has been brought to my attention that it was, in fact, the committee as a whole that made that decision. I was unaware of this. I have sought advice from the Clerk and I take this opportunity to correct the record.

TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY BILL

Second Reading

Resumed.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (4.39 pm): I stand today to speak on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I am truly honoured to be a member of the LNP, whose leadership has given our members the trust and respect required to practice a conscience vote on this bill. This action personifies the party's values of upholding individual freedom and liberty and is what sets us apart from all others. To our leader, the member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington, I say: you have strongly set the tone of

respect through your strength and natural, caring approach to the sensitivities of this bill. Your address earlier today was a further reflection of your leadership. Those opposite have also stated that their members will receive a conscience vote on this matter. I must say that I hold serious reservations as to the truth in this statement and wait with bated breath to see whether my reservations are proved correct.

I have given enormous thought to this bill and to the ramifications it may have for Queensland. It is clear that I am not alone in this. Everywhere we go it seems that someone is ready to provide their thoughts and opinions on this matter. This includes my Lockyer constituents who have inundated my office with emails, letters, phone calls and visits, overwhelmingly urging me to oppose this bill.

When driving into parliament on Monday I was confronted by a sign at the Mater Hospital that stated that 63 per cent of Queenslanders were in favour of legalising abortion. Upon contemplating that statement I thought that this may well be the case when one is asked a question designed to lead them to this outcome. However, when the details of this particular bill are brought to their attention this figure of support crashes. The implementation of on-demand abortions of up to 22 weeks gestation and further late-term provisions contained within the bill certainly do not acquire the same level of public support. I believe that this government has gone too far and I cannot in good conscience support the bill.

My conscience and experience tells me that the existing system is not broken. The provisions outlined in the Criminal Code and legal precedents well established around this matter are well tried and tested. The 14,000 women who underwent abortions last year in Queensland are not criminals. They are women who exercised their right to receive a legal abortion under existing provisions and precedents. According to Queensland's Criminal Code, for a crime to occur and a charge for this crime to be upheld there must be sufficient evidence to satisfy the elements of the offence. However, if that event is authorised, justified or excused by law, a person cannot have committed the offence.

I have reflected deeply on this important and divisive issue. Whilst my own view is that the current tried and tested laws need not be changed, this does not mean that I have not considered the arguments of those with a contrasting view. I have placed my beliefs and any moral or ethical questions that arise within me to the side to look at this bill as its supporters do. I have tried to utilise their arguments to show these laws as being necessary, but no matter what argument I consider serious questions still arise which stop me from supporting the bill.

Among the thousands of submissions received by the committee during its consideration of the bill were a number from esteemed medical bodies and practitioners. Many of these practitioners testified that at 22 weeks gestation foetal abnormalities may be detected that could necessitate an abortion. To me this does not justify on-demand abortion that satisfies a medical requirement. Surely, as the case is now, when a foetal abnormality occurs a properly informed medical practitioner can authorise and support that abortion.

The truth is that in most cases a pregnant woman or couple will face the question of delivering a baby well before this point. Indeed, many face this question before 12 weeks gestation. Should it come to the point where at 21 weeks the mother or couple decide that they do not want this healthy child, then surely we as a society should protect the rights of that healthy child. If the woman or couple decide not to keep the child, then that child should be born and adopted by one of the many families desperately seeking a healthy child.

I understand why some feel it necessary to remove sections 224, 225 and 226 from the Criminal Code to avoid the stigma associated with criminal inference, but the fact remains that no criminal action has or ever will be taken against a woman who satisfies the well-tested precedents of our current abortion laws. Medical practitioners are able to and always will consider both the mental and physical health impacts the continuation of a pregnancy will have on a woman. If they feel the woman's health is at risk they can authorise and undertake a legal abortion. No woman has ever been convicted of terminating a pregnancy, but these new laws will be tested and cause further distress.

It would be remiss of me to deny the fact that many woman are coerced into receiving an abortion when they may wish to carry through the pregnancy. This new law leaves the door open for abusive individuals to force their partner to perform a self-abortion in order to protect themselves from prosecution. To put it bluntly, these provisions can legalise a form of domestic violence. It may just be me, but for a government that claims to prioritise stopping domestic violence this seems like a huge step backwards.


This bill also ignores the potential for women to benefit from counselling, whether compulsorily undertaken or offered. I cannot claim to know what it must be like to have to make the decision to either go through a pregnancy or have a pregnancy terminated. All I can imagine is that in this situation as much support and information as possible could be nothing but beneficial. This bill provides none of

this support. Whether optional or compulsory, the bill should contain provisions which at the very least offer counselling support to women undertaking this decision so that they can make the best and most informed decision possible. Without such support in place, I cannot in good conscience support the bill.

Amongst the many questions this bill has raised with me is the question: where did this bill truly originate? The founders of the Labor Party will be turning in their graves to see this bill and to understand just how much the DNA of the current Labor Party has changed—from the blue-collar workers' party they founded in this very state to the left-leaning party it is today. The party has gone way too far from its roots just like it has gone too far with taxes, debt and this on-demand abortion for healthy pregnancies up to 22 weeks gestation.

As well as arising from a faction far removed from the values of the Labor Party, this bill contradicts the government's births, deaths and marriages legislation. Upon a search of the government's website, I came across a reference to a requirement for the registration of a birth of any baby delivered after 20 weeks gestation. This means this bill will legislate to allow the on-demand termination of healthy babies which, upon delivery or termination, will be recognised and registered as live human beings. To put it simply, this government is playing God and allowing healthy women to choose whether or not their healthy baby should live or die.

I would like to thank the members and staff of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their consideration of this bill. This may well go down in the history of the 56th Parliament as the most contested bill to be put to debate. I can only imagine the mammoth effort it must have taken to read through and carefully consider the plethora of submissions received. I would like to make special mention of the committee's deputy chair, the member for Caloundra, and the member for Nicklin for their dissenting report and their statement of reservation provided for this bill. I thank them for their guidance.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.48 pm): Our role as parliamentarians is to make laws for all Queenslanders recognising that many may not share our values, that situations confronting people are complex and that the law, especially the criminal law, may not anticipate every difficult circumstance that Queenslanders face.

In a submission to the former health committee, Father Frank Brennan told a story to illustrate the difficulty of his own personal conscience on the issue and our role as lawmakers. When he was a masters student he was told in the strictest confidence that a fellow student would be having a termination the next day. He stated that he is morally opposed to abortion and he remains so, but he tossed and turned throughout the night questioning what to do. The next day he did not go to the woman's door to try to stop her or indeed take any action. The question he posed was that, if in that situation he did nothing, how could he expect the law to act when he did not? This was confronting to me because I related it to a personal story of my own.

I was visiting a friend I had not seen for many years. We caught up in a sunny park in London surrounded by people playing soccer or walking through the park. We started talking about all of the things we had done through the years apart—where we had travelled, where we had worked and our partners. Sitting there on the grass, as we talked more deeply and personally, she told me that she had had an abortion, that it had been a surprise and was not the right time. Then we paused. I did not quite know what to say. She began crying, right there sitting in that busy park. In an instant, I reached out and hugged her. She cried and cried, deep visceral sobbing that I hope never to experience again. In some ways that single moment sums up my dilemma with this legislation.

I know from my instinctive behaviour that I do not want to punish women making difficult decisions. At the same time, I want every part of our health system to recognise the enormity of the decisions we make. Unlike any other successful health process, no other patient years later sobs in a park in the arms of a friend. I think respectfully that Frank Brennan had it wrong. The question is not whether we would break a confidence to confront someone but instead what advice would I give my friend if she asked for help and I had the knowledge that she would cry and cry and cry over her decision. I know that laws and regulations are not the best processes through which to do that, but I wish we could come closer to that goal.

Today the bill before us seeks to change the legal status of abortion in Queensland. It does not, as some on both sides of this debate have claimed, move abortion from being illegal to being legal. It does not remove abortion from the Queensland Criminal Code. Section 25 makes it clear that this bill firmly keeps abortion in the Criminal Code, at least for unqualified persons. Under the new bill we do not expect that we would see an increase in the number of abortions performed in Queensland. The Law Reform Commission tells us that more than 14,000 abortions occurred last year in Queensland.

Even if this new bill does not pass, there will still be the legal, if somewhat confused, framework for abortion in Queensland. The bill before the House does not legalise or decriminalise abortion but instead puts forward an alternative legal framework.

When locals in Logan have asked to speak to me they have often been uncomfortable about abortion. They feel that the new bill, from what they know of it, does not give sufficient regard to the value of the foetus that is being aborted. Recently I sat down with two couples on a back deck in Munruben, where they made a strong and impassioned case to keep the current laws. However, when I asked them whether they wished to see a system of laws that would actually imprison a woman for abortion, they were a lot less certain about the role of criminal law. I do not want to see a woman who seeks or has a termination face criminal sanction, but I respect those who have spoken to me and who feel that this society should show a greater regard for the value of the human potential that is ended with a termination.

During the last parliament, and this one, I read carefully the submissions that were put forward before the committee. Many made reference to abortions later in the term of pregnancy. Under the current legal framework there is no distinction around gestational term, whereas under the new bill there is a marker that requires the medical profession to treat patients who are more than 22 weeks pregnant differently, requiring doctors to ultimately consider whether termination should be performed. It is clear that doctors have a tough job to do with little guidance from legislation. It is clear that, after considering the circumstances, doctors have a responsibility to sometimes not perform a termination, but ultimately it is not clear, except through their professional standards and guidelines.

When the constituents of Logan spoke to me about this, I think they were surprised that the current legal framework makes no distinction or limit. The report noted that the AMA suggested the limit of 22 weeks, which they defined as 'prior to possible survival' outside the womb. Obviously this is a decision of ethics. Others have put forward that a lower limit be considered, especially as medical technology improves outcomes for premature babies. The report noted that a medical submitter stated, 'There will never be a consensus between those who believe the foetus gains full rights at conception and those who believe the woman's right to autonomy is absolute throughout pregnancy.' This is ultimately an ethical question. Even before this date, the ethical decision for a doctor simply changes to ethically deciding whether it is acceptable for the patient to continue the pregnancy for just another week or two weeks or longer to change the status of viability. This means that this is not an easy or clear-cut decision for doctors and is ultimately an ethical decision as much as a scientific one.


I note that the member for Caloundra has put forward an alternative limit. We should note that this requires a second doctor to consult with another medical practitioner who has considered the circumstances and agrees after consideration that the termination should be performed. In reality, at a later stage of pregnancy these terminations are not without complexity and within Queensland Health there are much more rigorous processes. The requirement for two doctors to consider the circumstances of the termination is then a legal minimum. Doctors in reality have to satisfy both the medical situation and their own conscience about these complex situations. We should note that some submitters felt that the distinction of a gestational limit created a time pressure for pregnant women making this difficult decision. However, the legal minimum of two doctors consulting is not the hard limit that submitters were anticipating and, as I have said, Queensland Health has much more rigorous internal procedures regardless.

I also recognise that our health workers have their own views that are both complex and nuanced. The doctor who faced charges in the nineties, Dr Peter Bayliss, on the complex issue of gestational limits stated, 'Up to 20 weeks you're pretty sure you're terminating a pregnancy and that you're not killing a viable child.' From that viewpoint, Dr Bayliss had a conscience position for himself. He stated, 'If medical technology gets to salvage a 20-weeker, I'm moving back to 18 weeks; if they save an 18-weeker, I'm back to 16 weeks.' This is ultimately a decision that is ethical, not medical, in nature and one where Dr Bayliss had a conscience position.

I am concerned that the conscientious objection is prescriptive on the doctor involved in an abortion. If someone had a similar genuine conscience position to Dr Bayliss that a 20-weeker would be, as he described it, 'a viable child', can we really require them to refer, to have to find a provider who will terminate what they believe to be a viable child? I grew up with my father's passionate involvement with the deaf community. Can we really then in this legislation condemn a doctor who has a deaf brother or sister and who cannot in good conscience refer to someone who they believe does not have any problem with that termination? Doctors confronted with a patient seeking an abortion for reasons of gender selection may not even be able to refer to a doctor who they believe would perform a termination

for that reason. I am concerned that this prescription does not anticipate the many difficult, ethical and conscience decisions that Queensland doctors face. I also think that if this bill were to pass then the problems of access that this section hopes to address will not be the same as before.

These are difficult issues. We cannot prescribe for all of the difficult situations we are faced with. I do know that the situation we have now is irrational and, as the previous speaker said, has never been used to prosecute a woman in the hundred years or so that it has been in place. That does not mean that it is right. If we believe that it is not the correct way to go, to prosecute a woman, then we have to make the hard decisions, even if we personally have problems with abortion, about the role of the law as we go forward. I will be considering the bill and the amendments. I intend to vote for the bill on the second reading and consider all of the amendments put forward before my final vote.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.58 pm): Today is a very emotional day for me. My parents and my foster-parents have all passed on, and I respect them very much. It is very personal for me because, as an unwanted pregnancy, my voice might never have been heard here today. I stand here today as a survivor. If this law were present in those days, I would not be alive to speak on behalf of all of the babies who have the right to live—and I believe that I had the right to live. I still believe that.

I do not believe that some minister opposite can bring a bill to this House that says, 'Terminate that pregnancy.' I feel that this bill we are debating today should be called 'killing Ted bill'. That is the way I feel. Every baby has a right to live. Whether it is 20 weeks or 22 weeks, there is a real baby there. I was one of them. I think in this whole debate, and considering some of the things that have gone on today, people have forgotten about life. What is life? Even in the case of a baby in the womb, it is a life. Take me, for instance. Who has the right today to say, 'Kill Ted'? Honestly, that is what we are talking about here today.

It is difficult for me to stand up and talk about this. I have had a good life; I really have. I was fostered out at 13 months, but I have had a good life. I have been blessed. I have had a good life, but who has the right to say that someone can take my life away? I do not think anybody has the right to take a life. Nobody! I am here as proof that a baby is a human being; they grow up. It is something worth thinking about.

During my time in the Hervey Bay office I had the privilege of assisting a young mum in Hervey Bay who lost her baby hours before the baby was eligible for a funeral. It was so unfair that there was nothing to recognise this birth, even though the baby was stillborn. Many of these mums deliver the babies naturally; there is a delivery and a birth but no funeral. Jodie and I worked together with the member for Kawana, Jarrod Bleijie, and successfully rallied for the recognition of a birth certificate through Births, Deaths and Marriages for all mums in Queensland. Jodie stated—


In October 2014, Ted and I changed a QLD law and got babies from birth to 20 weeks the right for a Recognition of Birth certificate—

a commemorative certificate—

The certificate has helped me a lot and made my child feel valuable.

This was a woman who lost a baby at 19 weeks. The baby is real. I do not see why we should be a forcing a doctor into performing abortions; I really do not. That is one thing I could not do. No matter what, I just could not do it.

That is why I cannot support this bill, because it is my strong belief that it is a life. I am living proof of that. There is nothing wrong with living. I have an adopted daughter. I love her greatly. Why should she have been terminated? She has grown up with us. She has enjoyed life. She has two beautiful children. However, this bill says we can terminate all of that. Why? Think about it. When honourable members vote on it, just think about killing Ted over here, because that is what you are doing to my heart today.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (5.04 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. This is a momentous occasion and I am sure all of us in this House, regardless of which way we vote, are aware that it will have a place in history.

The issue of termination of pregnancy is a deeply personal one. I want to acknowledge the many people in the Bulimba electorate who took the trouble to make me aware of their personal views, and I pay my respects to them for their respective positions. To those for whom my support for the bill will be distressing, I apologise that we cannot agree on this occasion. To those who sent messages of support for taking the position that I have I say thank you; it was much appreciated. To those who contacted me

to list the numbers of people who would vote against me if I supported the bill, I say that I cannot be expected to exercise a conscience vote on an issue which is so deeply personal on the basis of whether it will affect my chances of re-election.

To me this issue is about every child having the right to be welcomed in this world but, most of all, it is about the fundamental right of a woman to choose what happens to her own body and affording that woman the respect to make that choice. We are a society that is evolving. We are no longer a society that considers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people unworthy of being counted as citizens; we are no longer a society that considers floggings a suitable judicial punishment; we are no longer a society—I hope—that considers women to be so inferior that they are only fit to do women's work. I believe that those who argue against abortion in any or most circumstances are arguing that we are a society in which the inherent value of the woman is secondary regardless of the circumstances that brought her to this point. No-one has the right to relegate a woman to that status.


During this debate I want to touch on the issue of reproductive coercion. Children by Choice reports that its early research shows that about a third of all of its clients who report domestic and family violence also report reproductive coercion. In my job as Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence I unfortunately hear and read about things that would be beyond the imagination of most people. I read about acts of evil and depravity, of deprivation of liberty and dignity. I can tell honourable members that there are many women who are forced to become pregnant. There are women who are emotionally blackmailed or intimidated out of using contraception. There are women who are threatened with violence and who are raped to force them into pregnancy. There are some who are forced by partners or family members to have terminations. These circumstances are about a woman's control over pregnancy being taken away—a woman's right to control her own body—and what greater indignity, what greater degradation is there?

Although reproductive coercion is not a stand-alone criminal offence, if the House votes against this bill we are saying that the women who suffer the consequences of those acts can be charged with a criminal offence. Reproductive coercion was not included in the landmark *Not now, not ever* report. It is captured by a range of offences under the Criminal Code including offences carrying maximum penalties of up to life in prison. However, if we do not support this bill this week, we are saying that the choices of women to manage the consequences of these offences should remain in the Criminal Code. There are many issues in this debate. For some, it is the right of women to access terminations without intimidation from others. For others, it is the timing of terminations. However, few, if any, are arguing that women who terminate their pregnancy should face the overbearing threat of criminal sanctions.

Many Queenslanders have campaigned heartily and respectfully as this legislation has progressed towards consideration in the parliament. Unfortunately, some have brought vitriol, intimidation and dishonesty to the argument, and I condemn those people for the trauma and difficulty that they have caused. I was very grateful to the health minister for establishing the fact checker website so that Queensland could have an informed and respectful debate on this issue, and I know that many people have found this website absolutely invaluable.

I want to acknowledge the two committees that have helped shepherd this bill and the previous two bills to this point today. I know that it was hard work; I know that it was traumatic work. I want to particularly acknowledge that it is not just this committee that brought this bill here today but the very, very hard and difficult work of the previous committee in the last term who had to manage issues around the form of the legislation. I know that it was very difficult for that committee.

I want to acknowledge the Premier. This is an issue about which there are many polarities, and I cannot express how proud I am that in a minority government the Premier would be brave enough to take this to an election and say, 'This is what we will do if we are re-elected.' I believe it is a vindication of her choice and her courage that we have the bill before us today. I want to acknowledge the Attorney-General and the health minister in particular, who I know worked so hard to get this bill to the point where we can have a reasoned debate. I want to thank the electorate officers all over Queensland regardless of which side of politics their members are on, because I know that they have borne the brunt of many of the pros and cons of the people who feel very strongly, and I thank them for what they have done over the last few months. I want to honour the women who have died or suffered untold trauma as a result of illegal abortions. It is time to put choices into the hands of women who have the right to make decisions for themselves, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.11 pm): The Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 has caused intense debate and a definite variance of opinion. There are no winners in a debate of this nature, no cause for celebration. I want to thank my colleague the honourable member for Hervey Bay for his brave and deeply personal speech a few minutes ago.

I can recall as if it were yesterday me as a young, somewhat emotional paediatric nurse, cradling babies who had no chance of living through the night. Images are etched in my mind of babies born with severe abnormalities with no hope of survival and parents torn apart by grief. Images also remain of children with gross deformities that made living a perilous journey and parents who were bravely facing the short futures of their dearly-loved offspring. Times have changed since then and medicine has advanced drastically, but there will still be children conceived who develop problems not compatible with life and who can cause fatal complications for the mother. Some of these problems do not present until late in the pregnancy. Some problems are not identified due to infrequent antenatal checks and other reasons. Not all pregnancies are wanted, welcomed or go well, although the majority thankfully do. More needs to be done in the education sphere regarding contraception choices and effectiveness. I hear stories about women who choose terminations and either regret them or suffer depression and similar symptoms. Conversely, all too frequently in the media we witness the horrific abuse and neglect of children who were not wanted or loved.

At the very core of this bill is the intention to decriminalise the termination of pregnancy, to enable reasonable and safe access by women to terminations and to regulate the conduct of registered health practitioners in relation to terminations. Of key importance is that a women's choice should be respected. That is not to exclude partners, family or others directly associated from being involved in a decision to terminate, but for so long women have not had a say. Their decisions were made for them in the 1950s and 1960s. Pregnant single mothers were pariahs to be shut away from society, many in church facilities, where they were forced to work as cleaners and reminded daily of their sinful ways. Meanwhile, the bloke who got them into this mess got off free to 'sow his wild oats'. These women delivered babies in inhumane situations. They were often drugged and incapable of seeing their newborns, let alone holding them, before they were whisked away for adoption. They were not allowed to terminate and they were not allowed to keep them. Years and then decades of grief followed. I know, as I have met many of these damaged women and cried with them for their loss.

For the past 40 years I have been married to a GP husband. He studied obstetrics as he wanted to be a GP who delivered babies, which he subsequently did and was very proud of. His diploma training required involvement in late-term terminations, and although it was 30 years ago he still remembers the solemnity of those moments despite being in agreeance that it was best under the circumstances.

This bill implements safe access zones for staff and patients seeking terminations. Whilst I support this provision, I make mention of the worst and most militant protesters who advocate disrupting workplaces, the Greens and unions like the CFMEU, who behave appallingly with no respect for private property and workers. Are they in favour of these amendments, which make it unlawful to protest nearby? It seems hypocritical to me.

On the issue of respect, it is simply untrue to say that the government has behaved in a respectful or apolitical way in this matter. They cannot say that this should be above politics and then throw abuse at the LNP, taunting and demanding that we have a conscience vote. The disgusting and hysterical behaviour of the member for Cooper, Kate Jones, on numerous occasions these past weeks made me physically sick. The member for Cooper, a minister at that, stood in this place and screeched and shouted across this chamber in a most unparliamentary and offensive way that we, the LNP, should grant MPs a conscience vote. If only she looked at the history books she would know it is common practice for to us do just that. Unlike Labor, who execute MPs for crossing the floor, we in the LNP get to discuss things in a mature and grown-up way. Minister Jones' appalling behaviour is reason enough to vote this bill down. Mind you, the Minister for Health, Steven Miles, and the member for Gaven, Meaghan Scanlon, are not too far behind. Today, the member for Cooper sat next to the health minister as he gave his speech, saying 'here, here' and nodding. I will be interested to hear what the honourable member has to say, but I cannot see her name on the speaking list.

On Monday, 8 October, a letter was published in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* signed 'Meaghan Scanlon, member for Gaven, Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development'. Her patronising and contemptuous language revealed an arrogance that seems to be the natural manner of members opposite. 'Little Miss', who has been here five minutes, had the audacity to lecture the LNP and has used this bill to score cheap political points in a public way via the local newspaper. She said—

Unfortunately, at the moment, I am the only Gold Coast Member of Parliament who has committed to voting in favour of changing these archaic laws.

She accused LNP members of showing no leadership in this debate. What right does the member for Gaven have to admonish and bully LNP members in this way? Only yesterday at the end of a committee meeting in front of secretariat staff I had to put up with goading that amounted to intimidation

from the member for Capalaba. If I had not walked out of the room he would have continued. Sadly, it is typical of the thuggish conduct we are witnessing on a more frequent basis from a Labor government dominated and directed by unions. I feel sorry for new MPs, who are led to believe that it is acceptable to carry on this way. It is not.


I have had only one previous occasion to place a conscience vote in this place—one vote in almost 15 years. It is not something to take lightly or play with. This bill is highly emotional, as honourable members have acknowledged. To be given a conscience vote is a privilege. We should all show respect to the women of Queensland and their families and medical staff who are facing and making these heart-wrenching decisions, and we should show respect towards each other.

Provisions in this bill require doctors who have a conscientious objection to performing a termination to refer the women to a health practitioner who does not have the same objection. As women deserve a choice, so do those who are part of a termination. The medical team also deserves to have the right not to participate if it is against their beliefs, and surely a list of participating doctors could be made available. The honourable member for Caloundra's amendments seek to address this and other issues such as counselling, and I urge the government to consider them favourably.

In summary, like many honourable members and Queenslanders, I believe that medical and surgical terminations performed by medical professionals should be decriminalised. We have come a long way from the backyard abortions and gin and hot baths of past years. I recognise there are strong arguments against this bill. The provision allowing late terminations for social reasons alone is questionable motivation; however, this bill is asking us to have confidence in doctors—as I have told honourable members, I am married to a wonderful one—who have to determine whether late-stage post-22-week terminations can proceed if the case put to them is reason enough to terminate a foetus.

I have listened intently to both sides of this issue. I have lost sleep and agonised over my final decision. I have taken on board the survey of over 600 Currumbin residents that revealed that 72 per cent of people supported the move to make abortion access legal and almost 68 per cent of those supported terminations up to 22 weeks. Of course, I have taken on board the sentiments of LNP members, especially my branch, and resolutions made at our state conference. As a Christian, I have also had to grapple with the beliefs of the Anglican Church, even though I have always been of the opinion that religion and politics should never, ever be mixed. Matters of conscience are just that and must be respected and not turned into a pointscore brawl which, disappointingly, some MPs tried to do in the lead-up to this debate. We have a melting pot of opinions and emotions before us, and they all hold value.

I would like to place on record my appreciation to my electorate staff, Paula and Leesa, who have been at the coalface of all of the correspondence related to this bill. They have both been wonderful. I shall listen to the remainder of this debate as I give further thoughtful consideration to this bill before I exercise my very privileged conscience vote.

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (5.20 pm): I rise to place on record my support for the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I commend the Premier for her leadership on this issue, an issue that has been shirked for too long. The reference to the Queensland Law Reform Commission has ensured that a considered bill is before the House for debate. Equally, I recognise that there are strongly and sincerely held beliefs on both sides of this debate. I want to acknowledge the work of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee and its predecessor committee in the last parliament. In particular, I want to note and thank the member for Greenslopes for a number of informative discussions that we have had about this healthcare issue.

As this is a matter of conscience and not subject to a caucus vote, I believe it is important that I explain my position on the record so that my constituents have plain sight of my decision. During my time in public life I have consistently maintained that it is not the role of this place—the parliament—to dictate moral positions that are not broadly held across the community. There can be no doubt that the act of termination of pregnancy, something that has occurred throughout human history, is the subject of divergent moral views. I respect those in our community who find it morally repugnant; however, the reality is that this is not a view so widely held that it is justified to use the power of the state, the authority of this parliament, to enforce it.

In my electorate, I am confident that the majority of my constituents do not support the law as it currently stands. Indeed, I would suggest that most of my constituents would believe that terminations are currently legal without question. To anyone who has asked I have made it clear, since my first election in 2006, that I would support law reform if it relates to the current criminalisation of women


accessing terminations and the health professionals supporting them. To me, the fact that laws regulating the access to terminations are contained within the Criminal Code is wrong and it is in desperate need of reform.

Queensland women need legislation focused on their physical and mental health, particularly focused on their personal circumstances and not dogma when facing an important life choice for themselves and their family. The current legislative arrangements fail this in every way. My challenge to those who oppose reform is: if you support the current laws, do you want to see Queensland women jailed in their thousands? While some have personally told me yes, most have not, and I am confident that very few Queenslanders think this desirable.

With law reform necessary, we are presented, thanks to my friend the Attorney-General, with a bill that reflects the recommendations of the Queensland Law Reform Commission following extensive consideration and consultation. Women and their medical professionals should not be made criminals for making a difficult decision in the interests of a woman's physical and mental health, and women facing this difficult choice should not be harassed and harangued when accessing services.

I acknowledge that this bill, if passed, will be the culmination of the hard work of many people over many years. I commend the many groups across the community who have advocated for this change for many years but especially Children by Choice. Children by Choice pioneers like Beryl Holmes must be acknowledged. I acknowledge the work of campaigners whom I have worked with over the years—campaigners like Cait Calcutt, Kate Marsh, Terri Butler and Jo Briskey, amongst others.

At this point I wish to acknowledge a former parliamentary colleague, former member for Aspley Bonny Barry, for persisting on this issue when others have shirked. I know that Bonny is watching this debate with nervous anticipation. Another nervously following this debate is my wife, Megan. As well as being my life partner and mother of our three children, Megan has been a telephone counsellor at Children by Choice, an advocate for law reform and a member of the Children by Choice management committee. She is a very pragmatic woman and this, combined with her experience, has informed Megan's strong support for this legislation. We share a view that abortion should be safe, accessible and rare. I am satisfied that this bill will lead to a better Queensland with the necessary protections in place for women and their medical practitioners. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.26 pm): The Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018 seeks to, among other things, legalise termination of pregnancy by a medical practitioner up to birth. As Peter Gleeson writes in today's *Courier-Mail*, it is about the most sacred of all topics, the involuntary right to be born or, more specifically, the right to choose to kill an unborn baby. My KAP colleagues and I have been opposed to this bill from the outset and have been greatly concerned by the way this bill allows the abortion of a child right up to birth. We would not be having this discussion if the bill were about determining whether a mother should have the legal right to terminate the life of an infant up to two years old due to the stress of the way the child impacts her social situation.

Those opposing the bill—of the 4,855 public submissions, 78 per cent were opposed—are saying that both the mother and the child have equal value, that the lives of both are equally important. The myth that this is about women's rights has been clearly debunked by the fact that 90 per cent of people outside the parliament gate this morning were women and that 95 per cent of the protestors outside the parliament gate over a month ago were women. This demonstrates that many women believe that the right of the mother to choose does not supersede the right of the child to live. The view that life begins at conception is not a scientific view; it is a belief about the value of human life itself.

The health of the mother and the right to choose have been the reasons given for changing the laws surrounding abortion in Queensland, but this bill does not restrict the decision to terminate a pregnancy to health reasons alone. Part 2, clause 6, states—

(1) A medical practitioner may perform a termination on a woman who is more than 22 weeks pregnant if—

...

(2) In considering whether a termination should be performed on a woman, a medical practitioner must consider—

(a) all relevant medical circumstances; and

(b) the woman's current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances ...

The bill does not even define the physical, psychological or social circumstances that warrant a termination. The bill has been modelled on the Victorian law, under which almost half of the late-term abortions in recent years have been performed on healthy babies of healthy mothers for so-called


psychosocial reasons. This is not happening in Queensland now, but this bill will allow the same thing to occur if it is passed. YouGov Galaxy research showed that, when asked specifically about the provisions of the bill to allow late-term abortions for social reasons, 70 per cent of Queensland women said no, with only 18 per cent in favour.

The argument that women have the right to decide what happens to their body is a valid one. We all have the right to choose what we do. Nobody should ever be forced to make decisions that they do not want to make, but we must also bear some of the responsibilities for our choices. Saying that this bill will ensure women have the right to choose whether they have a baby or not ignores the fact that the bill will also make it easier for mothers to be coerced and bullied into terminating a pregnancy without their wishes. In a recent Galaxy poll one in four Queenslanders said they know at least one woman who made the decision to have an abortion following pressure from another person.

The high-profile case of Jaya Taki, which featured in the national media, reflects a situation that is repeated daily in our communities but is unseen and unreported. A rising NRL star forced his girlfriend, Jaya, to abort their child as it would ruin his career. The player told Jaya Taki that she should terminate the pregnancy and that he would not support her if she decided to have the baby. In the end Taki said, 'I gave in to him. I was so sick and so tired. He won.' What protections do we now give to women in Jaya's situation? What message are we sending by saying that life inside the womb has less value than any other life outside? This bill legitimises those who wish to force someone to terminate a pregnancy for social or psychological reasons. Safeguards for women that are missing from the bill include independent counselling, informed consent requirements and a cooling-off period, which is supported by 80 per cent to 90 per cent of Queenslanders.

The government has ignored the majority of people who have expressed their opposition to the bill. In a recent YouGov Galaxy poll, 62 per cent of Queenslanders believed that the unborn child at 23 weeks of pregnancy is a person with human rights. That figure went up to 69 per cent of females. The reality is the current laws in Queensland do not demonise women who have abortions. The Queensland Law Reform Commission report found between 10,000 and 14,000 terminations were performed in Queensland each year, with most performed in the first trimester of pregnancy. The report found that later terminations were comparatively rare. This finding indicates that the current laws ensure later terminations only ever occur when the life of the mother is generally at risk. In Queensland abortions are currently regarded as generally lawful if performed to prevent serious danger to the mother's physical or mental health. There are already safeguards in place for the protection of the mother's life in life-threatening situations.

This bill removes the right of medical practitioners to conscientiously object but opens the way for unsafe abortions up to the full term of a pregnancy with no legal accountability. This does not achieve the desired result of safety for women but enshrines in legislation the power to terminate a life with no personal, legal or medical accountability but simply for the right to do so. The KAP made its position clear. We support the sanctity of life and we strongly object to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.32 pm): I rise to speak to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. Any public discourse regarding an issue as deeply contested as abortion law can be expected to attract a high level of interest. Community opinions about abortion are complex, divergent and often based on deeply held values. It is unlikely that public consensus about abortion can be achieved and legislation cannot impose consensus. These are the words I used in my foreword as chair of the committee that considered the first two inquiries into abortion law reform last term and I believe they hold as true now as they did then. The former committee's examination of both bills, concurrent with an initial broader terms of reference, was protracted—spanning 10 months. As anticipated, the evidence conveyed in submissions and during hearings was conflicting and contested and views shared were deeply held and often irreconcilable. I am sure that the views and evidence tendered at the recent inquiry were equally as contested.

Under Queensland law, as it currently stands, it is a criminal offence to attempt to procure an abortion for oneself or another or to knowingly supply drugs or instruments to a person seeking to procure an abortion. Sections 224, 225 and 226 of the Criminal Code relate and refer to the 'unlawful' procurement of an abortion. The Criminal Code contains a defence to liability under section 282. The inclusion of the word 'unlawful' implies that there are circumstances where an abortion is lawful. However, the act does not define when and in what circumstances an abortion may be considered 'lawful' and hence the common law has become unusually instructive in the case of abortion law in Queensland.

Currently, there is no national monitoring of statistics with regard to the incidence of abortion and hence only incomplete data exists for Queensland and most other states and territories. There was significant evidence presented to the committee inquiries last term that the criminal offences for abortion in Queensland contribute to limits on data collection and transparency. However, what we can estimate by drawing on admitted patient episodes for licensed private health facilities, Medicare data, Queensland perinatal data collection and prescriptions for abortifacients is that between 10,000 and 14,000 abortions are performed annually in Queensland. The majority of these—an estimated 99 per cent—occur in private health facilities during the first trimester of pregnancy. An estimated one per cent take place in public health facilities beyond 20 weeks gestation, most for foetal abnormalities, maternal illness or complications.

Public debate about abortion law has historically been dominated by interest groups with strong views on both sides of the debate, as has been evidenced in the debate to date in Queensland. Both the former and current committee reports recognised that the views that are most often prominent in public debate are not necessarily reflective of the full range of community views. With the objective of understanding community attitudes and expectations, the former committee commissioned researchers from ANU to assess the reliability of seven Australian community attitude surveys and opinion polls about abortion undertaken over the past 10 years. The review found that recent surveys of attitudes towards abortion suggest that a majority of Australians support women being able to obtain an abortion if required.

Many of the submissions and testimony received throughout the debate on this issue have been premised on the question being one of abortion or no abortion. It is not—and I do not believe ever could be—a simple yes or no proposition. The question for me is whether the current law in Queensland is working or adequate. For many, abortion is a great travesty and loss of human life and for this reason it should sit in the Criminal Code as a deterrent. Some argue that thousands of women successfully access abortions in Queensland without prosecution and, hence, change to the law is not necessary. Conversely, many believe passionately that the current law in Queensland impedes a woman's right to make personal decisions regarding her health and in particular her right to maintain control over her own fertility, with access to health care only compounded by the tyranny of distance and/or financial hardship.

The committee received no evidence that the current legislation has any deterrent effect on women seeking a termination. Rather, the committee heard that women in large part are unaware that abortion is a criminal offence. The inquiries have, however, received consistent testimony that the current legal situation in Queensland has created uncertainty among doctors about how the law works in practice and that the threat of criminal prosecution acts to impede the provision of a full range of safe, accessible and timely reproductive services for women.

It is for these reasons that I believe that the current legal situation in Queensland is ambiguous and does not serve the rule of law, and that is that the law should be readily known, certain and clear, that it should be accessible and obeyed, and that the law should reflect community expectations. Instead, it ignores the reality of unplanned pregnancies and abortion. I do not believe it is fair and just to criminalise women for making what is invariably a deeply personal, difficult and sometimes impossible decision and I believe that the discussion would be better served for all involved by taking a public health approach and seeking to reduce the incidence of abortion rather than criminalising those who seek it.

Professor Eleanor Milligan, clinical ethicist and academic in medical ethics and professional practice at Griffith's School of Medicine, submitted to the initial inquiry that international medical research confirms that it is through public health and social policy measures that termination rates are reduced. I appreciate that, reciprocally, many fear that decriminalising will lead to an increase in the incidence of abortion in Queensland. Importantly, a recent study of abortion incidence between 1990 and 2014 published in the *Lancet* international medical journal found that in the developed world the annual abortion rate has declined significantly. It also found no evidence that abortion rates were associated with the legal status of abortion. Having spoken to the first question of whether the current law in Queensland is working or adequate leads naturally to the second of whether the bill before the House presents a sound opportunity to improve the current legal position in Queensland.

The Termination of Pregnancy Bill treats abortion as a health issue rather than a criminal matter and seeks to bring our current law into line with contemporary and safe clinical practice. The bill is designed to work in tandem with clinical guidelines, including the offering of counselling and a medical

practitioner's common law obligations to obtain informed consent, not in isolation. It reflects the positions of informed healthcare organisations and stakeholders, including the AMA and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

The bill provides for termination up to 22 weeks gestation. This limit was chosen on the basis of current clinical practice that considers that this represents the stage immediately before the threshold of viability and, further, to allow a woman who receives a poor or fatal foetal diagnosis at her 18- to 20-week routine scan time to seek further expert medical opinions and make difficult decisions.

However, after 22 weeks gestation, two doctors must agree that performing an abortion is appropriate in all the circumstances. Currently, this is not a requirement. Each year in Queensland, approximately 140 abortions are conducted after 20 weeks. All involve complex medical and personal circumstances. Most involve wanted pregnancies where a termination is necessary owing to severe health problems faced by the foetus or the mother or to save the life of another foetus in a multiple pregnancy. Such cases are very rare and very sad.


The bill establishes safe access zones of 150 metres around clinics where abortions are performed to protect the safety, privacy and dignity of women and staff accessing clinics. I believe that the right to protest should be protected. However, I also believe that women do not make these decisions lightly and to seek to invoke feelings of guilt or deeper pain at such a vulnerable time is unnecessary and, at worst, cruel. Under the bill, medical practitioners retain the right to conscientious objection, but will be required to refer to another health practitioner or service that does not have a conscientious objection.

I believe that the bill strikes the necessary balance between a practitioner's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the need for the transfer of care for a woman seeking timely clinical information or services. This is particularly pertinent to regional Queenslanders.

Time does not allow me to expand further. I would like to say in summary that I have not taken a position or formed my views in regard to this debate lightly. My position was significantly informed by the evidence, submissions and testimony tendered during those first two inquiries and confirmed by the recent Queensland Law Reform Commission report. The committee of which I was the chair during the last term rejected the first of the bills that sought to legalise termination of pregnancy and was not able to reach a consensus on the second bill owing in large part to the legal uncertainty created by the interaction of the two bills and the potential for unintended consequences. As some have sought to propagate, it was not because the case for law reform had not been made.

It is time we stopped ignoring the reality of unplanned pregnancies and abortion in Queensland and seek to do more about it by treating it as a public health issue. I have met with the health minister, Steven Miles, regarding my hope that we can do more in this space. I thank him for being so available and receptive to our discussions. I thank him particularly for his commitment this morning to an impartial women's health hotline and the provision of supporting information based on clinical guidelines to genuinely inform and support Queensland women.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge those constituents who contacted me, all of whom I sought to speak or write to personally. To talk about something so personal and contested takes courage. I know that many of them will be listening. Whether my position in support of this bill reflects the position and arguments that they put forward, please know that I listened and thank them for their contribution to this debate.

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (5.42 pm): I rise to speak to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. This bill is perhaps the most difficult bill any parliament will have before it. The reality is that, whichever way we vote, someone will be disappointed and believe that we have made the wrong choice. Abortion is one of the most emotional topics we can bring up in the public space. The range of views and passion with which these views are held is so divergent that it is impossible to bring people together. It is our job to assess the proposal before us and whether it best reflects the views of the Queenslanders we represent.

Frankly, as a male, this is a difficult topic to approach. I will never physically go through an abortion or pregnancy, but I find myself in the position of deciding what is right for a woman to do with her body. It is not just about that, though. We have to acknowledge that there are others involved. That creates an incredibly difficult and delicate situation in which we are trying to balance the rights of multiple people.

I have spent months talking to and hearing from hundreds of my constituents from my electorate—generally more women than men. I have also been raising these proposed laws at every opportunity as I have made my way around my community. That has probably not made me the best

company over the past few weeks. Abortion is not usually a topic that you bring up in polite conversation at a local cafe, or while cooking on the barbecue at a Bunnings sausage sizzle for your local scout group, or even over dinner at a Rotary meeting. Nevertheless, it is important to hear what people think and to take every opportunity to engage them in politics and the debate that we are having in this House. I thank everyone who has been in touch and who has entered into that discussion with me. I want them to please know that I will represent them as much as possible as I make my decision about this bill along with following my own conscience on what I believe is right.

I am in favour of abortion reform in Queensland. To me, this is not a debate about abortion and no abortion. It already happens. In fact, I do not believe that any member is advocating for an increase in the number of abortions performed in this state. We know from other states and countries that reform to laws around abortion does not change the rate of abortion and that, if anything, it often decreases. We are talking about a framework for the regulation of the termination of pregnancy in Queensland and whether this framework before us is the right one. I believe that the framework around terminations needs change. I believe that abortion should be a woman's choice up until a certain defined point and, after that, only in specific medical circumstances on the advice of doctors.

Regarding the bill before us, I support decriminalisation. I believe that a significant majority of members in this House share that opinion. In the over 100 years of the law being as it is in Queensland, no-one has been convicted and, therefore, it is archaic. Taking aside the emotive nature of this argument, I do not believe in laws that serve no real purpose. All that does is add stigma to an already difficult decision.

I am also in favour of regulation around safe access zones. I have heard from health professionals who have heard the vile abuse levelled at women entering these clinics and I do not believe that is acceptable. I do not believe safe access zones impact unduly on free speech; they only curb the disgusting behaviour of some of these protestors. There are many people who disagree with abortion and who will always disagree with abortions. I think they should, just as with any other issue in this country, have the freedom to speak their minds. However, I do not believe that they need to be permitted to project that view within such a close proximity to clinics. Given the passion behind the beliefs that different people have on this issue, it is difficult to be civil and respectful, but women copping abuse outside clinics is not respectful and is not something that we should allow to happen as it currently is.

My main concerns are about some other aspects of the bill. In my opinion, and in that of many of my constituents, to allow terminations on request up until 22 weeks gestation is too high a threshold. The reasoning provided in the committee's report and by other members has not convinced me otherwise. As a comparison to other parts of Australia, 22 weeks would give us one of the highest levels of on-request abortion access across this country. The ACT has no threshold. Victoria is at 24 weeks and every other state is lower than that. The thresholds of Tasmania, the Northern Territory and Western Australia are 16 weeks, 14 weeks and 20 weeks respectively. I would be more comfortable with some of these lower thresholds than the recommended one for Queensland, but that is what we have before us.

The justification that this threshold is just below the point of viability is not good enough. With babies from 23 weeks considered to be in the grey zone, 22 weeks is too close. We are seeing more and more advancements in medicine. To bring the law that places on-demand abortions available up until viability is cutting it very fine.


The reasoning that abnormalities are picked up at the 18- to 20-week scan does not warrant on-request abortions up to 22 weeks, because in the case of severe abnormalities the woman would be in discussion with her medical practitioners and there would still be the ability to obtain a termination from there. This is a difficult decision for any woman and no-one takes it lightly. It is difficult, because we know that we are talking about another life.

To understand how my community felt, I ran a survey asking people for their opinion on the key components of this bill. I received just over 250 generally very detailed pieces of feedback from people in my area. People overwhelmingly—in the order of nearly three quarters of those who gave me their thoughts—believe that abortion should not be in the Criminal Code. They support the notion that abortion should be a woman's choice up to a certain point and then on medical advice in specific circumstances after that threshold. The feedback also showed that a significant majority think that 22 weeks is too high a threshold. To me, this section of the bill is the most concerning. However, there are other sections that I would like to cover. Allowing terminations by a medical practitioner after 22 weeks should be available in very specific situations. I note that the cases of late-term abortions are extremely rare, complex and often horrific circumstances.

For this reason we need to have very clear and tight regulation and, to me, including social circumstances is not necessary. I also believe counselling should be mandatorily offered to women. They are making a serious decision. There are often psychological ramifications of terminations. Why would we not offer counselling so that we can ensure the best possible health care for them. This would not be a checkpoint to approve their decision, but a voluntary additional piece of support. I have feedback from women who have had abortions saying this kind of support would have been helpful before and after termination.

We should all be guided by our own thoughts and our own conscience, but also by what those we represent think. I have done my best to do that today. As I have weighed this decision I have asked just about everyone I can. This includes my local LNP party members. They are a great group of people who I would not be in this place without. These are people who voluntarily want to be part of our political process and they are from all walks of life and ages, from students to retirees and we even have a pharmacology professor in our local branch. Last night we discussed this bill at great length and we had special guests, former senator Sue Boyce and Teeshan Johnson, presenting each case. At the end of it I laid out my position and we had a secret ballot to see whether the party members would endorse it. Although unnecessary given it is a conscience vote, it is important to me to have their support in my position and I thank them for that and for engaging in such a civil discussion.

To sum up, we need reform but, in considering my conscience and my community, I do not believe this is the right reform. I am in favour of some of the proposed amendments and I will use my vote to try to achieve a better outcome.

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (5.51 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill. The bill presents an historic opportunity for Queensland to decriminalise termination of pregnancy and to place it into the Health Act where it belongs. The Palaszczuk Labor government took this reform to the 2017 state election and is committed to delivering this to Queensland women. I thank the Attorney-General, the Premier and the health minister for the work they have done preparing this bill and I wish to acknowledge the work done by the Queensland Law Reform Commission for its excellent review and investigation into the reform of termination laws in Queensland. I also acknowledge the excellent work done by the parliamentary committee on this bill.

I want to acknowledge all of my constituents who contacted me about this legislation before us this evening. As we have already heard, it is an issue that many people are passionate about. I also want to acknowledge my electorate officers, Susan and Keryl, who have been at the coalface of these opinions. I know they have both been exposed to things that have disturbed them deeply and I thank them for their professionalism throughout this process.

There are so many things to say about the issue of decriminalisation of abortion, but at the same time there is very little. The laws we are seeking to change are archaic and have no place in modern society. This legislation has not been rushed through or poorly thought out as claimed by the member for Mudgeeraba. There have been two parliamentary inquiries and the QLRC deliberated over this for more than 12 months. The QLRC's 28 recommendations have been accepted in full by the Palaszczuk government and it informs this milestone legislation.

To begin with I acknowledge that this debate has been challenging and difficult. It is a debate that has been emotionally wrenching for many women and men and one that goes to the heart of people's core values and beliefs. Conversations about issues such as termination of pregnancy are especially difficult in times when our general public debate has become particularly divisive and polarised. However, it is a conversation that we need to have. Unfortunately, some of that conversation has been laden with misinformation, falsehoods and alarming language that has had the intent to emotionally manipulate for the purpose of stirring guilt, shame and fear. For many women who have needed access to termination services in Queensland, this legislation is a long time coming.

In saying that, I would like to acknowledge some of the pioneers and campaigners of this debate who are in the House and have been listening with great interest. It means so much to me to see them here and to know that I am a member of a government led by a Premier, a Deputy Premier and a first-class front bench that has had the courage to finally right this historic wrong against women. You women are warriors and have invested much of your time and energy and passion to this issue and I know you are all awaiting the outcome of this debate with bated breath.

Our current laws have created uncertainty, fear and stigma for women and health practitioners. For women in regional and rural areas who do not have access to termination services, it presents serious health issues. Some women have been turned away for trying to access terminations and told


that the procedure is illegal. They have experienced deliberate delay by medical practitioners who have conscientiously objected to carrying out the service and they have been shamed into carrying out their pregnancies to full term by pro-life doctors.

We have been afforded a conscience vote on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill and I am grateful to use it for supporting this bill. I firmly believe that abortion is a personal health matter for women and their GP and it should not belong in the Criminal Code. The conscience vote is core to our democratic government and although rare in Queensland it has been used to determine legislation of significant moral and social importance such as we have seen in the past 15 years with the Prohibition of Human Cloning Bill in 2003, the Surrogacy Bill in 2009 and the Civil Partnerships Bill in 2011 and again in 2015.

My decision to support the Termination of Pregnancy Bill is not just based on my belief that abortion should be treated as a personal health matter. My support is based on the Queensland Law Reform Commission's review. I believe they have done a tremendous job in objectively examining this reform and their recommendations are in line with contemporary clinical practice and consistent with similar legislation in other Australian jurisdictions. During the review, the QLRC consulted widely with informed healthcare organisations and stakeholders and this bill reflects the positions held by those stakeholders and organisations, including the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists.

As Minister Miles said today, voting against this bill will not stop terminations and I personally do not see how voting for this bill will result in more terminations being performed. On the contrary, since Victoria decriminalised termination of pregnancy in 2008 it has seen a significant decrease in rates of abortion. This decrease has also been reported in other jurisdictions across the world that have decriminalised terminations.

Voting for this bill will ensure that Queensland women will have access to safe reproductive services without having to face legal uncertainty or feelings of shame and anxiety. Whether a termination is carried out for medical or personal reasons, the decision to terminate a pregnancy is a heartwrenching one for women and their loved ones. It is not a decision made flippantly for so-called social reasons. There are always good reasons a woman needs access to termination services and those reasons are personal, health related and are a matter between herself and a qualified health practitioner. To suggest otherwise is insulting. I am proud to support this bill and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (5.57 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. In doing so I have been listening closely to those members who have spoken so far and I must congratulate the majority of them on the content of their speeches. I have sat here and absorbed a lot of what has been said.

The objectives of this bill are to enable reasonable and safe access by women to terminations and to regulate the conduct of registered health practitioners in relation to terminations. Let us be honest: this is the Labor Party playing politics with what is a really important issue and it should be condemned for that.

I come to this debate as a husband, a brother, a father and a grandfather and as such I have consulted with those important women in my life. I have consulted directly with my mother. I have consulted with my wife. I have consulted with my sister. I have had a long conversation with my daughter and my nieces. I have talked to both of my staff members who are female; one who is pregnant at the moment and, in fact, has just started maternity leave and the other one has not started a family yet. All of those people that I have consulted with, after I have explained to them exactly what this bill does, agree with the position that I will articulate in the rest of my speech.

In this debate we have heard many say that the termination of pregnancy should not be in the Criminal Code and I totally agree with that. It should not be in the Criminal Code. However, it is a fact that every year in this state that there are over 14,000 abortions and so far nobody has been charged with a criminal offence. That is a fact. Therefore, why are we changing the law? As I said before, frankly, this is just the Labor Party playing politics. However, if we accept that abortion should be taken out of Criminal Code and if that is what the Labor Party wants to do, it could have simply done it. I would say that the majority of the members in this House—I will not speak for everyone but based on those who have spoken so far—seem to overwhelmingly support taking abortion out of the Criminal Code and making it a health issue, as it really should be. However, this bill goes much further.

We are talking about the on-demand termination of a pregnancy at 22 weeks gestation. As the member for Bonney quite rightly said, in this country we see medical practices change dramatically. In 1986, my firstborn children, my twins, were born prematurely at 37 weeks. There was quite a bit of

concern about their survival. At that time, babies born under 32 to 33 weeks were deemed to be in extreme danger and people were really concerned about them. Now we hear that a 22- or 23-week foetus is viable. In fact, close family friends of members of my family had a baby at 23 weeks. That baby is now three years old and is very healthy and living a great life. I would hate to have seen something happen to that child. I think 22 weeks is way too late. I look forward to seeing the amendments that might be moved in consideration in detail, to see exactly how that goes.


It is completely false for members on the other side to come into this place and tell us that, because at around the 22- to 25-week mark medical tests are done to tell whether there are issues with a foetus, citing a gestation period of less than 22 weeks for on-demand terminations would affect whether or not that child could be aborted. The bill allows for an abortion to occur after 22 weeks if two doctors look at the situation and decide that it is required medically to abort that child. We all agree that there are circumstances where a foetus is not viable or has deformities that mean the baby should be aborted. However, there are lots of cases where that should not happen.

I totally disagree that one of the things that should be taken into account by doctors looking at this issue is the social circumstances of the woman seeking the abortion or the future social circumstances of that person. That is abhorrent and should not be part of this discussion.

In summary, I think we should take abortion out of the Criminal Code. It should not be part of the Criminal Code. I totally agree that it should be up to a woman to decide what happens with her body and her health. However, on-demand terminations at 22 weeks is way too late. I would like to see that figure lowered. Taking into account changes in medical technology, we are not far away from a time when these things will be determined by DNA. Therefore, 22 weeks is way too late and having abortions after 22 weeks decided on social grounds is not acceptable to me.

We need to take into account issues around a doctor's conscientious objection to performing an abortion. In that circumstance, a doctor should not have to refer a person to another doctor. Looking back to 1986 when my sons were born, we decided to have them circumcised. We took them to a doctor who said, 'No, I do not want to do that'. He was not forced to refer us to anybody. He did not have to do that. This was just chopping off a little bit of skin, but he was not forced to send us to another doctor who would perform that procedure. We had to hunt around for ourselves. Therefore, if a person needs a termination performed they can find another doctor who will do it for them.

I will be watching the rest of this debate with interest. I will be watching to see the results of the debate on the amendments that are moved. At that time I will make my final decision as to which way I will vote. I can tell the House that I am inclined not to support the bill, because of the reasons that I have outlined.

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill and, in so doing, I acknowledge the incredible women upon whose shoulders I stand today. Some of those women are in the gallery and I recognise their contribution towards this issue. For many years those people have campaigned to give women agency over their own bodies.

I am proudly pro choice and firmly believe that a woman should be able to make a decision about her own health, in consultation with her medical practitioner, without that being a crime. The laws that currently govern abortion in Queensland were written in the 1800s. To put that into context, these laws were written during a time when women could not vote, when we were denied a voice and when we could not forge a career. These archaic laws need to change.

Like many of my colleagues, I have been targeted throughout the debate for being supportive of a woman's right to have agency over her own body. I have had offensive and inaccurate materials distributed throughout my electorate. I have been asked multiple times by people opposed to this reform if I have had an abortion. I have considered sharing my story to debunk some of the myths that have been thrown around, but I have made the decision that, quite frankly, it is no-one's business.

Instead, I will say that in Australia it is estimated that at least one in four women have had an abortion. There are more than four women in this chamber, so statistically speaking at least seven women in this parliament have had an abortion, but we are not able to speak about the details of that decision because we would have committed a criminal offence. If our laws were enforced, many of us would not be eligible to sit in this chamber.

I ask a question of those who are opposed to this reform. Do those who are opposed to this bill believe that I or any other woman in this chamber should go to jail for making a decision about our own health? Do those opposed to this bill believe that a woman who has been raped or who has a non-viable pregnancy with a foetus that has no chance of being born alive should be incarcerated for having a

termination? Any member who votes against this bill will be voting for many of the women I have just described to be subject to the Criminal Code. To those who have said that no-one has been prosecuted under these laws so we should leave them in the Criminal Code, I ask: if these laws are not being enforced, why do you have a problem with them being removed from the Criminal Code?

I have heard the slippery-slope argument and it is devoid of fact. There is no evidence from any other Australian jurisdiction or internationally that substantiates the claim that there would be a likely increase in abortions following decriminalisation. In fact, in Victoria we have seen a decrease. This bill will not increase late-term abortions and to say so is disrespectful to the many women who have shared their heartbreaking stories. This bill will not lead to sex-selective abortions. It will not allow women to terminate their pregnancies up until birth for any reason and women will not start using abortion as their preferred method of contraception.

Respecting women means respecting a woman's right to make a decision about her own health and respecting that we have the intellect to be able to make a sensible and informed decision that is right for us. All voting against this bill will do is continue to drive women into the shadows of seeking illegal and potentially dangerous abortions. It will continue to disproportionately affect women in regional Queensland. Keeping abortion in the Criminal Code will not stop abortions from happening. Women have always had abortions and they will continue to have abortions.

This bill is about bringing Queensland into the 21st century and bringing our laws into line with what is actually happening in society. It is about treating women and our medical profession with dignity and respect. I said in my first speech that I believe that our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. I have had hundreds of people in my community contact me in support of these reforms. I want to thank them for their contribution during this difficult debate. Women and men who are not ordinarily politically engaged have been sharing their stories with me.


One particular story that stood out the most was from an ex-soldier in Nerang whose daughter-in-law was harassed as she entered a private clinic. She had a wanted pregnancy that was nonviable, meaning the foetus had no chance of being born alive. No woman in this situation deserves to be harassed. Yet that is exactly what happened when she approached the clinic. This is one of the many reasons we want to introduce safe access zones in Queensland. I do not think that politicians or anyone in our community should sit in judgement of a woman whose shoes we have not walked in.

I have heard from a family who were given news that their foetus's lungs were not growing and that the prospect of survival after birth was minimal. This particular family chose to continue with that pregnancy and sadly the child died a few months after birth. They told me that they appreciated the fact that they were provided with a choice. That is ultimately what this debate is about. No member of parliament is forcing anyone to have an abortion. No-one is advocating for more women to have abortions. What we are saying is that women who need an abortion should not be treated like a common criminal for making a decision about their own health.

We live in a representative democracy, and I am very thankful for that. We are elected to represent the views of our community. I am a proud born and bred Gold Coaster and I am honoured to represent the community that I grew up in. I know that the overwhelming majority of my community supports this reform. A recent poll shows that over 70 per cent of Gold Coasters support the decriminalisation of abortion. Today I stand here advocating for the thousands of women in my city who deserve a voice in this chamber. We are one of the only jurisdictions in the country that still treat abortion as a crime. Even Ireland and America have legalised abortion.

This bill has been the subject of thorough consultation. The Queensland Law Reform Commission conducted a detailed and wideranging 12-month inquiry to inform its report, which included 1,200 submissions on its consultation paper from a diverse range of stakeholders. The committee then considered over 6,000 submissions on the bill as part of its inquiry. This issue has well and truly been considered and debated for many, many years.

We now have the opportunity to play a part in creating historic reform in Queensland. Reproductive autonomy is fundamental towards achieving equality. It is time that we get this done for the generations of women who have been fighting for the right to choose, for the women who have died as a result of illegal abortions, for the women who need safe access to abortion now and for the future generations of women. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise to strongly oppose the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. When I rose in this House for the very first time I made a commitment to the people of Bundaberg. I vowed to serve them with honesty, integrity and compassion for as long as they will have

me represent them. Each and every time I have spoken I have honoured that commitment, and today is no different. Today is not about us as members of parliament. Today is about the people of our communities and how they feel about the content of this bill.

I stand here on behalf of the people of Bundaberg, as their voice and their representative. I would like to sincerely thank each and every one of my constituents—numbered in the hundreds—who took the time to contact me with regard to this deeply emotive and complex matter. Their contribution is truly invaluable.

I would also like to thank those within the Bundaberg community who respected the decision-making process that each member of the Queensland parliament has gone through over the last two months. I can only speak from my experience, but it has been encouraging that those who have approached me with regard to this bill have been considerate and aware that as an MP it is not appropriate that I voice an opinion until a fitting time and place presents itself.

It has only been in the last few days that any criticism has arisen. It has been disappointing to see that there are members of my community, and presumably members of all Queensland communities, who have begun to be critical of the decision-making process and are slamming male MPs for voting against the legislation—making this debate a man versus woman issue—or saying that this whole bill is just to decriminalise abortion. This bill is so much more than that. Every member in this House should be able to freely have their input into the debate without being told that their input is more or less respected because of their gender. Going forward, hopefully those members of the Bundaberg community will respect the Queensland parliamentary process and become aware that matters of life and death are not matters to be taken lightly and are matters above party politics.

After weeks of emails, letters, phone calls and visits, my office has calculated that 99 per cent of Bundaberg residents who approached me with their thoughts and concerns opposed this proposed legislation. To add even more merit to that figure, 63 per cent of those Bundaberg residents who opposed the bill are female. Hundreds of women have contacted me and expressed their genuine worry and fear for our state's future should this bill be passed. This is where my decision to vote no on this bill has come from. It has come straight from the Bundaberg community. I have considered each and every person's contribution and I have personally, carefully and thoroughly read all pages of the bill.

I am aware that this bill is one of great complexity that encompasses several different elements. That is why I have waited for the suitable time to voice my views. That time is today. Based on the contact I have had with my community, there are aspects of the bill that are supported but, unfortunately, the frightfulness that comes with the bill as a whole overrules those valid aspects.

This bill is not about decriminalising abortion. In Queensland it is already lawful for women to undergo an abortion where it is necessary to prevent serious danger to their life or physical or mental health. In Queensland alone between 10,000 and 14,000 legal abortions are currently performed each year. Currently, sections 224 to 226 of the Criminal Code prohibit unlawful termination of a pregnancy. It is the unlawfulness that is the criminal behaviour. That is why tens of thousands of abortions have been performed in Queensland over many decades without one person being found guilty of an unlawful termination offence. Further examples of laws that act on unlawfulness would include the case of a doctor performing an operation not being charged with the wounding of their patient or assault for performing a medical examination. These actions are not unlawful.

We are now in the second half of 2018. We live in a modern society, with modern views and modern ideas. With that, I think it is fair for me to say that most people would be in agreement that no woman should ever feel like a criminal if in the early stages of a pregnancy she decides that a termination is necessary. That is entirely her decision. That is why necessary abortions are already legal.

However, if this bill is passed it will also become legal for terminations to be performed up to 22 weeks of a pregnancy on request of a woman with no reason required to be given. This could and in other jurisdictions has been for sex selection. I accept that late-term abortions are very rare and in most cases in the most heartbreaking of circumstances as expectant parents often face the imminent death of their baby from a severe genetic abnormality or other medical condition. However, these abortions are already permitted in Queensland by law. This bill adds late-term terminations for reasons including undefined, current and future social reasons as long as two medical professionals sign off on it.

Second trimester abortion, especially late second trimester, raises many ethical issues. One topic that is currently under discussion in the relevant research is the pain caused to the foetus and whether it should be given pain management or even a general anaesthetic prior to the pregnancy being terminated. There is no consensus on the earliest time at which a foetus can feel pain. Some say nine weeks, more agree on 13, but there is unanimous agreement on 10 weeks gestation at the latest.

From 20 weeks a foetus has brain activity, can move, has a fingerprint and has a heartbeat. If delivered after 20 weeks the baby can survive and live a normal life. Even the Queensland Births, Deaths and Marriages Act 2003 requires the birth of all children born in Queensland after 20 weeks gestation, or weighing more than 400 grams, to be registered as a birth, regardless of whether the baby was born alive or stillborn. The act considers this a life.

What I have heard from the hundreds of Bundaberg residents is that the vast majority absolutely do not support termination after 22 weeks unless there is a serious danger to the woman's life, or to their physical or mental health, or serious foetal abnormality, or medical condition to the baby. That is what I have heard not once, not twice, but hundreds of times. Many in my community fear that, if passed, this legislation will allow termination to become an added form of contraception and will become a convenient, easy option that people will follow through with without really thinking it through until it is too late—because it is legal and because they can.


I ask members to always remember that a vast majority of people are law-abiding citizens with morals that most of us live by, but legislation is required for the minority of people who do not share those morals or who want to act in a way that is contrary to what a majority in our society believe. That is why we have laws covering all aspects of our lives, including abortion.

To say that no-one will have an abortion due to sex selection or a full-term abortion for anything other than medical reasons is completely misguided. If the law allows for it then it can happen, and this bill allows for these events to happen. If the government members do not want women to be able to have abortion for sex selection then they should legislate accordingly or be complicit to its eventuality. If members think that all women have the best interests of their children at heart always, why do we have children being taken away from their families by government agencies for their own safety? These are the children we as a society need to protect.

This proposed legislation ignores the negative health risks and has the potential to cause an influx of individuals affected by detrimental psychological trauma and long-term mental health concerns. It fails to address the support women facing abortions really need and it removes protections for women against abortion coercion, subjecting women to even more vulnerability when it comes to pressure from their partners, family and/or others.

Our hardworking healthcare staff who spend each and every day putting others before themselves will also be placed under immense and unfair pressure should this bill be passed. If a medical professional rejects a patient's termination request, they must refer them to another professional who will perform the termination. Medical professionals who live and work within my electorate have approached me and stated that, if this becomes the law, they will have no choice but to change careers.

As the Women's Forum has stated, 'The bill is counterproductive to women's health, removes protection for women, unborn children, medical professionals and citizens, and is a radical departure from the current law.' This bill has gone too far and fails human nature. That is why I strongly object to this bill and will be voting against it.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (6.21 pm): I rise today to make a contribution to the debate on the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I do so from the perspective of a mother, a Christian and a legislator. I do so with the strong belief that I have thought deeply on this important issue before us—I have questioned and I have listened. I do not come to this with any sense of triumph because abortion is not something to celebrate. It is sad and deeply personal. It is a decision made that may or may not leave a scar. I believe it should be rare but I believe even more strongly that it should be legal and safe.

I am the mother of two beautiful daughters. I had two very wanted pregnancies. For those of us who have had the enormous privilege of carrying our babies, we know just how special it can be. I also have experienced the fear. Recalling the night before we were due to get the results of our 20-week scan with our first child, my husband and I spoke of those fears—the 'what if', the scenario of a significant or terminal diagnosis.

We know that abortion after 22 weeks in Queensland is rare. The data is clear and shows that it is just over one per cent of all terminations performed in Queensland. We also know that the 18- to 20-week scan is the first point at which many severe foetal anomalies can be diagnosed, including

health problems deemed 'incompatible with life', where there is no chance of the birth of a healthy baby or a baby is expected to die shortly after birth. I have met mothers who have made the very difficult decision to terminate their deeply wanted pregnancies, not because they changed their mind as some people continue to believe but because of these tragic diagnoses.

The testimony provided to the parliamentary committee by Ms Zena Mason was particularly poignant and captures why we need to review these laws. She said—

The people who comment and tell me that I should have continued are behind their keyboards writing their comments, but they are not there supporting the families, they are not providing the funding and they are not helping me keep my marriage and myself together, along with supporting my daughter if she were here ... If this is passed and that in the future we get to make the choice that is best for our own circumstances, whatever they may be, I hope that I would not have to feel like a criminal and be called a murderer for what I did, because I can assure you that we already live with the pain every single day.

What is best for our own circumstances, whatever they may be, has been an important guiding principle for me through this debate. I am not pro abortion. I would struggle to find anyone in this House who is, but I do not believe that my personal view on abortion, whatever that might be, should guide me here today. What guides me is the belief that an individual woman must make that choice, must make that decision for her own circumstances—whatever they may be.


I have a strong sense of faith and belief in God. It has guided me through some difficult times in my life. Mark 12:31 states, 'The second is this: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' That sounds easy enough, but it gets tougher when you realise that 'your neighbour' is not just the person you go to church with or agree with or look like. I will not judge another woman for the decision that she makes but I will give her the right to make that decision for herself. That is the greatest love I can show my neighbour.

Importantly, I take my role as a legislator very seriously, as I know all of the members in this parliament do as well. I want to acknowledge the significant review undertaken by the Queensland Law Reform Commission of the current laws relating to the termination of pregnancy in Queensland. I believe the review, which garnered over 1,200 submissions, and the recommendations put forward by the QLRC have led to the legislation before us and provide us with a clear path, in particular, that in Queensland termination is to be treated as a health issue rather than a criminal matter by repealing sections 224, 225 and 226 from the Criminal Code; ensuring a woman's autonomy and health is recognised, particularly in the early stages, whilst also acknowledging the more complex nature of later stage terminations; and providing safeguards for women and medical practitioners in the implementation of the law, including conscientious objections and safe access zones.

I believe, despite stories to the contrary, that the majority of Queenslanders support reform in this area, that the majority of Queenslanders do not want to see over 10,000 women who have had a termination in Queensland in the last year sent to prison as is the ambiguous nature of the current law. I certainly do not believe that the majority of Queenslanders want to see women who are having to make some extraordinarily sad decisions regarding their babies made to feel like criminals.

I wish to thank all of the individuals and groups who have contacted me regarding the issue of abortion—those who have opposed the legislation and those who have as fervently supported it. In particular, I am grateful for the opportunity to have met with a number of church groups in my electorate. Whilst we did not necessarily agree, I am thankful for the respectful and calm manner in which we were able to discuss all aspects of the legislation. I would also like to thank my electorate staff, Fran and Rose, for their support.

This has been a very difficult issue for me. I do not pretend otherwise. I have seen some comments that voting for this legislation is somehow more about career advancement than the issues at hand. I reiterate what I said at the beginning: I come to this from the perspective of a mother, a Christian and a legislator. I do this for all women in Queensland to ensure that terminations will be legal and safe and I do this for my daughters. Whilst I pray they never need to access a termination, I want to ensure that they have the choice.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (6.27 pm): I rise to speak to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I will only speak briefly but I want to put on the record my position regarding what I consider to be one of the most excessive attacks on the defenceless unborn child. I will be very clear: I do not agree with the legislation and I believe that the laws should stand as they are. I repeat: there should be no change to the current abortion laws in Queensland.

I have been inundated with requests from my electorate to stand against this legislation. Constituents and community leaders have spoken to me directly and I have been overwhelmed with emails and letters outlining their personal objection to this legislation. For the cynics among us, I can

assure them that most of the emails were not part of some sort of campaign with a template that merely asked constituents to press the button and send. They spent time writing pages about why they find this legislation horrifying. They find the fact that the government has put this on the agenda reprehensible. I totally support their views and the overwhelming view of my electorate, and that is why I will stand up for the victim in this case, who is the unborn child.

It is reprehensible that a government in the 21st century, which purports to support victims, is forgetting one of the most vulnerable victims—the unborn child. We have heard many dreadful examples of how children have been created in sometimes appalling situations. The point is that a life has been created. It is a life that we should protect. It is not how someone was created; it is the fact that they are created.

Supporters of this bill are perpetuating a myth. Abortion is already easily accessible in Queensland and has had no prosecutions; there are no barriers to securing abortion. Abortion up to 22 weeks gestation is legal for any reason—it does not have to be serious and can be merely flippant. Therefore, there is no need for this legislation other than a militant obsession with social engineering and imposing on us a society that pays lip-service to valuing human life.

About 14,000 abortions are already performed in Queensland each year. More than 10,000 of them are even supported by the taxpayer with a Medicare rebate. A woman can book herself into an abortion clinic with no referral from a doctor. Clinics can secure a licence to perform abortions up to 22 weeks gestation. After 20 weeks, they are performed in hospital for foetal abnormalities and serious health risks to the mother. No woman has ever been convicted of procuring an abortion. What more do the supporters of this bill want? Is it open slather? There can be no justification for this bill.

The most unacceptable aspect of this bill is that it has no effective gestational limit for terminations; it would legalise abortion up to birth for almost any reason. We are talking about sanctioning the destruction of fully formed little humans on the brink of viability because we already know that some premature babies have survived at 22 weeks gestation.


This bill will legalise abortion under expanded criteria including current and future physical, psychological and social circumstances with the approval of two doctors. There is no requirement for the second doctor to see the patient or even look at her file. It merely needs a tick and flick. Supporters of this bill say this is a health matter and yet the health criteria is merely a tick on a sheet of paper. Even if they do not secure a second tick, there is no legal penalty. It surely says a lot about the government's view of a second opinion on a health matter.

The physical, psychological and social grounds are clearly designed to cover every imaginable reason. The key point is that the word 'social' is unclear and vague. As sex selection is a social reason, this legislation will enable abortions to be conducted for sex selection reasons. As this bill is modelled on legislation in Victoria, we can look there for examples of what will happen. Anyone who claims that no abortions will be done up to birth just has to remember that in 2011 in Victoria a healthy baby of a healthy mother was aborted for psychosocial reasons at over 37 weeks gestation. It was regarded as a full-term baby, yet it was destroyed. In that same year, 10 healthy, viable babies of healthy mothers between 28 and 31 weeks gestation were also aborted in Victoria for psychosocial reasons.

A recent La Trobe University study showed that from 2011 to 2015 an average of 1.17 female babies a week were killed in sex-selective abortions in Victoria. 'Social criteria' takes no consideration of other social obligations. What about the social criteria of what we are doing to our society, the message that we send that somehow human life is valuable only when some arbitrary conditions are met? What type of world are we creating? We are creating a world where we say life apparently only begins at birth and the creation of life carries no responsibility for the vulnerable.

Supporters of this bill think they can pick and choose which lives are worthy. We are creating a society in which there will be an increase in the number of abortions because of sex selection. The creation of a child should not be treated the same as picking out something to purchase in a shop. Proponents talk about the rights of mothers. There is no discussion about the equal rights of the father. Surely somewhere along the line the father of these children has some sorts of rights. There is no consideration of the rights of the unborn child.

This government bill is on the agenda with the authority of everyone who sits on the government benches. No-one can escape their culpability and unconscionable attack on the weak. Saying abortion should be treated as a health matter is trying to absolve the government of complicity in what happens to the unborn child. It is trying to sanitise the issue. Abortion is a matter for all of society; it is a community matter. It goes to social responsibility, to the heart of our values and ethics and to the type of society we want. This bill should be rejected.


 **Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (6.34 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. Queensland's laws are out of step with community expectations. Abortion is a health issue that should be legal, safe and rare—a position that I have long been public and clear about—and I believe this bill delivers that. I support the passing of the new laws to ensure that termination is treated as a health issue and not a criminal matter. This bill does that and it does it carefully.

Leadership on this bill in the House has been carried by the health minister and by the Attorney-General, and they have approached this with a great sense of respect and meticulous thought and consideration. Leadership on this issue in general, though, has been carried by dozens of courageous women, Labor women in particular, who have never wavered from the belief that an evidence based framework should operate, an evidence based framework that means that Queensland women and their doctors are not subject to the indignity of being labelled a criminal even if only by a minority.

I have received lots of emails complaining about 'Jackie Trad's abortion bill'. Whilst it is not the Deputy Premier's bill—it is the health minister's and the Attorney-General's—this reform would not have happened without her dedication. A reform that overwhelmingly affects working women and women from regional and remote Queensland would not have been possible without the Deputy Premier's resolve and her genuine compassion for all Queensland women and to promote women's access to safe, quality termination and pregnancy services. These are human rights. They are workplace rights for Queensland health professionals.

There are those who assert that this bill is poorly thought out or that it is in some way flawed, and that has to be rejected. Women have been talking about this issue for decades. I have listened to my wife talk about this issue. I have listened to my girlfriends who have both terminated pregnancies and become mothers—and not always in that order. I have listened to many people in my own community and I respect their views although I do not agree with all of them. Queensland's political leaders, both our Premier and our Deputy Premier, have been listening to the experts: they have been listening to Queensland women and to Queensland's women advocates. Whatever honourable members believe about the policy substance of this bill, it is simply not credible to suggest that we have reached this point carelessly or thoughtlessly.

I am not going to stand here and continue to talk about it because the time for talk is over. It was over, in fact, a generation ago. It is now time for action. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.37 pm): I rise in the House to make a contribution to the Termination of Pregnancy Bill 2018. I would like to start by saying I understand that this is a very emotive and personal issue and that this debate arouses a great contrariety of passions. I would like to pay tribute to the member for Hervey Bay, although he is not in the chamber, for his marvellous speech earlier this evening. I felt that he spoke with sincerity and passion. I do not think his contribution will be soon forgotten.

I represent the people of Southern Downs, and that is my foremost duty in this House. I am happy to say that my own conscience, and I believe the majority of my own party's conscience, and also the wishes of my electorate are happily in symmetry on this matter. My staff—and I must pay tribute to them—Emily McKechnie, Ian Jackson and Virginia Marsden, have taken a great deal of phone calls, emails and letters concerning this bill. I am sure that most of the members in this House are in the same boat.

Like other members on my side of the House I have found that the vast majority of contact I have had through my office and as I travel around my electorate has been opposed to this bill. I would say perhaps two per cent have come to me and said that they want this bill to be supported. That should be no surprise because the electorate of Southern Downs is a relatively conservative place and the people of Southern Downs, by and large, hold conservative views and strong family values. I oppose this bill also because it is, in my view, flawed, divisive and, importantly, unnecessary and extreme. It is unnecessary because of the obvious fact that there has not been a single conviction in the history of the current law, which is over a hundred years old, for procuring an abortion.

In effect, abortion is currently legal. It is available now. Women who seek to have abortions are able to get them; however, it is also extreme. When we think about the idea of terminating a pregnancy up to 22 weeks as proposed under this bill it is effectively open slather, and that is quite alarming. Even worse, in my view, post 22 weeks there is only a requirement to have two doctors support the decision.

It has been said by a number of speakers today that a baby born at 22 weeks, and sometimes even 20 weeks or less, can be viable. There are stories of children who have survived being born at that particular stage, so I think that the 22-week mark is a disturbing one.

It is also extreme in that it proposes to attack the rights of those who object to abortion or this bill and prevent them from being able to effectively enunciate their objection in public. It is an attack on the rights of people to speak their mind and draw attention to their views on the matter.

I repeat that at 22 weeks a baby can be viable. We have heard about the case where a pregnant woman was murdered and the perpetrator was charged with two counts of murder: one for the lady herself and one for the child she was carrying, which I am told was at 10 weeks gestation. If we need legal recognition of the fact that that is a person, then I think we have a pretty persuasive one right there. Of course it escapes no-one's notice that at 20 weeks a stillborn child is entitled to have a death certificate, so at the very least there is formal recognition in the law that we are talking about a person at 20 weeks.

I have listened closely to the speeches. I spent most of the day in the chamber because I am interested to hear exactly what everyone has to say on this matter. I listened to the health minister this morning. In his second reading speech he gave a great number of assurances to the chamber like sex selection will not happen and late-term abortions will not increase. How can the minister say this? How do we know that? If the law permits it, then I believe it will happen. We do know for a fact that there are cases where foetuses are aborted because of their sex. Perhaps it does not happen in Queensland, I do not know, but we know that these things do happen. In my view this bill would make that easier, and I think that is repugnant.

This bill is all about decriminalising abortion. Well, I do not think that that holds water because, as I have said, there has not been a single conviction in 100 years under the current law. There are many things that are illegal which perhaps people are not convicted of. Perhaps the existence of the law itself serves to moderate the behaviour of those who might cross the line. It is all about the health of women, but what about the health of the unborn child? There needs to be a balance between the interests of the mother and the unborn child, but this bill shifts the entire emphasis to the rights of the mother. I heard that it was necessary to legalise late-term abortion in order for babies with foetal defects to be aborted. In the same breath the minister said that he had been advised by a doctor that she has already been performing abortions in the case of foetuses which have birth defects and which may not be viable, so I cannot see that there is any necessity indicated there.

We also heard the chestnut that we ought to respect the wonderful work of the Queensland Law Reform Commission and swallow what they have given us in relation to this bill. I have great concerns about that. I am not the first member to speak in the House today about my doubts about the impartiality of the Queensland Law Reform Commission in this matter. I draw the attention of the House to the lamentable public utterances of those within the Queensland Law Reform Commission concerning the bill, which I believe was most improper and portrayed a lack of impartiality.


To return to the question of safe access zones, as the Leader of the Opposition said, these are going to be censorship zones. In a free and democratic society we have to balance all sorts of rights. On the one hand, we talk about the right of people to draw to the public's attention their concerns in the form of a public protest. On the other hand, we have the competing right of people to go about their daily business unmolested by violence or menace. A happy medium needs to be achieved, but this bill proposes to go right to one side and eliminate the rights of those to make their feelings known in favour of those who attend an abortion clinic.

That is not right, and I draw the attention of the House to the Fitzgerald report. I know that the Labor Party is very keen to quote the Fitzgerald report to us from time to time, but on the matter of public protest Mr Fitzgerald said—

The right of public assembly has traditionally been regarded as analogous to the right of free speech, and a touchstone of the respect given to other civil liberties within a society. In these days of a mass media, it holds an even greater significance since the main way for groups within the community to gain the attention of the media and therefore the public is by "creating" news events by holding rallies and marches.

Well, there you go. That is damn right. It seems what is really happening here is that the left is saying, 'We do not like what you have to say, so you will be prevented from saying it in a way which effectively gives voice to your concerns.' That is what that is about, and it is wrong. I believe that we should prosecute those who misbehave in their protests, not stop them from speaking. That works both ways, of course, because if the CFMEU has a violent protest, ignores court orders to desist or threatens

to rape the children of those who wish to work, then they should be prosecuted as well. We need to balance the rights of the unborn with the rights of mothers, and this bill goes way too far. It is extreme. It does not recognise the rights of the unborn, and I will oppose it.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (6.46 pm): Today I am incredibly proud to stand in this House and speak in favour of the Termination of Pregnancy Bill. Our laws and our parliament need to reflect the community we were elected to represent, and the overwhelming majority of Queenslanders view a woman's decision to end a pregnancy as a health matter, not a criminal matter.

Today is the culmination of the work of many people in this parliament and countless more in the community who have lobbied and fought hard for these changes for many, many years. I want to acknowledge my colleagues currently in the House who have fought for many years for this reform and the incredible work of Labor for Choice, Children by Choice, Young Queenslanders for the Right to Choose, the Centre Against Sexual Violence, all of the organisations that came before them and the many more doing great work across our community. These reforms are based on the work of the Queensland Law Reform Commission, and I want to thank the commission for their exceptional work in taking the diverse and strongly held views around this issue and providing an independent, fact-based set of recommendations for government which, importantly, align with clinical practice. It is a testament to their work that we are implementing their recommendations in full.

All other states in Australia with the exception of New South Wales recognise that termination of pregnancy is a health matter, not a criminal one. Our Criminal Code, written in 1899, has not kept pace with modern society, which is why this bill repeals sections of the Criminal Code that criminalise the termination of pregnancy. These reforms are based on providing women with safe and accessible services. The bill ensures that medical procedures are conducted by qualified health professionals with a clear framework to regulate health practitioners involving an on-request gestational limit of 22 weeks with a single broad additional ground to be satisfied after that time in consultation with another medical practitioner. Twenty-two weeks is not a random number, a compromise or a copy of another state's legislation; 22 weeks is consistent with Queensland Health's clinical framework. It is based on medical facts. Twenty-two weeks is when terminations get more medically complex and must be conducted in an appropriate high-level facility. Most importantly, it represents the stage immediately prior to the threshold of viability.

Other contributors to this debate have covered the facts, statistics and stories on later term abortions so I do not intend to repeat them, except to reiterate that each and every one of these rare cases involves complex factors and personal circumstances that most of us could never even contemplate. In my view, given we have received this recommendation from the independent Law Reform Commission and it is based on clear expert medical advice, it is not for us to arbitrarily set another threshold for when additional limits should apply.

For many years now I have been a board member on the Centre Against Sexual Violence in Logan. CASV works on the front line, supporting vulnerable women who have experienced violence by providing counselling and other services and support. Working with these women and hearing their stories, I saw firsthand how critical abortion law reform is in Queensland. One case in particular has always stuck with me—a child who came here as a refugee, incredibly vulnerable, still in primary school, raped then pregnant. She was unable to access the reproductive health services she needed at her local public hospital. She was refused a termination of pregnancy. Few people would deny the right of this child to access termination in those circumstances; however, under the current framework many health services would not perform this procedure. Thankfully, CASV, along with many others in our community, were able to fundraise several thousand dollars needed to get this young girl into a private clinic.

That brings me to the precarious situation our doctors, nurses, midwives and other medical staff are placed in while terminations remain in our Criminal Code. No-one performing a safe medical procedure that they are appropriately trained to perform should do so under the threat of jail. The AMA Queensland expressed in their submission to the committee—

Queensland's current laws, which criminalise terminations of pregnancy are a barrier to a doctor's first duty—best patient care. The Australian Medical Students Association, representing our future medical workforce, released a statement strongly supporting the decriminalisation of abortion and pointed out—

These laws—

the current laws—

discourage doctors from offering these services and restrict access for women, particularly those in rural areas.

We are being told by representative bodies that these outdated laws are restricting doctors' ability to properly serve the best interests of their patients by forcing them to work under a cloud of legal uncertainty. We trust doctors on so many things, and it is time that we stopped treating terminations differently from any other health decision that a doctor advises a patient on.

When we as some of the most privileged in our society debate these laws, we must focus on the stories and the impact our vote will have on the most disadvantaged in our society. In Anti-Poverty Week it is vital that we acknowledge the importance of giving women the ability to make their own reproductive decisions if they are to avoid poverty. A recent study by the University of California has found that women denied an abortion are more likely to spend years living in poverty than women who have had a termination. Carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term quadrupled the odds that a new mother and her child would live below the US federal poverty line.


Giving women control of their reproductive health is part of lifting women out of poverty. Voting against this law will mean that women in Queensland will still need to continue to access terminations at private clinics at high cost or travel interstate. The women who will be most impacted by these laws are women from disadvantaged backgrounds—Indigenous women, women from culturally diverse backgrounds, women who are victims of domestic violence and, importantly in a state like Queensland, women from remote and regional areas.

Back in 1980 the Bjelke-Petersen government tried to pass legislation to impose tougher restrictions on a woman's ability to access a safe abortion. Several National Party MPs crossed the floor to vote down this bill, including the then members for Gregory and Warrego. Mr Turner, the then member for Warrego, spoke against the bill due to concerns that 'women in remote areas seeking abortions in the terms of this bill will in many instances be disadvantaged'. Mr Glasson, the then member for Gregory, echoed those concerns and added that 'too many people who sit in parliament ... think they have a God-given right to act on behalf of the people without consulting their wishes'. I hope that the members representing rural and regional women in the parliament today have the courage to hear from their constituents and promise to defend their right to access safe reproductive health care.

Another key recommendation of the QLRC report is the establishment of safe access zones of 150 metres around clinics where terminations are conducted. These safe access zones ensure the safety and privacy of patients, but they also support our healthcare professionals. We have heard countless stories of abhorrent treatment of women and healthcare professionals, and I strongly support the inclusion of safe access zones in the bill.

We need to be clear: these are not radical, far left views. Some 71.9 per cent of Queenslanders support changing the law so that abortion is no longer a crime. It is estimated that between one-quarter and one-third of women have had an abortion. I, along with the majority of Queenslanders, believe that these women are not criminals. These women are our friends, our family, our neighbours and our colleagues, and they are not criminals for making a health decision that was best for them and their family.

In this debate the truth can be lost amongst all the lies and misinformation. It can be difficult to remember that, fundamentally, this bill is about supporting Queensland women. I am proudly pro choice and I firmly believe that termination is a health issue and not a criminal one. I am incredibly proud that our government has introduced laws that will ensure Queensland women have reasonable and safe access to terminations and reduce the stigma surrounding accessing these important health services. I strongly commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (6.56 pm): It is a fact that there are between 10,000 and 14,000 legal abortions performed every year. No-one has been charged. People have not been criminalised. As the member for Mermaid Beach, I believe that there is great support for the decriminalisation of abortion by most members. The fact of the matter is that Labor has packaged this bill up as a decriminalisation of abortion when 10,000 to 14,000 abortions per annum have not been treated as criminal activity. In other words, what we have seen here is a clever manipulation of the media in relation to what this bill is really all about in terms of changing some of the very important parts. I refer to the gestational limit of 22 weeks. On my maths—I am pretty ordinary at it—that is about 5½ months. That is a very late time, even for someone as illiterate in these matters as I am, to be condoning terminations of pregnancy for social reasons.

I will be opposing this bill based on my conscience. Even my good wife said to me in conversation, 'You have to vote for decriminalisation.' When I explained to her the minutiae of the bill she said, 'That's not right. That's not fair. That should not happen.' I had representatives of women's refuge groups come to see me—I spoke with them in a full, frank, open and supportive manner—in support of decriminalisation, and they said, 'I hope this does not go down the tube on political grounds.' It is my

belief that it will not go down on political grounds. The Labor Party has 48 members in this House and can expect support from two of the minor party or Independent members. That gives them three votes to play with, and up to three Labor members will probably vote against the bill. That is just my Nostradamus prediction.

This has been a minor issue in my electorate of Mermaid Beach. I have had a few calls. Most of those have been to the effect, 'Ray, you are going to vote no.' I have had a couple of calls—only a couple—asking me to support the bill to pass through the House.


I would support the member for Mudgeeraba, who gave a wonderful speech here today, in terms of decriminalisation. As I said to the women's refuge group, a bipartisan approach—as we have done on many other issues that have come to this House—would have reached an outcome that suited the House and it would not have come down to an 'us and them' mentality which the government currently has put forward to the House—that is, either for or against. That is not the way forward for a good outcome for the women of Queensland, in my view. I am very disappointed that this has been packaged the way it has been and I certainly will be voting against it. I would like to see this issue come back to the House in a better form in terms of decriminalisation that is properly organised and put together by a bipartisan group to ensure that it receives appropriate attention, rather than this little tricky piece of Labor legislation that we see before the House tonight.

I understand that these matters will be going on for further debate, but from the point of view of the Mermaid Beach electorate and from my personal conscience view, I will definitely be voting against this bill for those reasons.

Debate, on motion of Mr Stevens, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Townsville, Regional Export Distribution Centre


 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.00 pm): I rise to support the call for a regional export distribution centre to be established in Townsville. The aims of the export distribution centre initiative and the dream to realise the potential of Northern Australia can and will be achieved by the creation of the distribution centre in North Queensland. In less than 10 years the agribusiness industry has grown by almost 50 per cent. Currently North Queensland has a strong horticultural industry. However, so much more can be achieved with the more productive supply chain that enables efficient delivery of product.

Today's release of the feasibility study into the Hells Gates Dam feasibility combined with studies currently underway into the Urannah Dam and the raising of the Burdekin Falls Dam wall will prove that the development of up to 80,000 hectares of additional irrigated land in the Upper Burdekin and Collinsville areas will support high-value agriculture products for the export market. The creation of a regional export distribution centre in Townsville will allow for the full leveraging of the most productive agricultural region in Northern Australia. Townsville is ideally located to provide a centralised, multifaceted freight distribution solution. The presence of Queensland's second largest port and an international airport with wide body aircraft landing capability positions North Queensland in a unique position to support regional producers in their quest to deliver high-value products to international markets.

Currently, products grown in the North Queensland region are harvested, aggregated and transported out of the region for accumulation and sale into the domestic market or prepared for export. This results in increased transport costs and does little to support job creation in North Queensland, where it is so desperately needed. North Queensland is proactive in ensuring that more food produced reaches consumer plates, increasing return on investment to the producer, boosting agricultural contribution to gross regional product and reducing food waste. Development of a regional export distribution centre will provide benefits for a wide range of industries, not just agriculture. It will provide the impetus for new industries and the full development of burgeoning industries such as aquaculture and other high-value horticulture.

Townsville is the most viable option for maximising the state's export potential. This critical investment decision must be based upon the long-term return on investment, not based on propping up other projects. The allocation of this grant will act as a critical stimulant, delivering growth and efficiencies to the North Queensland agricultural sector. It will provide the catalyst for commercial investment, job creation and market connectivity. I urge the government to consider these factors when making its decision and to finally realise the potential of North Queensland.

Ogden, Mr P


 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (7.03 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise tonight to speak about a very special member of the Australian Labor Party on the occasion of his 90th birthday celebration—Mr Pat Ogden from Barcaldine in Queensland. Pat of course is a life member of the Australian Labor Party and regarded as one of our party's national treasures and the long-time publican of the Globe Hotel in Barcaldine—the pub where nothing was too good for the worker—which of course is the keeper of the Tree of Knowledge where the striking shearers in 1891 would meet during those difficult times and where the Australian Labor Party as a political party was born. I know members opposite have also known and respected Pat over the years as a local councillor, a community leader and sometimes even a friend. Pat celebrated his 90th birthday in Barcaldine a few weeks ago surrounded by his wife, Clare, family and friends in the grounds of the Globe Hotel. Visitors can still visit the Globe as it is now a visitor centre and art gallery.

Born in 1928, Pat dreamed of working on the railways and started in 1943 in Gladstone. He moved to Brisbane in 1949 as a shunter where he met Labor Party legends Kevin O'Leary and then Les Thorpe, who would remain his friends for the rest of their long lives, before returning home to Barcaldine, where he still lives with Clare. Pat was a member of the Australian Railway Union his entire railway life until 1964 when he left the railway service and bought the licence of the Union Hotel and then the Globe in 1970, and he remained its licensee until 2011.

I first met Pat many years ago on a Labour Day weekend in May—as it should be. That weekend a former MP in this place Bonny Barry introduced me to Pat as he was working behind the bar of the Globe. He loved the Globe, Barcaldine and the iconic Labour Day march. It remains a very special memory for me now that the Globe is no longer a working pub. I returned with my family in 2016 for the 125th anniversary of the Australian Workers' Union where Pat and Bob Hawke were the special guests of honour. I wanted my family to experience the country hospitality and the special spirit that comes with a visit to our Labor spiritual home, for them to march in the Labour Day march and to meet Pat and Clare. It was a special weekend for us all.

Pat, on the occasion of your 90th birthday, please accept my best wishes, former MP Bonny Barry's best wishes and of course the entire Labor Party's warm wishes. Tonight we will toast you and we will toast the Globe Hotel, where nothing is too good for the worker.

Newton, Mrs J, OAM

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.06 pm): Fifteen years ago when I joined the National Party I first heard of a lady by the name of Joyce Newton—a name whispered amongst party members with both respect and perhaps a little fear. Five years later, as my home town was redistributed into the electorate of Glass House, I got to really know Joyce, the then state electoral council chair. When I was preselected as the LNP candidate for Glass House, Joyce and her husband, Greg, became like another set of parents to me. I would take breaks from doorknocking at their then farmhouse in Witts. We discussed tactics. We would debate policy. We became friends, but I am only one of many on the Sunshine Coast that has come to know and love Joyce Newton.

Time does not allow me to list everything Joyce has done but, alongside husband, Greg, and children, Ty, Jennifer, Daniel and Carl, I think it is fair to say her proudest achievements and interests were the Maleny Girl Guides, the Maleny branch of the LNP and her endeavours to deliver a new indoor aquatic centre with hydrotherapy pool for the community of Maleny. I tell you what, Mr Deputy Speaker: the Sunshine Coast Regional Council better build that pool and, if it had any sense, it would name it the 'Joyce Newton Memorial Aquatic Centre'. It is no wonder Joyce was not only awarded an honorary life membership of the LNP but also an OAM earlier this year. To give true credit to her achievements, I table Joyce's acceptance speech and an article printed in the *Hinterland Times* titled 'Joyce Newton: a woman of substance'.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Speech given at the Newton's, on the day Joyce Newton was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia' [[1644](#)].


Tabled paper: Article from the *Hinterland Times* online, dated 6 March 2018, titled 'Joyce Newton: a woman of substance' [[1645](#)].

Early in 2017 Joyce was diagnosed with motor neurone disease. Nerve cells—or neurones—control the muscles that enable us to move, speak, breathe and swallow. Motor neurone disease is the name given to a group of diseases in which these neurones fail to work normally. Muscles then gradually weaken and waste as neurones degenerate and die. Joyce was given less than 12 months which meant that she was not expected to see the next state election campaign, which was ultimately held late last year. Well, she proved them wrong! As I mentioned in my recent address-in-reply, not

only did she live to see the campaign; she was again instrumental in it. She coordinated polling day rosters, continued to tell me where I was going right and wrong on social media and provided all sorts of advice and guidance. Sadly, Joyce passed away last Thursday morning.

It is bittersweet that one of the last things Joyce would have seen was her husband, Greg, wearing his Andrew Powell LNP campaign shirt. Apparently, it brought a smile to her face. Joyce's community involvement speaks for itself, but it is the way she influenced lives that is harder to explain. She loved to debate, to challenge, to disagree, but it was not about winning the argument; it was about making herself and the person she was debating a better person or about getting an outcome for Maleny. She loved the contest of ideas and I was privileged to spar with her on many occasions. At the end, you would have a cuppa and chat like there had never been a disagreement. Joyce has made me a better person. Maleny and the Blackall Range have lost a tireless advocate, my political party has lost a fierce warrior and I have lost a dear friend. Rest in peace, Joyce Newton.

Greenslopes Electorate, Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Services

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (7.10 pm): I rise to provide a brief update on the Greenslopes Domestic Violence Prevention Network. It is a group of people who came together following a series of round tables that we held in the community to talk about what we could do to prevent domestic violence. The network has done a few things this year. It held an information session at the Holland Park State School fete.

More recently, we decided to offer domestic violence prevention training for people who work in the hair and beauty industry. In visiting every hairdresser and beautician in my electorate I was joined by a mighty lady named Carolyn Robinson. I met Carolyn through the domestic violence network. She is an amazing person. She started an organisation called Beyond DV. I want to talk about Beyond DV and how it started.

Carolyn's daughter was affected by domestic violence. As I have seen many times since being elected, many people who are affected by tragedy manage to turn that into triumph. This is certainly one of those situations. I was really pleased that Carolyn came to meet with me. I quickly realised the strength of her ideas and what she was proposing. I suggested that she have a meeting with the minister. I would like to acknowledge and thank Minister Farmer for taking the time to meet with Carolyn. She has been a great supporter ever since.

Beyond DV is an amazing organisation that has two main programs that I would like to outline. I have seen directly the benefits of one of those programs. The first program is the Bright Start program. This program recognises that, when people are affected by domestic violence, children often have to change schools several times. Families do not necessarily tell the schools that they are affected by domestic violence. This organisation draws on Carolyn's experience as a 30-year veteran of being a teacher in Education Queensland and works with the families and the schools to smooth that transition. This program makes sure that those children stay in that school and are supported properly by that school.


The other program is the Time Out program, which is designed to provide women with the confidence and skills they need to rebuild their lives after being affected by domestic violence. I was really pleased to meet with the women who had gone through this program when I joined them at a lunch. They told me the difference that this program had made in their lives.

Beyond DV is a great organisation. I would like to finish this speech by reading their motto—

We should reach back and gather the best of what our past has to teach us so we can achieve our full potential as we move forward. Whatever we have lost, forgotten, forgone or been stripped of can be reclaimed, revived, preserved and perpetrated.

Carolyn Robson and Beyond DV are certainly helping people to reclaim, revive and preserve their lives. I wish her all the best with that.

Tallebudgera Valley, Proposed Development; Assistance Dogs Australia; Rural Fire Brigades

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.13 pm): Last night, a meeting was held at the Tally Valley Golf Club to discuss a major development proposal in the picturesque Tallebudgera Valley by the Australian wing of Chinese developer Ridong called the Wellness and Tourism Gardens. Last September, the development application was lodged with the council and comprises a six-star 98-room hotel, including a five-storey building, a four-storey art gallery, a 100-seat theatre, an entertainment

lounge and an automotive museum. There will be 113 private luxury villas, a 16-hectare man-made inland lake, a luxurious day spa, three restaurants, two conference centres and a wedding chapel, all on 47.5 hectares on Tallebudgera Connection Road.

Approximately 85 residents and friends attended the meeting, which was a big turnout given the terrible weather conditions. The major concerns raised about the development included building on a flood plain, adversely affecting other properties in the form of flooding the creek, significant changes to the amenity of the valley and the residents' chosen lifestyle, increased traffic flow and increased risk to wildlife. Koalas are already being killed at unacceptable rates and these dangerous hotspots were mentioned.


At that meeting, Councillor McDonald advised that she had been made aware of the submission, which was lodged on 20 September, and believes that there had been some consultation and meetings with the state government prior to the submission being lodged. If that were the case and discussions have already been held with the state government about an integrated resort type of development, where the state government could override any negative decision of the council, the people in my electorate deserve to know. Councillor O'Neill indicated that there is a window of about six months for the community to get organised and put in any objections in line with the planning process. New developments, especially of this scale, must be open to thorough community consultation. I shall be writing to the relevant ministers to seek some clarification.

I also want to applaud the efforts of volunteer puppy educator Melissa Bromley from Assistance Dogs Australia. Melissa and retriever Oska are familiar faces around Currumbin and the greater Gold Coast, spreading the benefits of volunteering and fundraising for this worthy cause. Assistance dogs change the lives of those they accompany by adding companionship and safety to their lives. In September, Oska and Melissa participated in a Veterans' Health Expo at the Currumbin RSL to raise awareness of PTSD. Recently, five new super puppies were placed with volunteer puppy educator families on the Gold Coast.

The Dogtober campaign brings a number of events. On 28 October at Eddie Kornhauser park at Elanora, Golden Retriever Meetup Gold Coast is hosting an event to support ADA with treats for dogs and humans, dog related businesses and the chance to win prizes in dog competitions. I urge members to make sure to get along.

I would like to thank the volunteer rural fire brigades and their members in my electorate of Currumbin at Currumbin Valley, Tallebudgera Valley and Tomewin Mountain. I wish them a very safe bushfire season and again thank them.

Rockhampton Country Music Concert Inc.


 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.16 pm): Rockhampton Country Music Concert Inc. is a group of caring Rockhampton locals who hold monthly concerts in aid of all good things in my community. Recently, it tipped the scales in over \$50,000 in donations to various organisations in need in Rockhampton. I attended the concert held by the group at the QRI club in Rockhampton to take part in the group's milestone of donating over \$50,000 to 31 organisations in Rockhampton. The list of beneficiaries appears endless. The support that this group has provided extends across Meals on Wheels, Alzheimer's CQ, the Acute Stroke Unit, the SHINE program, the Oasis New Life Centre, the Rockhampton and Central Queensland Legacy Fund, the CQ Prostate Support and Awareness Group and many more groups.

Recently, I met with Ms Leonne Johnson, the secretary. She spoke about how this group of people started through their common interest of care, compassion and camaraderie and a great love of providing entertainment for others. On Sunday, 23 May 2010 the group met at the residence of Keith and Dawn Anderson to start a morning tea and concert group. This group quickly grew into a well-organised group coordinating monthly concerts at the QRI club for all to enjoy.

Ms Johnson said that, initially, the members donated money to buy sound equipment, tablecloths and other essential items to get started as well as registering their name and becoming incorporated and organising insurance. Mr Neville Johnson, who is now the president of Rockhampton Country Music Concert Inc., said that they donate up to \$1,000 to each organisation that seeks help from them from the funds that are raised at their concerts. He said further that it was such a great pleasure to help others. About 150 to 180 people regularly attend their concerts.

Rockhampton Country Music Concert Inc. has also assisted other organisations, such as the Salvation Army, Camp Quality, the Rockhampton and District Blind Club, the RACQ helicopter service Angel Flight, community radio, horseriding for the disabled and the Rockhampton cancer and palliative care service. It is an absolute pleasure to visit this group and I congratulate all involved. Well done.

Renting Reform

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (7.19 pm): I rise to talk to the House about how unethical and dishonest this Labor government is. A couple of weeks ago the Labor Party announced that it would be looking at a review of renting in Queensland so they came up with this website. I table this for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, depicting Queensland government website titled 'Open doors to renting reform' [1648].

One would not be surprised when looking at the minister's Facebook page that he is referring people to www.makingrentingfairer.com.au. Where is one directed when one goes to that particular website? One is directed to a Labor Party website. How unethical and dishonest is it that Labor members are announcing a government review into renting and then they are directing people to a Labor website—for data mining purposes.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, depicting Facebook post by Mick de Brenni for Springwood, dated 12 October seeking input on renting reform [1650].

Tabled paper: Document, undated, depicting Queenslandlabor.org website titled 'How can we make renting fairer for everyone?' [1649].

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you will use correct titles.

Mr HART: Have a look at the Facebook pages of members of this House. On the member for Gaven's Facebook page she says the Palaszczuk government is launching a major consultation into renting in Queensland. Where does she direct you to? To the Labor Party website—for data mining purposes. Look at the Facebook page of the member for Lytton: 'The Palaszczuk government is committed to making renting fairer and we would like to hear from you.' They direct you to the Labor Party website—for data mining purposes.

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member, resume your seat. Members to my right, I appreciate the member is challenging and being provocative, however, I still need to hear the contribution. I will give all in the House a little bit more latitude. Member, can you please continue your contribution.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister for Transport and Main Roads, I just asked you to use correct titles. You are warned under standing orders.

Mr HART: The member for Ipswich says the Queensland government announces a major review, and directs you to the Labor Party website. Is it dishonest? Is it unethical? Absolutely! The Facebook page of the member for Ipswich West states that the Palaszczuk government is delivering on its election commitment and directs you to the Labor Party website. Unethical! Dishonest! The Minister for Education's Facebook page states the reason why the Palaszczuk government has announced a major review into renting and directs you to the Labor Party. Unethical! Dishonest!

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents about consultation on renting reform in Queensland [1646].

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Lytton!

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Lytton!

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: member for Lytton!

Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: member for Lytton!


Ms Pease interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Lytton! You are warned under standing orders. I called you to order personally five times. I call the member for Burleigh for his remaining 24 seconds.

Mr HART: The Facebook page of the member for Mount Ommaney directs you to the Labor Party. The member for Miller, the minister over there, directs you to the Labor Party. The member for McMahon directs you to the Labor Party. The minister, the member for Waterford, directs you to the Labor Party. There are another few that I will table, including the Premier of this state, that direct you to the Labor Party.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents about consultation on renting reform in Queensland [1647].

Redlands Electorate

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.22 pm): It has been a huge few weeks across the Redlands community. We have had the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Wellbeing Forum with Redland City Council and the state government coming together to look at the needs and services of these unique island communities. A huge congratulations to Dr Dave Scott who has been working tirelessly on getting organisations, departments and the community together and collaborating. We have had Thrive By the Bay to celebrate Mental Health Week and I give a big shout-out to the many community groups that participated, especially the Redlands Community Centre which is really kicking goals. They also hosted a World Homeless Day Dinner as part of their Homeless United program and it was such a privilege to share dinner and talk with those experiencing homelessness and those supporting pathways out of it. The Redlands Community Centre are also running Project Runway helping young Redlanders get the formal dress of their dreams. What a delight to spend the morning with some of our young people.


The Queensland Training Awards were held earlier this month and our Running Wild Youth Conservation Group were awarded Queensland Community Training Initiative of the Year, moving onto the National Awards in Sydney. We have everything crossed and are just so proud of the work they are doing to break the cycle of unemployment across our islands. We had the National Landcare Conference in Brisbane last week and a fringe event was held on Coochiemudlo Island. Delegates came to check out the amazing work of Vivienne, Graham, Heather and the Coastcare team. Steam weeding is a result of the Palaszczuk government's grant for groundbreaking equipment that is chemical free in its treatment of serious weeds. The delegates were impressed and were also shown some of the work being done in shore erosion management.

Last week I hosted the principals of my electorate in what will be an inaugural dinner to share knowledge and ideas and inspire collaboration. It was wonderful to have Minister Grace join me. It was a first and a fantastic opportunity for principals to get to know each other better and to forge strong relationships. Last week also saw the opening of the Dan Holzapfel Park. Dan is indeed a pillar of the Redlands Community and what a wonderful way to acknowledge a lifetime of achievement.

In fundraising for cancer organisations we are leading the way. Another big shout out to the Isle of Coochie Golf Club and Macleay Island Golf Club which raised over \$7,000 in a weekend with wonderful 'in the pink' events. I love a bargain and I have been at it again thanks to Wally Crooks and the guys at the Macleay Island Lions Club who also raised thousands of dollars for cancer research earlier this month with an 'all things bright and new' high tea and fashion parade. Mr Speaker, I think you will again agree that this is a beautiful jacket, like the one I purchased at the Redlands District Special School Op Shop, and it was again at the bargain price of \$2.

Redlands really does love a bargain and held the Biggest Ever Weekend Garage Sale raising vital funds for drought relief, an amazing combined effort by our Redland Bay Men's Shed, Rotary and Lions clubs. Together they raised over \$10,000 for drought relief. Our Redland Bay Men's Shed move into their new digs at Redland Bay and gave me a sneak preview. Thank you for all you do in our community. You really are doing great things. I am so privileged to represent our Redlands community. It really does punch above its weight when it comes to getting involved, particularly in fundraising for great causes.

Climate Change

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (7.25 pm): Eight days ago everyone in this place got what should have been a wake-up call. We are looking down the barrel of a climate change catastrophe and we got a clear warning in the form of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BERKMAN: Oh, they scoff! With representatives from around the world, they are the global authority on climate science and when they speak we should listen. They have said categorically that if we are going to keep the world safe from dangerous global warming we need to stop burning coal and fundamentally transform every sector of our economy. If we do not keep global warming below 1.5 degrees the scientific consensus is now stronger than ever that we will face more intense droughts, bushfires, starvation across much of the world, mass migration, more severe wars and conflict and the collapse of entire ecosystems, including the total disappearance of the Great Barrier Reef.


Sometimes it is hard to set aside the rising panic from all these dystopian warnings, but it is my great privilege—or perhaps my solemn duty tonight—to be the only person here willing to speak this truth out loud in Queensland parliament. This is hard to say, but it is important. Right now we are losing.

Here in Queensland a people powered campaign to stop the Adani coal mine is on the brink of success and clean energy is expanding apace. Progress is happening, but eight days ago some of the smartest people in the world told us it is not happening fast enough. The IPCC has said that we must stop burning coal for power by 2050. That means Adani and the Galilee Basin mines can never, ever be built. It means phasing out all thermal coal exports and shutting down coal-fired power stations. Our massive exports of fracked coal seam gas will also need to be phased out. If we do not quit coal and gas we are screwed. It really is as simple as that.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maiwar, I ask you to withdraw. That language is unparliamentary.

Mr BERKMAN: I withdraw that last comment. To everyday Queenslanders worried about your future, I say this: Labor and the LNP are not defending coal because they want to protect jobs. We have known for years that a massive mobilisation to build clean energy, affordable homes and public transport could create millions of secure jobs. They are defending coal and fracking and big polluters because they are working for the other team. They would rather protect the profits of a few big polluters than break with the status quo. This moment of greatest danger is the time for us to plot a more ambitious course than ever before. We are fighting for a future where everyone has access to an affordable home, with more free time and secure meaningful work when they want it, a future where the basic necessities of life are guaranteed and where our state is run on cheap, abundant, 100 per cent clean energy. If we deploy our collective energies of progress and invention and solidarity we can make a cleaner future that is also a fairer one.

Cook Electorate, Art

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (7.28 pm): Cook is home to the most amazing art in the region and today I am proud to stand here to talk about the talent that exists in my electorate. Our art is most sought after and, for the art enthusiast looking for something different and exciting, Cook delivers with unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and contemporary art in various forms from painting, print, carving, pottery, ghost nets, mosaic and recyclable art, to name a few.

Through my travels I have come to appreciate the stories being told through art and the showcasing of rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and non-Indigenous contemporary art, which create awareness for the different issues affecting communities in Far North Queensland. It is noted that the style of art varies significantly between communities.

Lockhart River, on the eastern side of Cape York Peninsula, continues to produce world-class art. Its vibrant, contemporary canvas paintings have been exhibited on both national and international stages. During my recent visit to Lockhart River, I had the opportunity to meet some very talented artists who clearly paint with heart and soul to tell stories of the deep connection they have to country and place.

In Cooktown, I visited the Cooktown Art Society and met with many wonderfully talented artists from that community. The Cooktown Art Society provides a warm and friendly space that is open to all members of the community to display their art. Theirs is a more contemporary style of art, leaving me with an impression of coastal living. There were paintings, mosaics, mobiles and much more. I was particularly impressed with the sea dragon made entirely from driftwood collected from the shores around Cooktown and neatly sculptured to produce a magnificent piece of art.

The Pormpuraaw Art and Culture Centre on Cape York Peninsular and Erub Arts in the Torres Strait take pride in the creation of extravagant ghost-net art that depicts wildlife. However, those magnificent pieces of art bring light to a very important environmental issue: marine pollution. Ghost nets or fishing nets are often discarded and left to float aimlessly in the ocean, slowly contributing to the killing of vulnerable marine life.

Art is clearly an industry with a huge potential to grow. In those communities, abundant talent has the capability of building more than just an industry; it has the capacity to build up people by creating opportunities to increase knowledge of and skills for art, as well as business and marketing. It supports future employment and long-term economic growth. Furthermore, it contributes to the social and emotional wellbeing of a person and the whole community, as people are more inclined to get in touch with the environment for inspiration. Art is more than what meets the eye; it is an avenue for opportunity in a region that lacks industry. I look forward to working closely with communities to tell the story of Cook and Far North Queensland.

The House adjourned at 7.31 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, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson