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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 15 May 2019

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WEDNESDAY, 15 MAY 2019


 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.

REPORT


Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General report No. 18 of 2018-19 titled *Local government entities: 2017-18 results of financial audits*. I table the report for the information of members.

Tabled paper: Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 18: 2018-19—Local government entities: 2017-18 results of financial audits [\[763\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

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

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 8 April 2019 the member for Burleigh wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy deliberately misled the House during statements made on 26 March 2019. On the evidence before me, I consider the minister has made an adequate explanation for the basis of his statements under standing order 269(4). I have therefore decided that this matter does not warrant the further attention of the House by the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence regarding a matter of privilege relating to an allegation raised by the member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham, misled the House [\[769\]](#).

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

MR SPEAKER: Honourable members,

On 8 April 2019, the Member for Burleigh wrote to me alleging that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy deliberately misled the House during statements made on 26 March 2019.

The matter relates to statements made by the Minister about the effect of competition policy on electricity prices for regional families.

In his letter to me, the Member for Burleigh contended that the Minister's statements were based on an incorrect interpretation of the relevant Productivity Commission Report and the LNP's policy, and that the figures the Minister quoted in the House were incorrect and misleading.

I sought further information from the Minister about the allegation made against him, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5).

The Minister provided me with information contained in the Productivity Commission Report which he used as a basis for his statements in the House.


On the evidence before me, I consider that the Minister has made an adequate explanation for the basis of his statements under Standing Order 269(4), which is a differing interpretation and application of data contained in the Productivity Commission Report, from that of the Member for Burleigh.

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


However, I wish to take the opportunity to remind Members to be prudent when drawing on data to support statements they make in the House so as to avoid circumstances that may give rise to ambiguity.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Absence of Member

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, yesterday I omitted to make this statement. I have received a notification from the member for Kurwongbah advising of his intended absence until Tuesday, 11 June 2019. The member's notification complies with standing order 263A.

School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from the Scots PGC College at Warwick in the electorate of Southern Downs; Ananda Marga River School in the electorate of Glass House; and Our Lady of the Assumption school at Enoggera in the electorate of Everton.

PETITIONS

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

Murgon, Youth Crime

Mrs Frecklington, from 400 petitioners, requesting the House to consider additional strategies to combat youth crime for the township of Murgon [\[764\]](#).

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

Oyster Creek Road, Bus Service

Mr Hart, from 1,068 petitioners, requesting the House to introduce a new bus service at Oyster Creek Road to enable residents of Old Burleigh Town to travel directly to and from a main transport hub such as Treetops Shopping Centre [\[765, 766\]](#).

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

Booral Road, Upgrade

Mr Sorensen, from 67 petitioners, requesting the House to redesign and fix the Booral and Keen Road intersection at Bunya Creek and plan to upgrade all intersections along Booral Road between Maryborough Hervey Bay Road and Main Street [\[767\]](#).

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


Bicycle Helmets

From 439 petitioners, requesting the House to retain current law in relation to compulsory wearing of bicycle helmets [\[768\]](#).

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

QPAC, Theatre; Regional Queensland, Arts Infrastructure


 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.34 am): The new \$150 million theatre to be built at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre reaches an exciting stage today with the release of concept designs. The theatre will be built on the Playhouse Green site, and I can announce that architects Blight Rayner and Snohetta are the successful principal consultant with a world-class plan. It respects the original design of QPAC by Robin Gibson but with a unique identity for the precinct's fifth theatre.

This addition to QPAC and the Cultural Centre will be one of our most significant cultural projects, supporting more than 100 jobs during design and construction. When the new theatre opens it will generate ongoing employment opportunities, with an estimate of more than 40 full-time jobs at QPAC. It will make QPAC the largest performing arts complex in Australia. That is great news. With 1,500 seats, it will attract bigger shows and more visitors to our already thriving South Bank cultural precinct. Like all great theatres, we want to ensure the new facility is not only a wonderful performance venue but also an outstanding architectural addition to our city and our state. This morning we have seen some of the concept drawings, and all of the striking design artwork will be unveiled later today. Watch this space. This will be a performing arts venue we all can be proud of, and I look forward to the start of construction next year and its completion in 2022.

At the same time, we also are investing in the arts throughout the state. In Rockhampton we have committed \$8 million towards the city's new Art Gallery, and today I have more great news which I know the member for Rockhampton will be pleased to hear. My government will contribute another \$5 million to the project from our Building our Regions program. Look, the member cannot stop smiling! It is great news for Rockhampton. Members should be aware that the Rockhampton gallery has some of the best Australian artworks in the country. They were collected in the Gough Whitlam era and were housed in the back. Once this art gallery is finalised, these magnificent artworks will be on display not just for Queenslanders but for Australians and visitors as well.

In Cairns we are spending more than \$5 million to refurbish and revitalise the Centre of Contemporary Arts to strengthen the local arts sector and to boost cultural tourism in the far north. This comes on top of \$15 million that we committed to the Cairns Performing Arts Centre, which I know the Minister for the Arts, Minister Enoch, attended at the end of last year. Arts and culture will continue to thrive across Queensland now and into the future.

Year of Outback Tourism

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): The House may recall that in December last year I announced 2019 as the Year of Outback Tourism. I also announced a \$3 million events grants program for new and existing events in outback Queensland to grow tourism and shine a spotlight on the rich experiences available in the regions. Once again, my government is delivering for the bush. Isn't that wonderful? I did not hear any announcements in terms of backing the bush when those opposite were in government.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mudgeeraba. You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thought they would be jumping for joy at this announcement. Today I am delighted to announce that—

Opposition members interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Order! I remind all members of the purpose of ministerial statements. I also remind all members that there is no acceptable interjection.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Today I am delighted to announce the recipients of the first of the four rounds of grants through the Year of Outback Tourism events program. The outback is set to come alive with 27 events and experiences that will share in more than \$1.1 million in funding. The array of events being supported is as vast as our outback itself. The list includes events and experiences in 24 of the 27 local government areas that form outback Queensland. Grants of up to \$100,000 have been allocated to support existing events such as the Hughenden Rugby 7s Carnival, the Cloncurry Stockman's Challenge & Campdraft, the Winton Outback Festival, Surat's Cobb & Co Festival, Birdsville's Big Red Bash festival, the Cunnamulla Fella Festival and the Vision Splendid Outback Film Festival, which today is having its launch here at Parliament House.

There are new events, too. Longreach is putting on the Outback Paddle Regatta and River Fest, the Charleville Cosmos Centre is hosting a two-night astronomical event commemorating the 50th anniversary of the moon landing, and Emerald will host the Out the Back Music Festival, along with other events across the region.

We will be opening round 2 next month, so there will be plenty of opportunities to boost tourism in the outback. I urge everyone to head west and experience the natural beauty, history, rich Indigenous heritage and warm welcome the outback will offer them and their families. Why not take the train? This week until Friday—there is not long to go—Queensland Rail is offering a two-for-one deal on the famous Spirit of the Outback, Inlander and Westlander trains. The deal will enable people to travel with a mate—or a spouse, a friend or a child—for free, helping to boost tourism in regional Queensland towns and supporting our outback communities along the way.

Weather Events; Floods, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.40 am): Once again our state is being subjected to extreme weather. As of this morning, former Tropical Cyclone Ann was 380 kilometres north of Cairns. Now a tropical low, it is expected to cross the north-east Queensland

coast today, bringing wind gusts of 90 kilometres per hour between Cape Grenville and Cooktown, including Lizard Island. Some 150 millimetres of rain is expected over a six-hour period, leading to the possibility of flash flooding. Our emergency services are ready. Sadly, we are well experienced.


Since Tropical Cyclone Marcia our state has endured 35 natural disasters. It is barely 100 days since the last flooding disasters in our north. We have not forgotten what our communities have been through, and we have remained by their sides every step of the way through their recovery. To date, more than 116,000 people have received personal hardship assistance grants totalling over \$32 million. Through negotiations with the Prime Minister we have been able to increase special disaster assistance recovery grants to eligible small business from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and to eligible primary producers from \$25,000 to \$75,000. QRIDA has approved almost \$62 million in grants, with \$500,000 going to non-profits, \$5.5 million to small business and, very importantly, \$56.7 million to our primary producers. My government has also secured matching funding from the federal government for a \$242 million exceptional circumstances package which includes infrastructure, business and industry support, tourism recovery and improved flood mapping and warnings, and to assist the North-West Queensland cattle industry recover.

This is what standing up for Queensland looks like. It takes a particular strength to endure these disasters. I do not think we could do it if we were not also the kind of people who take care of each other. Donations to the North Queensland floods appeal have now grown to more than \$10 million.

I am pleased to announce that 400 rail workers laboured 161,000 hours to reopen the Mount Isa to Townsville rail line, and they did it in just 11 weeks. That is a great achievement. I ask the minister to pass on the parliament's thanks to all of the workers involved. This was not a small undertaking, with more than 200 sites across 300 kilometres of rail needing repair on what is a vital transport route for our state.

The mental wellbeing of affected communities has not been forgotten either, with more than 63,000 people provided with support and NQ Connect continuing to provide telephone counselling to anyone affected and teams on the ground. We will continue to work with Queenslanders on this recovery. I look forward to visiting some of the communities next week.

QPAC, Theatre


 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (9.42 am): The Premier's announcement this morning means that the government has reached an important milestone in delivering a new performing arts venue for Queensland. Last year the Palaszczuk government announced a new \$150 million theatre for the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. Today I echo the Premier's excitement in announcing that architects Blight Rayner and Snohetta have been announced as the winning design team. This team has extensive experience in designing major theatres and entertainment venues in Australia and around the world. Their concept design responds to the once-in-a-generation expansion opportunity for QPAC, transforming it into Australia's largest performing arts centre and supporting the continued growth of performing arts here in Queensland.

QPAC is a place of great cultural and heritage significance for Queensland. The design for the new theatre, with inspiration drawn from the Brisbane River, will create a place of its own identity while respecting the legacy of Robin Gibson's original design. The final concept design also recognises first nations peoples and the cultural significance of South Bank, with inspiration in the design drawn from the Brisbane River as an important meeting place and a place for sharing stories.

QPAC welcomes audiences of more than one million people each year and programs more than 1,000 performances. When fully operational, this performing arts venue has the potential to welcome an estimated 300,000 attendees per year and an additional 260 performances per year. The new theatre will help us meet this enormous demand for quality performing arts and is the next step in supporting the state's future growth. It will also provide another way for Queensland's arts organisations to showcase local talent and tell unique stories.

This important project is about much more than arts infrastructure. It is about acknowledging the important role the arts plays in Queensland's identity, it is about securing Queensland's share of the \$86 billion the arts contributes to the Australian economy and it is about supporting the more than 80,000 people who are part of the creative workforce in Queensland.

QPAC, Theatre; Cairns and Yarrabah, Visit

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.45 am): I join with the Premier and the Minister for the Arts in welcoming this milestone in terms of the new theatre at the Queensland performing arts complex, located at South Bank in my electorate. It is truly exciting and I cannot wait to see the community's reaction to what I think is such an outstanding design.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, I ask you to cease your interjections.

Ms TRAD: Last week I had the pleasure of visiting Cairns and Yarrabah to meet with local community members and to see innovation in action. A highlight of the trip was joining with the member for Cairns and meeting with local travel itinerary branding specialists Didgigo, the first business in Far North Queensland to receive funding from the Palaszczuk government's Business Development Fund. This government backs Queensland businesses. Our \$500,000 investment in this company is a fantastic example of government and private enterprise working together to get positive outcomes for home-grown businesses and the people they employ.

I also met with the Torres and Cape Indigenous Council Alliance, TCICA, to discuss a number of important issues for remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the cape, gulf and Torres Strait. Among the key issues raised was funding for remote housing. I note the presence of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils in parliament this week.

This is an area that has been neglected by Canberra for too long. At this federal election the choice could not be more clear. On the one hand you have the Morrison Liberal-National government that has effectively announced an exit payment, or a cut to funding for remote Indigenous housing, and on the other hand you have a Shorten Labor government that has committed \$250 million in the 2019-20 financial year, as well as a commitment to negotiating a long-term funding agreement to make sure that construction—

Mrs Frecklington: Can't sign the agreement.

Ms TRAD: I take that interjection from the member for Nanango and Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, cease your interjections.

Ms TRAD: To be very clear, what the federal government has put on the table is an exit payment from the remote Indigenous housing partnership agreement. It is not an agreement for a long-term partnership that we have seen for the past five decades; it is an exit payment so they no longer fulfil their obligations to some of the most marginalised and poverty stricken Queenslanders.

What we have from the Shorten Labor opposition is a \$250 million payment in 2019-20 to build new houses, as well as a commitment—

Mrs Frecklington: 2019-20?

Ms TRAD: Yes, that is the next financial year, funnily enough. 2019-20 is the next financial year. I think the member for Nanango should talk to her shadow Treasurer to understand how financial years work.

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I ask you to resume your statement.

Ms TRAD: On the other hand, you have a Shorten Labor government that has committed \$250 million in 2019-20 and to a long-term negotiation around building houses in remote Indigenous communities in Queensland.

We know that this is a long-term issue that needs long-term solutions, and we will continue to work hard to ensure this is addressed properly by our federal colleagues. I note the member for Nanango giggling about this. I do not think it is a laughing matter, quite frankly.

As Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, I also held some initial consultation meetings with stakeholders around the most appropriate way to give Indigenous landholders more of a say in the development of their lands transferred under native title—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Please continue.

Ms TRAD: Yes, Mr Speaker, but I just seek your guidance around their constant disruption of the parliamentary proceedings.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! No, Deputy Premier. I ask that you resume your statement with the purpose of ensuring it is about factual and public information and not an opportunity for having interjections sought or taken. Ministerial statements should be about providing advice. That is the convention in the House. I ask you to continue your statement, Minister.

Ms TRAD: Okay, Mr Speaker. I will go back to my factual statement. As Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, I also held some initial consultation meetings with stakeholders around the most appropriate way to give Indigenous landholders more of a say in the development of their lands transferred under native title and tenure resolution processes.

Mr Hart interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders. I have been very clear about members being addressed by their proper titles in this House.

Ms TRAD: This was based on the recommendations from the bipartisan parliamentary State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee and after requests from traditional owner groups. I can assure the House that consultation will continue with all relevant stakeholders on this issue.

Another highlight was spending time with the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council and members of the Yarrabah Leaders Forum. I commend their approach to a unified voice to act on key issues, priorities and opportunities for their community. I also had the opportunity to see some recent infrastructure works and improvements delivered with support from the Palaszczuk government. This included a new cycle pathway, the Jilara Oval building with a gym, grandstand and sporting equipment storage and a new housing subdivision with solar streetlights. A new netball court will also be constructed shortly, and the young women in the Yarrabah community are very much looking forward to that piece of sporting infrastructure being delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

These improvements were selected and implemented locally and employed 46 people during round 1 of construction, many of whom were retained for the second round of works, most of which were funded under Works for Queensland. When I first went to Yarrabah and met the first crews that started working on infrastructure projects delivered through Works for Queensland, I met Sam. Sam is about to finish his apprenticeship—he is three months away—based on projects that have been delivered through the Works for Queensland project. Supporting strong and diverse regional economies is a priority of this government and I want to acknowledge and thank those who took the time to talk with me about the issues that matter to them in Cairns and Yarrabah.

Olive Downs Mine; Alliance Airlines

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.51 am): Yesterday our government announced the approval of the Olive Downs coalmine, bringing 1,500 new jobs to Central Queensland, and what a great project it is. As the ABC has reported, not a single negative submission was made against this mine by any environmental group during the project's environmental impact assessment. It is a great example of how our environmental laws ensure that good projects that stack up will be approved in our state. It is also another example of our government's strong support for coal industry jobs.


Today I am pleased to inform the House of even more jobs coming to Rockhampton and Central Queensland. I am pleased to inform the House that Alliance Airlines, Australia's third largest airline, is expanding its Queensland operations and will establish a new operational base in the great city of Rockhampton. Two weeks ago I was proud to join the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel to launch Alliance's new \$12.5 million project that will support up to 30 new full-time jobs in its first year of operation, growing to 58 full-time jobs over the next five years. This new operation brings greater connectivity, potential new routes, increased private charters and new tourism adventures to Central Queensland, with crew maintenance and aircraft based in Rockhampton.

For the people of Rocky it also means that during natural disasters like flooding, fires or cyclones there will be improved access to large commercial jet aircraft. Importantly, this would not have happened without the Palaszczuk Labor government's industry assistance program which attracted Alliance to put this base in Queensland. It is another chapter of a Queensland success story that would not be happening without Queensland Labor governments.

Alliance started its operations in 2002 with assistance from the then Beattie Labor government and is now Australia's largest charter operator, specialising in charters for the resource sector. The company has grown from one Brisbane head office and maintenance facility with just two Fokker 100


aircraft in 2002 to now having permanent maintenance facilities and offices in Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Darwin and in excess of 40 aircraft. The Queensland government's \$105 million Advance Queensland Industry Attraction Fund is continuing to offer financial incentives to encourage businesses to relocate or to expand in Queensland. It is a clear reminder of how the Palaszczuk Labor government's industry policies are growing our state's economy and providing more jobs for our regions.

Innovation

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (9.54 am): We are investing in Queensland businesses that are developing new technologies and creating new jobs now. Today I am proud to announce that as a direct result of funding support from the Palaszczuk government a leading Queensland drone company has now secured more than US\$2.5 million in venture capital funding from the UAE. In even more exciting news, today I can confirm that Skyborne Technologies was recently selected to participate in the US Army Maneuver Battle Lab's Army Expeditionary Warrior Experiment. This is a major coup if it can secure a long-term deal with the US Army.

We are partnering with business and investing in emerging technologies to create jobs in our state. In fact, since securing its government grant, this Queensland company has employed 10 more workers. While the federal government refuses to acknowledge that innovation is a pillar of our growing economy, we are getting on with the job of working with Queensland businesses to create new industries and opportunities for Queenslanders. Through Advance Queensland we have created more than 14,000 jobs by investing in innovation, and that number will continue to grow. We will continue to work with companies like Skyborne Technologies to scale up and export Queensland technologies and innovation to the world.


Flu Season

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.56 am): It is nothing short of tragic that 25 Queenslanders have died from the flu this year. It is a stark reminder that the flu is a serious disease and we must do what we can to protect ourselves and our communities. We have seen more than half the number of deaths already compared to the total number of deaths last year, and it is only May. It is no secret that so far this year we have seen an unprecedented and unseasonable spike in flu cases, over three times the five-year average. Last sitting I told the House that we had seen just over 9,000 confirmed cases of the flu in Queensland. Now, just weeks later, it is almost 10,000. Of those, 823 people ended up in a public hospital and 73 were admitted to an intensive care unit.

As we head into the peak of the season in the winter months, we must urge people to get their flu vaccinations. It is not too late to get protected. Flu viruses change frequently, which is why it is so important for Queenslanders to get their flu shot every year, and free flu shots are available to many in the community. I encourage those eligible to get vaccinated by their GP. People are eligible during any stage of pregnancy, if they are over 65 years old, if they are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or if they have certain medical conditions like asthma. Just ask your doctor. The Palaszczuk government has also funded free flu vaccines for all children under five years old and we have seen an incredible uptake of this program. I encourage all mums and dads to get their little ones vaccinated. All other Queenslanders can purchase their flu shot from their doctor or pharmacist.

The Premier and I had ours on the green last sitting and I promise it does not hurt. That means that we are now protected against the flu, as the shot takes 10 to 14 days to fully take effect. We know that the complications from flu can be deadly. My heart goes out to the families of the 25 people who have lost their lives this year to this dreadful disease. We need to encourage everyone to wash their hands properly, cover coughs with a tissue and to stay at home when sick—and please get your flu shot. Remind your family members, remind your work colleagues, tell your friends. It only takes a minute, it is incredibly effective and can save your life and the lives of your family.

Police Service, Resources

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (9.58 am): Queensland has a world-class Police Service and this year the capital and operational budget for our police is more than \$2.4 billion, an increase of over 13 per cent since our government was elected—and in this budget police are getting more bang for their buck. We are getting more police,


more police stations, more technology for our police, more specialist personnel, more police vessels and vehicles and, under our government, our police are better qualified, better trained and better equipped than ever before.

Examples abound. The world looks to our Task Force Argos as the benchmark when it comes hunting those who prey on children. Our homicide squad and cold case unit lead the nation when it comes to solving cases. We have invested over \$46 million in building a new Counter Terrorism and Community Safety Centre in Wacol, which will be a world-class use of force, weapons and counter-terrorism training facility, with construction about to begin, creating 130 jobs. Importantly, this new facility will support the work of 85 counter-terrorism specialists, which our government has funded and who will be embedded throughout the state.

We are creating jobs for Queenslanders. As a result there are more police in Queensland than ever before and there are more coming. Today, I am pleased to announce to the House that a new batch of recruits will graduate at the Oxley police academy tomorrow—74 brand-new police officers. They will join those who graduated from the Oxley academy only a few months ago. At that graduation ceremony, 76 new police officers were sworn into service. These new police officers will be deployed across our state—to Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Far North and North and out west.

For the benefit of those opposite, I point out that we have two police academies in Queensland. One is at Oxley and the other one is at Townsville. Earlier this year, the Townsville police academy received a new intake of recruits, who will spend six months learning the skills and capabilities of a modern police officer. Those recruits will graduate this year as well. The recruitment drive for our Queensland Police Service continues. By 2020-21, the Palaszczuk government will have invested in an extra 535 police personnel since 2017. Our police do a great job keeping Queensland safe and we commend them for their service.

STEM Education


 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.01 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to giving Queensland kids the skills and knowledge they need for the jobs of the future. That is why we are so passionate about science, technology, engineering and mathematics—or STEM—and none more so than the Premier. The number of jobs in STEM fields is growing at more than twice the rate of that of other industries and occupations and we are seeing a major shift towards a knowledge-intensive economy, which means that the demand for STEM skills will only increase over time.

As a demonstration of our commitment, over the past two years the Palaszczuk government has invested \$83.2 million to support STEM education in Queensland. This investment funds initiatives such as the annual Premier's Coding Challenge, which was launched in February 2019, with entries closing on 2 September; the statewide robot lending library, including six Pepper and 10 NAO robots—and it is great to see them in use in schools throughout Queensland; our STEM Girl Power initiative to encourage girls to study senior STEM subjects and pursue a career in STEM; and the Peter Doherty Awards for Excellence in STEM Education.

We are also committed to increasing the capability of teachers in STEM subjects. We are investing \$81.3 million over four years to support STEM subject teaching and learning in all state primary schools. This funding can be used by schools to source expertise from local secondary schools, universities or industry or to gain access to the resources they need and to forge new partnerships to make STEM learning more engaging. Since 2016, we have seen more than 3,100 teachers participate in professional development to increase their STEM capability, especially in the area of maths, giving teachers the increased knowledge they need to be confident teaching STEM in our classrooms. We have also employed a STEM champion in every education region to support STEM capability in schools and funded scholarships for professionals working in STEM jobs to transition into teaching and teachers in rural and remote communities.

Our investment is paying dividends. For example, students from Merrimac State High School were presented with awards for the best coding and solution documentation at the 2018 World Robotic Summit in Tokyo. Both teams performed incredibly well and demonstrated their excellent skills in coding, engineering, developing logic and problem solving. Recently, it was great to welcome them to Parliament House. Sunnybank State High School, in the electorate of Toohey, was the winner of the national Education Innovation Award 2018 for their work in STEM. Springfield Central State School, in the electorate of Jordan, took out the Premier's Coding Challenge for 2018 in the years 3 and 4 category. We are giving our young people the skills and knowledge they need to become the global citizens of tomorrow and investing in STEM teacher skills and professional development.

Carroll, Commissioner K

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (10.04 am): I rise to update the House on what is now ex-Tropical Cyclone Ann, which is off the coast of Queensland's Far North. This morning, a severe weather warning was issued from Cooktown down to Ingham, including Lizard Island. Residents and visitors in those areas can expect damaging winds of up to 90 kilometres per hour and showers increasing to heavy rain. Fortunately, there has been no damage so far.

QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll has deployed swiftwater rescue personnel and drone operators to monitor the weather and join our amazing emergency services personnel up there who are already on the ground, because this Palaszczuk government is 100 per cent committed to ensuring that Queenslanders are safe. Tropical Cyclone Ann is a late season cyclone. In fact, she is coming very late to the party. The cyclone season officially finished on 30 April. Obviously, no-one told Mother Nature.

This brings me to a sad but necessary part of my role as Queensland's Fire and Emergency Services minister. These sittings are the last for our QFES Commissioner Katarina Carroll as she begins her transition to the Police Service. For the past 4½ years, Commissioner Carroll has steered a steady course at QFES's helm. Today, I have the task of saying goodbye.

Commissioner Carroll was not just our first female QFES commissioner but Queensland's first female commissioner full stop. Commissioner Carroll came to QFES from the ranks of the Police Service and immediately had to tackle a culture that was concerning, and she has done that. Last week, I was privileged to join her at the graduation ceremony of this year's first cohort of firefighter recruits, of whom almost 30 per cent are women. Now, Commissioner Carroll is returning to the Police Service as its first female commissioner.


As we know, integrity, intelligence, determination and vision are not gender issues. The commissioner has been cited many times as saying that her greatest inspirations were her people and serving the community. In QFES, that also means providing leadership in the most extreme of circumstances. Maybe Cyclone Ann is heading our way as Mother Nature's last hurrah under Katarina's watch.

One thing that has been somewhat overlooked in what has, quite frankly, been a brilliant career for the commissioner is her passion for education. I would like to put on the record that this passion has resulted in an impressive and enviable list of awards, merits and degrees—from an Associate Diploma in Community Welfare in 1982 to a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice and an Executive Masters of Public Administration. In 2018, Commissioner Carroll was the recipient of Griffith University's Outstanding Alumnus Award. Who are the main beneficiaries of this outstanding and accomplished dedication to education, leadership and self-improvement? The people of Queensland.

The Premier and I have seen Commissioner Carroll in action across the state—from the remote communities of Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw and Lockhart River to our east coast communities between Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton. At the end of last year I observed Commissioner Carroll lead QFES magnificently as Queenslanders confronted their worst bushfire season on record. While we were dealing with the fires, Severe Tropical Cyclone Owen crossed the coast near Cardwell. Then we had Penny. Then we had Oma. Then we had Trevor. At the helm consistent, calm and cool headed was Commissioner Katarina Carroll. Then we had a monsoon trough that dumped an unimaginable amount of rain on North and North-West Queensland. People in those communities, including in the Townsville region, are still recovering.

I have watched the commissioner inspire the men and women who make up her QFES team. I have watched as, with focus and compassion, Commissioner Carroll worked with communities facing down natural disasters. For that I say thank you. Queensland's Police Service is now truly blessed to have her and the men and women of QFES are better off for her having been with them.

Palm Island, Water Supply

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.08 am): The Palaszczuk government has a strong record of investing in critical infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including Palm Island. Our \$120 million Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program includes \$6.1 million for Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council over four years. It is designed to deliver repairs and upgrades to critical water, wastewater and solid waste infrastructure—ensuring safe drinking water for Palm Island


residents. The council also received \$1.2 million under the 2015-16 Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program to upgrade the Palm Island water treatment plant, an asset that I have inspected personally with the mayor.

As the owner of these water assets, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council has an obligation to properly maintain them for the benefit of local residents. The state government has been working with council to tackle the water asset maintenance challenges the local community has faced in recent times. State government engineers have visited Palm Island at least 10 times in 2018 and 2019 when water quality issues have been reported by council. On that note, I acknowledge that the member for Townsville has been an ongoing advocate for supporting the council in these times.

In May this year when the latest issues emerged, engineers committed to undertake a detailed operational assessment of the water supply system to identify any infrastructure upgrades that may be required. Engineers found the source of the fault causing these issues in May was a water pressure sensor and this was replaced by the state government at a cost of \$360,000. Since then, the 'do not drink' order that had been in place has been lifted. Engineers will be on Palm Island again today continuing to assess the situation.

In another important development, yesterday federal Labor committed \$3 million to address water supply issues on Palm Island. We welcome this important contribution which will be earmarked for any future water infrastructure needs arising from my department's audit. In total, federal and Queensland Labor have now committed more than \$10 million to improving water quality on Palm Island. We will continue to work with the local community to ensure a safe drinking water supply is available for all residents.

Rural Economic Development Grants

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.11 am): Today I rise to announce the latest round of the Palaszczuk government's Rural Economic Development Grants. This grant scheme will contribute \$3.2 million to fund the expansion and advancement of 15 rural businesses throughout the state. Additional support to grow these rural businesses will create up to 600 jobs as they expand and increase their capacity.


The Palaszczuk government supports jobs growth in every part of Queensland, including rural and regional Queensland. These grants will support jobs in the Maranoa, Lockyer Valley, Central Highlands, Toowoomba, Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast, Mareeba, Balonne, North Burnett, the Western Downs and the Southern Downs. These grants of up to \$250,000 will enable these businesses to build new infrastructure, create jobs and build the success of our regions.

We have seen some very impressive projects in the applications for these grants which will create ongoing economic and social benefits for their communities. Midwest Fabrication in the Western Downs will use its grant to improve and build infrastructure so it can expand its manufacturing capacity, creating 24 direct and indirect jobs. JV & MH Brodie in the Balonne Shire will construct a 10,000-head lamb feedlot and a spelling yard, creating 13 direct and indirect jobs. Their grant will contribute to the first three stages with a capacity of 6,000 head.

I look forward to announcing other successful candidates from this grant program over the coming weeks. The Palaszczuk government has always been and will remain the best friend of rural and regional Queensland. We have always backed our farmers, we have always backed regional Queensland and we always will.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Alleged Contempt of Parliament, Apology

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (10.13 am): Yesterday in the House the member for Oodgeroo took offence at a satirical tweet of mine. I was surprised at the timing, being the week before the election, because the tweet was first tweeted in 2017, but as the member has taken offence I apologise for the satirical tweet.

So that the record is correct, for the benefit of the House I table the actual tweet of the member having dinner with Pauline Hanson.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 10 December 2016, from the Twitter account of the former member for Cleveland, Dr Mark Robinson MP [\[770\]](#).

Mr SPEAKER: Please table it and not hold it up.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member, please resume your seat for a moment. I think you are going beyond the bounds of a personal explanation. Do you have anything further to add that relates directly to the explanation you are trying to provide to the House?


Mr BROWN: I just note that the photo was taken by Steve Dickson, the former member for Buderim.

Dr ROBINSON: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is misleading the House. That is not the individual who took the photo.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Oodgeroo.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.14 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House—

1. condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government's catastrophic management of the Queensland economy under a Deputy Premier who even failed to forecast a \$1.3 billion budget blunder;
2. notes that under Labor—
 - (a) Queensland has the second highest unemployment rate in the nation;

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Cooper, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked for these motions to be heard in silence.


Mr MANDER: It continues—

- (b) the Sensis Business Index puts the Palaszczuk Labor government as the least popular amongst small and medium sized businesses;
- (c) compared to an equivalent time under the LNP government, Labor has seen a drop of 38.5 per cent in business investment equal to \$73.5 billion;
- (d) Queensland private sector wage growth was less than the national average for 2018;
- (e) the December 2018 quarter was the worst for construction seen since December 2006;
- (f) 18,000 jobs have been lost in the manufacturing sector and Queensland has the lowest number of manufacturing workers in three decades;
- (g) Queensland has more strikes than any other state or territory;
- (h) the Queensland growth rate for last year was lower than the national average;
- (i) five new taxes have been introduced, ripping \$2.2 billion from the economy;
3. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to stop petty politics in its forthcoming budget and adopt the LNP's policies to—
 - (a) air-condition every state school classroom;
 - (b) fast-track the second M1 upgrades;
 - (c) deliver the second M1;
 - (d) deliver the Mackay Ring Road stage 2;
 - (e) upgrade the Bruce Highway;
 - (f) duplicate the Sunshine Coast rail line; and
 - (g) guarantee no new taxes.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

Youth Detention

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.17 am): My first question is to the Premier. This week the LNP will introduce legislative amendments to set a maximum holding time of 72 hours for children in watch houses. Will the Premier support the LNP's amendments to end Labor's watch house fail today?

Mr SPEAKER: Before answering, Premier; can I be sure, Leader of the Opposition, that this is not related to a bill that is presently before the House? Can you give me that assurance?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, I can give you that assurance.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is good to have a question about something we have not seen. When those opposite introduce that bill we will have a look at it and the government will take a position on it. I would like to see the LNP come out publicly and say that it supports the \$550 million that we are investing in youth justice. The answer of the LNP to issues of youth justice was failed boot camps. I would like to see the LNP give a press conference and say it supports the building of a new youth detention centre in Queensland. Under its watch there was no planning for a new detention centre. This government is planning and we are building.

Secondly, we know that they give mixed messages when it comes to youth justice in this state. One minute the young people are grubs and thugs, and the next minute they are children. 'Let them out', the member for Everton said yesterday. Those are completely mixed messages.

I have said very clearly in this House that we do not want to see young people held in watch houses for any length of time, but the reality is that some of those young people have committed serious offences and the magistrates have said so. The offences are things such as assault, attacking police officers, domestic violence, rape and serious armed robbery. The sum of \$550 million is the largest investment in youth justice ever seen. As I have said very clearly—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They do not want to hear the answer—the No. 1 way to break the cycle of youth offending is to get those young people a job. What did the LNP do? They cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work, they abolished youth justice conferencing, they banned elders from going into the youth detention centres—

Ms Trad: Defunded organisations, sacked public servants and sacked youth workers.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—defunded organisations and gagged them. I want to see a robust youth justice system. I want to see young people being given the chance to get a job.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, we are not off to a good start today. I appreciate there are interjections back and forth across the chamber, including the incident from the Premier. I am having difficulty hearing the Premier. I ask that you cease your interjections and listen to the response. Premier, do you have anything further to add in relation to the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I do, Mr Speaker. I thought I heard the member for Glass House say, 'Send them down a coalmine'. Did you say that?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is pretty serious.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I ask you to put your comments through the chair and not directly address other members of the parliament.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thought I heard the member for Glass House say that derogatory comment.

(Time expired)

Youth Detention

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question without notice is also to the Premier. I refer to advice from Damien Atkinson QC, the Chairman of the Youth Advocacy Centre, that the watch house crisis can be fixed by increasing staff ratios at youth detention centres and building temporary accommodation. Will the Premier immediately implement those changes to get the kids out of Queensland watch houses as soon as possible?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. As I said, we hear mixed messages from the opposition. One minute those kids are thugs and grubs, and the next minute they say we should look after the kids. It is a very mixed message. In relation to accommodation, yesterday the Leader of the Opposition released a statement—

Mrs Frecklington: It was a press conference.

Ms PALASZCZUK: She held a press conference to talk about temporary accommodation. I will always adopt the recommendations of any royal commission held into youth detention and we have been told very clearly that temporary accommodation does not work.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my left, not agreeing with the statement being made is not a cause for uproar in the House. I ask you to cease your interjections.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I assure all members of the House that the government has considered every possible option to accelerate youth detention centre capacity, including such temporary options. As if we did not consider that. Of course we considered it, at length.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: With regard to the suggestion for temporary accommodation such as was built at the former John Oxley detention centre in 1994, I can advise that those interim structures were not appropriate for youth detention and resulted in escapes and major damage to structures. The Design Guidelines for Juvenile—

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Southport, you are warned under the standing orders. Members, I will not be repeating myself today and I may not issue any warnings prior to the official warning under the standing orders. Tread with caution.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is an important issue and I would like the House to listen. The Design Guidelines for Juvenile Justice Facilities in Australia and New Zealand were developed for the juvenile detention system under the auspices of the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators forum and endorsed by the states and territories in 1996. They were enhanced by the 2009 Australian Juvenile Justice Standards. Those standards set the minimum standards for youth justice facilities, and temporary demountables will not fit within those standards.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I would like to continue, Mr Speaker.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Please continue, Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As far back as 1999, the Forde inquiry report included consultant recommendations about juvenile—

Mr Mander: A complete lack of planning.

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is a serious issue. I am trying to give—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As far back as 1999, the Forde inquiry report included consultant recommendations about juvenile detention centres and, amongst other things, recommended the removal of the demountables at the former John Oxley youth detention centre.

Mr Purdie interjected.

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Ninderry, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Nicklin, you have had a very good go this morning. Leader of the Opposition, I caution you to cease your interjections. You have asked the question and I ask that you hear the answer.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We cannot risk the installation of temporary demountable buildings such as occurred at John Oxley, which resulted in injuries, escapes and damage to buildings. Detention centres are now built to a very robust and demanding standard to ensure the safety and security of young people and the staff who work at those detention centres. That is why we are building a brand-new secure facility that meets the guidelines that protect the young people and the staff.

Federal Funding

Mrs LAUGA: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier inform the House whether Queensland is getting its fair share from the Morrison government?

Ms PALASZCZUK: What a great question from the member for Keppel. We know that Queensland is not at all getting its fair share from the Morrison government. We know how important Central Queensland is to the economy. Yesterday I spoke about record exports from our state. Rocky is the beef cattle of Australia. In the year to March, beef exports from Queensland increased from \$1 billion to \$5.8 billion. We are doing our part by injecting \$946,000 to reinstate the Yeppoon branch line to the JBS meatworks. I remember going out there with the member for Keppel and talking about that. That is an example of government and business working together. In this state, we get on with the job of working with everybody in the best interests of Queenslanders.

Unfortunately, that is not the case with the Morrison government. This Saturday, Queenslanders have a great opportunity to send the Morrison government a very clear message by voting them out. The clearest way to send a message is to vote them out.

When it comes to health funding, Queensland has not been given its fair share. We are owed more than \$300 million. When it comes to infrastructure, yesterday I told the House that we are not getting our fair share. Wouldn't it be wonderful if Queensland received the same amount of money that the Morrison government gives to New South Wales and Victoria? Imagine what we could do for regional Queensland! We also know that the federal Labor candidate in Capricornia has committed \$20 million to fix Laurie Street at Gracemere, but we have heard nothing from Scott Morrison. It is very hard.

Over the past nine months—indeed, over the past six years—we have seen complete chaos in Canberra. We have seen a procession of people such as Abbott and Peter Dutton involved in leadership coups. Wouldn't it be wonderful if on Saturday the people of Dickson sent Peter Dutton a clear message by voting him out?

Mr Mander: Ali France will go against me after she loses.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I think she will be the federal member. Let us wait and see. I am happy to take a bet.

In all seriousness, Queensland has been duded. All I can say about the LNP is if only for once they stood up for Queensland and said that Queensland deserves its fair share. I know that the member for Rockhampton, the member for Keppel and the member for Gladstone will always stand up for Central Queensland—part of the economic powerhouse of Queensland. We will continue to fight the good fight.

Youth Detention

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. I refer to reports on the ABC that a young Indigenous boy with a mental age of a six-year-old was held in a maximum security adult cell for 34 days. Given that Damien Atkinson QC, the Chairman of the Youth Advocacy Centre, has compared it to Nauru and Third World conditions, what action has the minister taken to stop Indigenous children being held like caged animals?

Ms TRAD: I acknowledge the question from the member for Everton. For full disclosure to the House, I can report that Mr Damien Atkinson is in fact my brother-in-law. He is married to my sister. Mr Damien Atkinson has spent more than two decades in the area of youth justice advocacy as the Chairman of the Youth Advocacy Centre. He has contributed quite significantly to the debate on this issue over that period and has worked with some of the most marginalised people within our community.

For the benefit of the House, I will ensure that those opposite understand that my role as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships is not to take on responsibility for every single policy area where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may in fact be impacted. I do not take responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children coming into the child protection system, but clearly my agency, as specialists in the area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms TRAD: Mr Speaker, I am not sure they actually want to listen to the answer.

Mr SPEAKER: Please continue, Deputy Premier.

Ms TRAD: My agency provides specialist advice and policy support in areas, particularly of social policy, that impact significantly on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We will ensure that this matter is investigated. As the Premier has already said, what has happened under this government is the most significant investment in youth justice that we have seen in this state—infrastructure, but, more importantly, non-infrastructure support and solutions. That includes money to the organisation Murri Watch so that they can conduct daily visits to children in watch houses to assist them and their families navigate the legal system.

Those opposite have absolutely no credibility when it comes to this issue. They defunded organisations like Murri Watch. For the benefit of the House, I will remind people what the LNP's policy was on youth offending going into the last election.

Mr SPEAKER: Please table the document.

Ms TRAD: I will, Mr Speaker, after I read from it. Their policy was removing the principle of detention as a last resort and locking up kids on their second offence. Those opposite have no credibility. I table this document for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Liberal National Party document, undated, titled 'Getting tough on young offenders' [771].

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, can I just provide some guidance. I was simply asking you to cease holding that up to the chamber. You can read from the document or table it. Both are acceptable, but you need to choose and not prolong the holding of the document.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Please take the guidance, Deputy Premier.

Resources Industry, Jobs

Mrs GILBERT: My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier please update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to support resource industry jobs in the Mackay area?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mackay for the question. I know the member for Mackay is a big advocate for the resources sector and the jobs it brings to her area. On many occasions we have gone to many of the companies that help support mining companies, including technology and support services. Yesterday we were very pleased to announce the \$1 billion Olive Downs mine. That is great news for Central Queensland and another vote of confidence in the government and our commitment to the resources sector across Queensland.

As I have said in the House many times—and I am more than happy to say it again—\$20 billion worth of resource projects have been given the tick under this government. That is a far cry from what we saw with the LNP government where we saw a decline in mining jobs of around 6,000. Under my government over 7½ thousand mining jobs have been created.

Our strong metallurgical coal is going to be needed for many years. The steel is used in our houses and vehicles. I visit JFE Steel and Mitsubishi in Japan as much as I can to reaffirm our strong commitment to metallurgical mining in this state. Those jobs are going to be welcomed.

I note that the member for Mackay explained to the media that Pembroke has committed to recruiting locals and people from other regions who might like to move to local towns. There will also be significant opportunities for local and regional suppliers, contractors, service providers and businesses. There is a flow-on effect of this mine through her local community.

I also note that Resource Industry Network chairman, David Hartigan, told media in Mackay yesterday that this is terrific news. I know that the community—

Mr Costigan: Did you read his comments on Carmichael?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Whitsunday, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is good to know the member for Whitsunday is still here.

Ms Trad: Team LNP.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Team LNP; that is right. I take that interjection. Pembroke Resources chairman, Barry Tudor, states in the article, 'Our focus is on workers'—

Ms Trad: Now he is going. Oh, bye.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I did not mean to upset him. Is it something I said? The article states—

Our focus is on workers living locally, including in Moranbah, Nebo and Dysart, and hiring locally from the surrounding towns of Central Queensland. There will be no fly-in fly-out rosters.

What a great win. He also goes on to say—

The approval is not only a sign of confidence in this project, but also an acknowledgement of Pembroke's adherence to the highest of standards throughout the approvals process.

(Time expired)

Youth Detention

Mr BENNETT: My question is to the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women. On 11 October 2018 the minister met with Public Guardian, Natalie Siegel-Brown, ministerial staff and departmental staff. Did the Public Guardian raise concerns with the minister at that meeting about Labor's policy to detain young kids in police watch houses?

Ms FARMER: I thank the member for his question. I cannot say hand on heart what occurred in that conversation. I would need to refer to meeting notes. I imagine, given that the Public Guardian has continued to raise these concerns over a period of time, that she would have raised those concerns. There is not much basis to all of this questioning—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Minister, please resume your seat. Members to my left, the minister is being responsive to the question asked. Cease your interjections so that I and other members of the House can hear the answer.

Ms FARMER: No-one on this side of the House—and I do not know whether they have heard this—wants those young people to be in watch houses. We have made that very clear. That is why we have made a half a billion dollar investment in youth justice reforms in this state. We are showing leadership on what is a complex and difficult issue. We are looking at getting those young people out of our youth justice system as quickly as possible.

Mr Boothman interjected.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Ms FARMER: I am absolutely in despair at the statements that are being made on that side of the House about their plans for youth justice.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Theodore, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Toowoomba South, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms FARMER: We had the opposition leader saying just before—I do not think we are really clear about whether she is introducing a bill or how she is actually going to do it—that she is going to have all of those young people out of the watch houses within 72 hours. She might change her mind again by tomorrow, so I am not going to prepare for that yet. On 26 April last year she said, 'Offenders who commit serious crimes should be in detention and off the streets.' Just a couple of weeks ago the member for Everton said, 'Overcrowded cells should not be an excuse to let young offenders back out on the streets.' What are we to think? That is her view today. What is going to be her view tomorrow? Has she got something else for us to look at tomorrow?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members to my left. Do you have anything further to add, Minister?

Ms FARMER: Yes, Mr Speaker. After they committed to pulling \$200 million out of the youth justice budget, I would like to see, going to the next election, what they think they are going to do to really solve youth justice. That is what we all want to know. How are they going to solve youth justice? How are they going to exercise the leadership that the Palaszczuk Labor government is showing on youth justice?

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders.

Taxi Subsidy Scheme

Ms RICHARDS: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on the funding arrangements for the Taxi Subsidy Scheme?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Redlands for that question. Members of the House would know that the Taxi Subsidy Scheme has been a particularly important and stressful issue within the disability sector for some time now. This is because members of the House would have been lobbied by a whole range of people with a disability who rely upon this very important subsidy to go about their daily lives. I thank the member for raising this in the House.

As some members of the House would be aware, the Taxi Subsidy Scheme was always intended to be included within the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It was one of those programs that was intended to be applicable to the individual packages that would be administered to people with a disability so that they could make independent choices within their lives, including the type of transportation that they would take every day to go about their daily lives. Unfortunately, because of the cuts and chaos that we have seen under the Morrison-Turnbull-Abbott governments, we know that the implementation of the NDIS and the understaffing of the NDIA have led to an unenviable position where people with a disability are unsure who is going to fund this going forward.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I am having a difficult time hearing some of the response. I ask that you cease your interjections so that the answer to the question can be heard.

Ms TRAD: The Palaszczuk Labor government refuses to let—

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Moggill, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms TRAD:—people with a disability be left stranded because of the cuts and chaos of the Morrison-Turnbull-Abbott governments. We will fill the gap for the next 12 months and enter into negotiations with the incoming government—and I hope it is a Shorten Labor government that cares about people with a disability, unlike the Morrison-Turnbull-Abbott governments that have left them stranded.

If we want to absolutely care for Indigenous people with a disability then we need a Morrison Labor government—

Opposition members interjected.

Ms TRAD: Sorry. We need a Shorten Labor government—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have made statements previously about members' slips of the tongue. It is possible for that to happen to all of us. I ask the Deputy Premier to continue.

Ms TRAD: It would have been better if I had said a Turnbull Labor government. We need Bill Shorten and we need Labor if we are going to ensure that people with a disability, including those in remote Indigenous communities, get their fair share of services.

Watch Houses, Access

Mr WATTS: My question without notice is to the Premier. In the past six months I have requested access from Labor's police minister to three watch houses and on each occasion those requests have been denied. In the interests of accountability and transparency, will the Premier grant the opposition access to watch houses?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question, and it is an important question. Those decisions are made by the Police Commissioner. If the Police Commissioner believes that it is appropriate—it is an operational decision—then it is appropriate. If the Police Commissioner says that it is not appropriate, it is not appropriate. It is not the minister's decision.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I ask you to cease your interjections or you will be warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: In the spirit of cooperation, I will ask Minister Farmer and the police minister to brief the opposition on our package of reforms for youth justice and for them to get a thorough briefing about why temporary accommodation is not the answer.

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The member for Everton is saying, 'Let them out.' They went to the last election saying that they were getting tough on young offenders. What they want now is for young offenders who are in for the most serious offences of assault, armed robbery, domestic violence to be let out in the community. That is what the member for Everton said in this House, and others echo that view. That is an appalling approach to youth justice. You cannot put out a statement saying, 'We're getting tough on young offenders,' and then come into this House and say, 'Let them out.' That is irresponsible. It shows no understanding of policy. It shows a complete lack of understanding of the youth justice system. I take Minister Farmer's statement before when she said that when those opposite were in government they planned to cut \$200 million from the youth justice budget. That is a complete disgrace, an absolute disgrace—\$200 million wiped from youth justice.

Let me make it very clear: as the minister has said and I have said in this chamber, no-one wants to see these young offenders in watch houses for any time longer than is absolutely necessary, but I will not under any circumstances put these young people in irresponsible temporary accommodation where a young person could commit suicide. I will not do that. I will not have that happening under my watch.

Mr WATTS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The question was asking whether the opposition can have access or not.

Mr SPEAKER: I believe that the Premier has provided a partial response to that. She has 40 seconds remaining to round out her answer. Do you have anything further to add, Premier?

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are tackling the whole package when it comes to breaking the cycle of youth offending. It is a very clear policy.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I have just ruled on a point of order and indicated to the House that the Premier has time remaining. Saying, 'Yes or no,' is not helpful. I ask that you afford the Premier the time to answer the question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Even yesterday I had discussions with a service provider about how we can incorporate some beds in Queensland to look after especially young people who are going through ice addiction—something that no other government is tackling. I am very keen to try to break that cycle of ice addiction and offending in this state.

Regional Queensland, Infrastructure

Mr O'ROURKE: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister update the House on infrastructure being delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government that will benefit regional Queensland and whether the minister is aware of any alternative approaches to investing in infrastructure?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Rockhampton for his question. Like all members of the government, the member for Rockhampton knows how important it is for all governments to invest in infrastructure, particularly in regional Queensland, which is why he never stopped advocating for the South Rockhampton flood levee. We are keen to get that built as a government, which is why I will be using my ministerial infrastructure designation powers to ensure we get that levee built as quickly as possible and that will ensure prioritised assessment of the critical program. It was the Palaszczuk Labor government that invested \$25 million in that project to make it happen—an action for which Michelle Landry, the federal member for Capricornia, was dragged kicking and screaming to fund—thanks to the work of the member for Rockhampton.

Ms Jones: Lazy.

Mr DICK: Very lazy. I take the interjection from the member for Cooper. Speaking of infrastructure, yesterday I informed the House that the federal Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison-Palmer-Hanson government was yet to commit funding for the Townsville Ring Road. The Palaszczuk government committed its share of funding for that project in 2018. In late April 2019, federal Labor committed to the project. Only then, one week later, did the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison-Palmer-Hanson government agree to fund their share of the Townsville Ring Road. However, they have not matched federal Labor's \$100 million commitment to Mount Isa rail improvements. They have not matched federal Labor's commitment to fund Beerburum to Nambour on an 80-20 basis. They have not matched

federal Labor's commitment to \$2.24 billion for Cross River Rail—not one dollar. They have not matched federal Labor's commitment of \$125 million to upgrade the Peninsula Development Road on Cape York.

Who could forget Gold Coast Light Rail? What was the innovative policy of the federal minister for innovation, Karen Andrews? Cut it by 700 metres. There is one thing that the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison-Palmer-Hanson government is well known for and that is cuts. You can see the kids now: 'Are we there yet?' 'Yes, kids. Get the towels and the hats and the sunscreen and the umbrella and the drinks and the sandwiches. We've got to walk almost a kilometre to get to Burleigh beach.' That was the answer from Karen Andrews.

There is one thing we know we get from the federal LNP, and that is cuts—cuts to education, cuts to health care, cuts to Indigenous housing in remote Queensland and 700 metres cut off the Gold Coast Light Rail. That is what we get from federal LNP. Queenslanders deserve better. They deserve better from a ramshackle government of cuts and chaos. Queenslanders deserve Labor. They deserve better. They deserve a Shorten Labor government.

Youth Detention

Mr CRISAFULLI: My question is to the Premier. I refer the Premier to her earlier answer. Will the Premier advise where a 10-year-old detainee in a watch house can submit their CV to secure the job that the Premier refers to will get them out of detention?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for that set-up of a question. Young people need to be in safe homes. That is what they need. They need to be in safe homes and in school getting an education, and that is what they get at the youth detention centre. We have educators in the watch houses, as well as youth justice workers.

As I said in this House this week and I will say it again, the young people coming in to watch houses and in youth detention come from a whole range of backgrounds. I have spoken about the ice addiction. I have spoken about homes where alcoholism is prevalent. The minister has been in this House talking about how we are putting that extra capacity around families to make sure that family capacity is actually built up as well.

These are complex social issues and we need to make sure that the young adults who are able to work are able to get a job. When it comes to young people, I do not want to see a 10-year-old in prison, I do not want to see an 11-year-old in prison, I do not want to see a 12-year-old in prison. In fact there is some current work underway at a national level about the age of criminal responsibility and we will listen.

Mr Crisafulli: Does it show a 10-year-old can't get a job?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Broadwater, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: And that is why the member for Broadwater will never be the leader of the LNP. He has just stated today why he is not fit to be the leader of the LNP by asking such a ridiculous question in this House.

Mr Dick: A stupid question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I will take that interjection—a stupid question.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members to my right!

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said, those opposite cut Skilling Queenslanders for Work. They did not have a back to work program. Our Back to Work program has already put more than 12,000 young people into work. We have Skilling Queenslanders for Work and Works for Queensland. They wanted to sell off TAFEs.

Ms Trad: Sell off schools.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right—sell off schools.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We had the member for Everton laughing about how he supposedly saved Everton Park State High School. I was at the rally saying, 'Don't sell it.' I did not see him at the rally. He was not around. He did not care. Now he wants a statue of himself—the ego—at Everton Park State High School. At least there will never be one at Suncorp Stadium.

In all honesty, this is a serious issue. We are tackling all of these issues associated with youth crime. There is a \$550 million package. I want to pay tribute to the youth justice workers and the police across our state who do a great job. We are restoring front-line services. They cut front-line services.

Tourism Industry, Events

Mr HEALY: 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 benefit of business events to Queensland's tourism industry?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. He is very passionate about tourism. I have a little note to the shadow minister for tourism. Sometimes if the member for Kawana passes you a question, you just say no. You say, 'No thanks, mate.'

Dr Miles: He's not on your side.

Ms JONES: I will take that interjection. It is simmering over there. We can all see it. We know that tourism is absolutely driving jobs in this state. Recently in Cairns—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, members.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms JONES: Mr Speaker, as you have seen in your own community in Cairns, we have had more than 6,000 delegates from Amway in the Cairns region for over two months. During these two months, they have injected more than \$40 million into that local economy. The member for Cairns and I were there to welcome the first arrivals, and after two months the final delegation is departing today. That is two months of economic activity. It has actually been going longer than the federal election, although like most Australians I feel like that has been going for a long time. Anything to end us having to watch Scott Morrison scoff down another pie, I say, 'Welcome' to that.

In reality, we know that this election is very serious when it comes to the economy of Cairns and the economy of regional communities right across Queensland. We want to see an end to the chaos and cuts that have been the hallmark of the Morrison government. I will give an example from this week. We know that tourism is all about rolling out the welcome mat and making sure that everyone who comes to our country knows they are welcome and safe in our community. It is appalling that the Prime Minister of this nation was unable to condemn the comments made by Israel Folau. Later in the afternoon, he came out, but we all know why he would not do that. It is because of the deal that the Prime Minister has done to try to form government with Pauline Hanson and Clive Palmer.

We know that those opposite are far from condemning the behaviour and in fact endorse that behaviour. We only have to look at the tweet by the member for Oodgeroo. He said that the CEO of Rugby Union in this country should be sacked for her behaviour, which is that she took a stand against homophobia in this country.

I call on the member for Oodgeroo to come out and say why he supports these terrible, homophobic comments. It is shameful, but it gives us a very good insight and a very good window into the kind of leap to the right—giant step to the right—that we will get under a Morrison-Hanson-Clive Palmer Australia.

Mr SPEAKER: The minister's time has expired.

Dr Robinson: Go Issy!

Ms Jones: Mr Speaker, I take that interjection.

Mr SPEAKER: No, Minister. Member for Cooper, you are in no position to take that interjection. I am warning you under the standing orders.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member, I ask you to leave the chamber. You were warned under the standing orders earlier today.

Ms JONES: Sorry, Mr Speaker. I was just clarifying what warning I had.

Mr SPEAKER: No, you are not being warned for that. You were warned earlier in the day. I ask you to leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

Whereupon the honourable member for Cooper withdrew from the chamber at 11.00 am.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Oodgeroo, you are warned under the standing orders for initiating what we have just seen.

Youth Detention

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Premier. Yesterday the police minister said the Premier had regular briefings from the department about kids in watch houses. Can the Premier tell the House how many children are being held in police watch houses across Queensland as of today?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Mudgeeraba for the question. Of course, I am more than happy to answer that question. Yes, I do receive regular updates. Of course, cabinet has had lengthy discussions about all of these complex issues. We do not make policy on the run; we think about these issues and work out what is the—

Mr Purdie interjected.

Ms Trad: Even adhere to international standards.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, that is right. We adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in terms of taking 17-year-olds out of adult prisons.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I can advise that there are currently 75 and there are no 10-year-olds.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next member, I ask the member for Ninderry, who was already under a warning, to leave the chamber for 10 minutes.

Whereupon the honourable member for Ninderry withdrew from the chamber at 11.02 am.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service

Mr MELLISH: My question is of the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister outline what the federal government's commitments to health care are in the Metro North Hospital and Health Service area and if there are any alternative policies?

Dr MILES: I thank the member for Aspley for what is an important question. I know that he is, like I am, worried about how the LNP's cuts and chaos from Canberra are affecting our hospitals throughout the northern suburbs of Brisbane.

Opposition members interjected.

Dr MILES: Those opposite have never wanted to hear it. They have wanted to defend their bosses in Canberra, who cut \$78.7 million from the budget of Metro North Hospital and Health Service. Those funds would have paid for 1,687 hernia repairs, 683 hip replacements, 1,206 knee replacements, 6,216 cataract procedures and 549 tonsillectomies. That is the real impact of the LNP's cuts. Their cuts continue to undermine the hard work of our doctors, nurses and health professionals.

We on this side of the House have gone about rebuilding our front-line health services after the cuts from those opposite. We continue to rebuild our hospitals across the north side, from the STARS project at Herston all the way to the Caboolture Hospital redevelopment and our work at Redcliffe with the new special care nursery and paediatric ward there. In fact, just last week the Premier and I were at Redcliffe with the member for Redcliffe to announce an additional \$10 million investment in an MRI machine, an MRI machine that will be licensed thanks to the efforts of Labor's candidate in Petrie, Corinne Mulholland.

A federal Labor government will not only reverse those cuts but also deliver candidates across the north side who are committed to investing in our hospitals, whether that is cancer care treatment at Caboolture or the urgent care clinic at Bribie Island thanks to the efforts of our candidate for Longman, Susan Lamb; whether it is the specialist clinic that federal Labor will build in Pine Rivers thanks to the advocacy of Ali France after Peter Dutton delivered exactly nothing over 18 years; or at Redcliffe where they will deliver not only the MRI licence but also a new CT machine and an emergency department upgrade, \$22 million of investment thanks to the efforts of Bill Shorten—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, sorry to interrupt you. Member for Mudgeeraba, you were already under a warning. You can leave the chamber, member for Mudgeeraba, for 10 minutes.

Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 11.04 am.

Mr SPEAKER: I remind all honourable members who are under warnings you will be asked to leave the chamber. You can provide no further interjections. That will be the last time I address the House on this matter this morning.

Dr MILES: That is a total of \$22 million to be invested at Redcliffe Hospital thanks to the efforts of Labor's candidate for Petrie, Corrine Mulholland, after years of inaction by Luke Howarth—

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Minister. Member for Southern Downs, you can leave the chamber for one hour. I have only just warned the House and you are under a warning already.

Mr Lister: I am not under a warning.

Mr SPEAKER: I must have inadvertently missed giving you a warning, so you are under a warning now. You have been consistently interjecting all morning, member.

Dr MILES: Right across the northern suburbs of Brisbane people have a choice on Saturday between LNP candidates, who backed in the Morrison government's cuts and chaos, and Labor candidates, who will deliver more money for our hospitals.

Federal Election, Campaign

Mr POWELL: My question without notice is to the Premier. Last week we saw a worker's employment at the Gladstone Ports Corporation threatened because he asked a simple tax policy question of Bill Shorten, and today it has been revealed that Queensland's Resources Investment Commissioner, who described the Adani approval process as a 'mess', will not have her contract renewed. Why do Queenslanders continue to have their jobs put at risk for speaking out against Labor Party policy?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Glass House for that question. Let's talk about putting workers' jobs at risk. LNP—that is the answer: 14,000. When their former leader went to the election and said public servants had nothing to fear—14,000. Now let me address the other two parts of the question. The first part of the question was in relation to Gladstone and the contractor there. I said that every person should be allowed to express their opinions to leaders who are running for prime minister. I said that very clearly and the minister echoed that. In relation to that particular issue and incident, I understand that the head of the Treasury department will now conduct an investigation into that issue.

In relation to the second issue about the resources commissioner, it is my memory that the resources commissioner's term comes to an end on 22 May. We have been having discussions with the Queensland Resources Council—

Mr Powell: I bet you have!

Mrs Frecklington: If you say so.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Yes, we have, very productive discussions. We have been talking about—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, I would like to hear the Premier's response.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—the functions being moved into Trade & Investment Queensland. As we know, there have been record exports in this state and conversations have been happening between the Queensland Resources Council and TIQ, which rests under my portfolio. This position will be promoted into TIQ. In fact, we have 12 Trade Commissioners right across our state advocating very much for, and helping to contribute to, our \$20 billion worth of resource projects. In fact, when I was with the Trade Commissioner in South Korea we had a meeting about the Sconi project and we were able to announce that when I returned. We talked in Japan about the—

Mr Powell interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House, as you were already warned under the standing orders you can leave the chamber for 10 minutes. If a conversation is loud enough to be heard, it can be considered an interjection.

Whereupon the honourable member for Glass House withdrew from the chamber at 11.09 am.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Over \$83 billion worth of exports—I understand that is about a 90 per cent increase from when the LNP was in government—shows that exports and jobs in this state are booming. A strong economy is creating jobs for Queenslanders. This will be a jobs focused budget.

When opposition members stand in this House and ask questions about workers, every single member, including the Leader of the Opposition, who told this House that she sat around the CBRC table—

Ms Trad: Very proud.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Very proud of the budget. Members opposite need to remember what they inflicted upon Queensland families. Every single LNP member needs to remember that and the dignity they took away.

(Time expired)

Wage Theft

Mr SPEAKER: I call the member for Glass House—sorry, Gladstone.

Mr BUTCHER: He is not here, Mr Speaker; he has gone.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, there is a convention not to refer to members when they are not in the chamber! I apologise to the member for Glass House. The member for Gladstone has the call.

Mr BUTCHER: My question is of the Minister for Education and the Minister for Industrial Relations. Can the minister please update the House on any new approaches to protect workers who are victims of wage theft?

Ms GRACE: I thank the member for Gladstone for that question. I know that he truly believes in that fundamental Labor value of a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. What have we seen federally? We have seen case after case of wage theft happening under the noses of the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government. Over six years there were three changes of prime minister but not one addressed this insidious issue. We saw high-profile cases of wage theft happening in 7-Eleven, Caltex and Domino's—well documented and well established in Australia.

Wage theft represents underpayment of wages, unpaid superannuation, unpaid penalty rates, unauthorised deductions from pay, unpaid work trials and the total misuse of ABNs and sham contracting. What do we get from those opposite in government at the federal level? There is absolute inaction—nothing happening whatsoever. Those opposite want to talk about industrial action. The Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government has been on strike for six years when it comes to wage theft. It has done absolutely nothing.

Then we hear about its policies. When we see wage stagnation at the federal level impacting the economies of rural and regional areas, which is absolutely disgusting, who do we hear from? Finance minister Mathias Cormann said in March this year that the stagnation rate of wage growth is a deliberate design feature of our economic architecture.

Instead of picking up employers not paying penalty rates, what did the federal government do? It got rid of them. 'Let's reward those employers who are not paying penalty rates. Let's just get rid of them so they do not have to pay them.' What did it say in relation to unpaid superannuation? 'Don't worry about it. It doesn't matter if you don't have money in retirement. Someone else will be able to look after you.' It is not right. It needs to change. Only a Shorten Labor government will do so.

Today I welcome Labor's commitment to introduce a new lay tribunal to assist workers subject of wage theft and underpayment of wages of up to \$100,000 in a claims area. I welcome such an office right here in Queensland. We know that in Queensland many workers are being hurt by the inaction of the Turnbull-Abbott-Morrison government, which did nothing on labour hire or wage theft. It has reduced the number of industrial inspectors. It is time to change the federal rules. It is time to change the federal government. It is time for a Shorten Labor government.

International Trade Treaties, Compensation

Mr ANDREW: My question is of the Premier. Due to the federal government having signed a number of international trade treaties, most notably with India and China, that contain investor state dispute settlement mechanisms, ISDS clauses, will the Premier advise the extent of financial provisions in place to cover successful compensation claims should one or more of the Galilee coal projects be cancelled?

Mrs D'ATH: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, that was a very long question. I believe that it was a hypothetical question. I ask that you rule on it.

Mr SPEAKER: Leader of the House, I do not believe that it was an overly long question. It was acceptable compared to others. As I heard the question, it asks about what is possible under the arrangements and an example was given. I do not believe that it was hypothetical. I will give the Premier latitude in terms of how she answers that question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. My understanding is that it was a hypothetical question in relation to—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I have just made a ruling that that was not a hypothetical question. I ask you to answer the question, but I will give you latitude.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you, Mr Speaker. As we know, there is no railway at the moment to the Galilee Basin, so I cannot talk about any compensation when nothing has been built.

Peninsula Developmental Road, Upgrade

Ms LUI: My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on the Peninsula Developmental Road upgrade?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the member for Cook for her question. She is an absolutely passionate and effective advocate for her constituents in Cape York and Far North Queensland. Last week I had the great pleasure of joining the member on the Peninsula Developmental Road to see the tremendous progress—the sealing of 173 kilometres of the most wild and unsafe roads in the country. This is being fixed as a result of this government's investment.

The five-year program instituted in the last year of the Rudd government is coming to a close, but what do we see from the federal government? This program has created Indigenous jobs, Indigenous training, new Indigenous companies, incredible consistency of employment and economic growth in Cape York. The job is only half done—it needs another five-year program for completion—but what did we see in the federal budget? We saw the greatest con job on Far North Queensland and Cape York from Warren Entsch and the federal government. They effectively cut this program, spreading it over seven years and back-end loading what they did announce, after they trumpeted it hugely before the budget. They put the majority of funding in the 'four years plus' column. Even the larger portion is in the fourth year. We need this program continued in Far North Queensland so that the momentum to open up tourism opportunities—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BAILEY: The sealing of the Peninsula Developmental Road in Cape York will open up unprecedented tourism and economic opportunities for Indigenous communities. We must keep the momentum up there going. The member for Cook agrees with me that we need a strong program to do that. We do not need a con job from the federal government whereby funding is in the never-never, beyond four years—

Mr Millar interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gregory, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr BAILEY: I was very pleased to do a press conference with the federal shadow minister for infrastructure, Anthony Albanese. He announced that a federal Labor government will provide an additional \$125 million—on top of the federal government's announced program, which is in the never-never—to ensure the momentum continues and jobs continue.

The sealing of that road has road safety and economic benefits. This is my favourite project in the whole state, because it means so much to every community in Cape York. I know the same applies to the member for Cook, who joined me to look at the road. We need to keep the momentum going on jobs in Cape York and on road safety. This road has a shocking road safety record. Every time we seal it, we reduce crashes and fatalities in Cape York, but the federal government is dumping this program and Warren Entsch is dumping Far North Queensland. We need a Shorten Labor government to keep the momentum going on the Peninsula Developmental Road.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has expired.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 248 with respect to standing orders 243, 244, 246 and 247. I want to point out to you, Mr Speaker, that the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the minister for tourism constantly disregarded your rulings today after you had

given them. They backchatted you, Mr Speaker, sitting in the chamber. I want some direction with respect to all of those standing orders and your ruling with respect to the disregard that the Premier and the Deputy Premier had for you today.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, it is up to me as Speaker to determine the interpretation of standing orders. You can dissent from a ruling I have given, but you cannot dissent from a ruling I have not given. I have made my view very clear: I do not believe that the behaviour in the chamber generally has been good today. Hence, I believe today has seen the most warnings I have had to issue since I became Speaker. It is a message for all members of the House. I appreciate that there is an event on Saturday and I appreciate that tensions in this House are high, but there is no excuse for the House being disorderly. I will continue to enforce the standing orders as I believe they should be, without interrupting debate and allowing the government of the day to be questioned. That is all I have to say on the matter, member for Kawana.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 14 May (see p. 1573), on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.21 am), continuing: This Labor government is taking away a key source of data and transparency about who owns land in this state. Queenslanders have a right to know which countries have invested, how much land they own and what types of land are owned by foreign individuals and companies. They deserve to have this information and it needs to be made public in this parliament.

The Labor government and the members opposite would have us believe that the Commonwealth government has a duplicate register. This is not so. These registers are not apples and apples. We should also be aware that federal Labor has said that it would abolish altogether the coalition's special treatment of agricultural businesses when it comes to the Foreign Investment Review Board. Federal Labor has a very dismal track record when it comes to highlighting foreign investment in agricultural land in this country.

Federal Labor has already opposed the coalition's decision to lower the threshold for foreign investment in farmland without the scrutiny of the Foreign Investment Review Board to \$15 million. When this report on foreign investment is abolished and federal Labor abolishes the information that is provided by the federal government, under Labor there will be no register federally and no register at the state level of foreign ownership of land or foreign ownership of agricultural land. These two registers are not apples and apples. If those opposite think they are then they are incorrect.

I will outline what AgForce had to say about the difference in the two registers. Whilst there is a report produced by the Commonwealth government, that report fails to make detailed comment on the following aspects: definition of who is considered to be foreign, in particular with respect to corporations; difference in what interest in land is required to be in the reports, in particular with respect to leases in terms between five and 25 years; the value of annual acquisitions; and that acquisitions are not broken down to a foreign state level for all reporting metrics. Rather, there is one total figure of landholding across the country as to which foreign states own how much land. It fails to break down the figures related to each Australian state.

Overall, the Commonwealth's report is very high level, whereas the state's foreign ownership of land report provides useful and comparable information at the local government level on the changes in foreign ownership levels. This level of reporting is important to informing public discussion about the value of foreign investment and our national interest, particularly around agricultural land and particularly in the regions.

No estimate of cost savings to the state government has been provided in the explanatory notes. With the proposal to remove section 16 of the act, it is unclear how the minister will inform the Legislative Assembly and the Queensland public about investment trends over time. AgForce was very clear that it supports the continuation of the current public reporting. So does the LNP. The reality is that we need to have proper scrutiny. We need to have both the Commonwealth Foreign Investment Review Board report and the state foreign ownership of land register report.


The LNP will always oppose moves to reduce transparency on foreign ownership of Queensland land. We will vote against this proposal to scrap the annual report and scrap its tabling in this parliament. There is a massive difference between the Commonwealth report and this annual report. Its scrapping

is a very retrograde step by the Palaszczuk Labor government when the reality is that Queensland is in a global marketplace. There should not be less scrutiny of foreign ownership of land in this state; there should be more scrutiny.

Those who are reasonable and legitimate foreign investors have nothing to fear from scrutiny and accurate reporting. In fact, the five-page report goes a long way to reducing fear of foreign investment because it does provide accurate, detailed and reliable information and it allows people to assess trends and see what is happening over a period. It even mentions areas in my electorate, like the area of ownership in the Bulloo shire and the Quilpie shire. At times other regions in my electorate have been mentioned.

It should be for Queenslanders to decide if the foreign ownership of land is in the public interest. They have the right to know which countries are choosing to invest in their state. There should not be a watering down of and reduction in transparency by this Queensland Labor government. Queenslanders have the right to the information, and without this register they will be denied public access to this information by this Labor state government. In future, under Labor the public will have to pay for this information—something that has been available for 30 years. People will have to pay for the privilege of obtaining that information. I think that is a very retrograde step. The LNP opposition will be opposing the sections of the bill that remove the requirement to—

(Time expired)

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (11.27 am): I concur with my colleagues and strongly oppose the provisions in this bill that weaken the reporting of foreign ownership of land. This change is just mind boggling in this day and age, when we should be making information available to people in the interests of transparency and accuracy. People talk about fake news. When governments lock up information and make people pay for access to the facts, they are denying people access to information they have a right to access.

There is a very good reason for the state to have a foreign ownership of land report. It is not the same as the report that is put out by the federal government. As has been noted, by removing the state foreign ownership of land report Labor will make people pay for information that will not be in the same format and will not provide a direct correlation with the report of the federal government.

Stakeholders have clearly spoken out against the weakening of transparency through the removal of access to the land register for Queensland. AgForce in particular noted that this weakening of the reporting of foreign ownership impacts on agricultural land in Queensland. What does this government have to fear such that it is locking up this information and proposing to require people to pay for information from a federal source that is not in a type and format that is as clearly identifiable and useable for people in the public square?

We clearly oppose moves to reduce transparency on foreign landownership in Queensland and cannot understand why this government would take this move and would hope that it will back down on it because enough stakeholders who have skin in the game, particularly in the agricultural sector, who are interested in the long-term production outcomes for Queensland and building our state have raised real concerns about this.

I also want to address the issue of allowing the state access to private land without consent in the changes to the Land Act 1994 to allow an authorised person, without consent or warrant, to enter freehold land if they need to access adjacent state land. We have indicated that we will oppose this clause as it also weakens the rights of landholders. AgForce has also spoken out rejecting the need and legitimacy for extending the state's right to access freehold land in this way without due process. This is more evidence of a left-leaning government with very little regard for the rights of private property owners. We understand that there will be times when a state or federal government may have a need that impacts upon people's personal property rights and that is why there is either compensation or some checks and balances in terms of those powers. There clearly have not been checks and balances put on those powers given the way that this has been put forward and it is a case of disregard for the rights of the landholder.

Does this matter? Yes, it does in that the rights in themselves are inherently valuable to that person as the owner of that freehold title. However, as has been raised by my colleagues in this debate, there are also concerns about the biosecurity impacts and how that would be addressed. In my own area of the Sunshine Coast there have been incidents where a corridor crosses people's properties and the state owned agency has right of access. There have been real biosecurity failures where vehicles have not necessarily been cleaned of weeds that can infest that area.

I appreciate that this is not an issue that many Labor members have spoken about, but biosecurity issues that can impact upon people's livelihoods by somebody driving across their property without due regard for the fact that they can be carrying in weeds that will infest that area are something that need to be re-emphasised. If that happens, it means that the landowner is left to take action and they are left with the legacy of that mess to clean up with chemicals and with the costly employment of their own time or their workers' time to deal with that and the loss of production. There may be flow-on impacts as well, certainly for those with organic farms. In addition to the normal biosecurity issues, with organic farms there is the whole issue around accreditation when people come across their properties. They will have tried to avoid using certain chemicals on their property, yet if other people bring weeds and other rubbish onto their properties they are left with the dilemma as to how to address that.

There are a multitude of issues that happen when we take away the rights of property owners in such a way where others have access without having due regard to the rights of the property owner and accessing that property in a way where they can in fact leave a legacy of damage, let alone the disrespect and disregard for the fact that it is somebody else's property. As I said, there will be incidents, as we acknowledge in legislation, where the state may need to have access on particular grounds, but those incidents must be very carefully controlled to ensure that the rights of the property owner are respected and not watered down. There are no controls that are satisfactory in this legislation that provides that assurance. I have mentioned biosecurity. I have mentioned organic farmers who have other challenges when people come across their property, particularly if it leaves a legacy of weeds that are difficult to control organically or the fact that they have to certify that there have been no chemicals used around the animals on their properties.

One of the other quite considerable concerns about this omnibus bill is the sheer size of it. As the Queensland Resources Council said—

Even for an omnibus Bill, this legislation is extraordinarily broad in scope, amending according to the references in the Minister's Explanatory speech, a staggering 29 different Acts. The breadth and complexity of this Bill makes it very difficult for any stakeholder to be confident they have understood all the ramifications of these amendments in the 15 business days between the Bill being tabled and submissions falling due for the Committee.


Mr Costigan: Shocking!

Ms SIMPSON: It is. The Queensland Law Society has also expressed its outrage at the size of this omnibus bill, so this is across stakeholders, it is across the community and it is across politics, except for the Labor government that is putting it through in this way. The Law Society said—

The most difficult position that we have in assisting the parliament in its important business is hoping that we have not missed anything.

That is because of the sheer size and complexity of the multitude of changes. Omnibus bills that are so broad run the real risk that stakeholders who have a valuable insight as to the impact of these changes have not been alerted to those changes. Governments should not see this as something to be avoided. Having those viewpoints of stakeholders may in fact save the time of this House further down the track by ensuring that their voices are taken into account in a timely way, so that when amendments are made they are as workable as possible and it is fully understood what those impacts will be.

As has been mentioned, a staggering 29 different acts are being amended. In particular, the ones that I wished to address were those aspects with regard to the removal of the state government's requirement to produce an annual foreign landownership report and also to allow the state access to private land without consent without the appropriate checks and balances. Queenslanders do deserve to know who, how much and what types of land are owned by foreign individuals and companies. The LNP will always oppose moves to reduce transparency on foreign landownership in Queensland. It is a shame on this Labor government that it does not hold those principles and it is not supporting the rights of Queenslanders to have access—free access—to that information in a timely and easily accessible way.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (11.37 am): I rise to make a contribution to the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill deals with several issues relating to natural resources, among them Indigenous and general land access issues, gas production tenure management, foreign landownership registers, the Surveyors Act, the establishment of CleanCo and category 2 water governance arrangements. I will focus my comments on the broader resource sector issues of the bill and matters most relevant to Aboriginal land tenure issues as they apply to regional and South-East Queensland and particularly to my electorate.

This side of the House wholeheartedly supports Queensland's resource industry, whether gas, mineral, gold or coal, among others. We also support land justice and opportunities for work and prosperity for Aboriginal people on Aboriginal land and on other public and private land, whether in

regional Queensland or in South-East Queensland areas like North Stradbroke Island. Sadly, I cannot say that the Palaszczuk Labor government supports our resources industry and jobs, as it has shown that it is willing to play a dangerous political game with the sovereign risk of the whole resource sector by constantly moving environmental and Indigenous land goalposts, whether in the Galilee Basin or on North Stradbroke Island or in Cape York, as we saw with the Deputy Premier today. For inner-city Greens preferences, Labor will do anything, even sell-out Aboriginal opportunity. Having raised my concerns about the Labor government's handling of the resources sector, I acknowledge that in this bill there are some good measures and so I will not be opposing the bill as a whole.

There are some amendments that I do not support and those have been outlined well by other opposition speakers, so I will leave the details of that to what is already in *Hansard*. As others have commented, I have concerns about the size and span of the bill. It is a large omnibus bill that sprawls across 234 pages and amends 29 separate acts. I agree with the Queensland Resources Council in that this bill could not have had the proper due diligence done on it.

The new ministerial power that grants the minister to terminate and change exploration licences is open to exploitation. The QRC has raised serious concerns about the granting of this ministerial power, as it opens up considerable risk to investments that could be ended at the stroke of a minister's pen. The Queensland Law Society also expressed a number of concerns, one being around the minister being given the power to unilaterally impose, vary or remove a condition in an exploration permit without application by the holder where the minister considers that the conditions must be amended because of an exceptional event affecting the permit. People are concerned about the potential of this Labor government to abuse this power and cancel exploration licences purely for political reasons.

There are also concerns about Labor's addiction to the Di Natale-Hanson-Young Greens preferences, which are skewing resource industry and Aboriginal land politics in Australia to the far Socialist Left and, in so doing, risking resource jobs in Queensland both now and in the future. One example of this risk to the resource sector that is relevant to the bill and Aboriginal land in Queensland is the rushed and early forced closure of Sibelco sandmining on North Stradbroke Island. The mine will be closed this year—

A government member: Hear, hear!

Dr ROBINSON:—and all mining jobs gone with it. I did not hear the 'Hear, hear!' to the mining jobs gone with it. Over the last few years that decision has cost hundreds of resource jobs as Sibelco was forced to downsize its operations in readiness for Labor's forced extinction and hundreds more indirect jobs have been put at risk by Labor-Greens laws—jobs in small business, tourism, services, retail, trucking—from many sectors. When governments move the goalposts on the resource sector, that creates problems and introduces risk factors, whether in exploratory stages, extraction, or other stages.

A carefully planned phase-out of the mine was already underway with an economic transition that provided a sensible pathway to a non-mining future and one that was compatible with and coexistent with the native title land rights of the Quandamooka Aboriginal people. Tragically, inner-city, West End, soy latte-sipping Greens did a preference deal with Labor and Labor sold out the Straddie workers, sacking hundreds of resource sector workers, including 30 per cent of the Sibelco workforce who are Quandamooka Aboriginal people. Shame on Labor for that act! I ask today: how is it closing the gap and disadvantage that Aboriginal people face when workers in the mining industry are sacked by the impact of Labor laws? That is a shame on the Labor Party. We do not need more Labor in this state. Sadly, we see this trend of Labor resource policy being dictated to by the Greens and a Shorten-Di Natale government would put our resource sector jobs at even greater risk.

I also want to briefly consider the amendments to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Act, particularly as they may make changes that affect land tenure issues on North Stradbroke Island. The bill amends the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 to reduce the government's legislative burden by replacing a subordinate legislation process with a ministerial declaration process. This is said to enable the minister administering the acts to make a declaration about land available for grant as inalienable freehold, the reservation of forest products and quarry materials to the state on those lands, and the management of certain lands that have been granted. The bill also proposes that a public register of ministerial declarations be kept. The bill also amends the Aboriginal Land Act and Torres Strait Islander Land Act to clarify the interpretation and application of certain provisions of those acts. There is range of other details about those changes to those acts.

Owing to the wide span of the bill and insufficient scrutiny, I have concerns about the potential for unintended consequences, or even the potential abuse of power by these changes, as they may affect the Quandamooka people and the future of North Stradbroke Island. Sadly, the government has shown that it cannot be trusted to protect the interests of workers in the resource sector and Aboriginal people on North Stradbroke Island. I will continue to stand up for the Aboriginal workers and the families on North Stradbroke Island, some of whom are doing it very hard. They have not been able to find jobs after they lost their job because of this government's laws. It is sad that this is happening—

Government members interjected.

Dr ROBINSON: Members opposite are interjecting over my statements about the loss of opportunity for Aboriginal people on North Stradbroke Island.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. The member is not taking interjections. The House will come to order.

Dr ROBINSON: I will stand up every day of the week and support the Aboriginal families, the Quandamooka people in Dunwich, at Point Lookout and at Amity Point every day of the week. I will support their jobs, I will support their rights to own property, to buy and sell homes—have homes like every other person has the same right. It is a shame—

Ms Enoch interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, that was unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Ms ENOCH: I withdraw.

Dr ROBINSON: On 6 May, there was a major protest on the island where traditional owners and other local people protested the failure of this government to manage the economic transition, to properly consult and to get the situation right for the Quandamooka people. The government cannot keep ignoring the fracturing of the community that—

Ms Richards interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Redlands, you are warned.

Dr ROBINSON: This government cannot keep ignoring the fracturing of the community it has caused by its failure to properly plan and its non-consultative approach to Aboriginal land use in light of the government's—

Ms PEASE: I rise to a point of order. I ask about relevance. Can this matter now be brought back to the long title of the bill instead of some ongoing rambling?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Dr ROBINSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, as I was saying—and I thank you for your protection—in terms of the consultative approach to Aboriginal land use in light of the government's forced and abrupt cessation of mining—

Ms Pease interjected.


Dr ROBINSON: I believe the member was under a warning.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I do not need assistance from you. You have the call. Continue your contribution.

Dr ROBINSON: Otherwise the community angst and unrest, unfortunately, is likely to continue and even grow. I hope it will not. I am doing all I can to work with the different groups.

Sadly, the slow pace and abrasive approach of this government is having a negative impact on Indigenous and non-Indigenous people on North Stradbroke Island. For example, the preferred location of the Aboriginal people of the whale interpretive centre at the cultural centre is being ignored. This government is failing the people of North Stradbroke Island.

(Time expired)

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—Ind) (11.47 am): I rise to also make a contribution to the debate on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I want to echo the sentiments of many of my colleagues, particularly on this side, the right side as I look at it—Mr Deputy Speaker, your left side—of the chamber who raised various concerns about this omnibus bill. It has been noted by a number of honourable members that the bill is almost 240 pages long. The explanatory notes are almost 130 pages long. It makes me wonder how many trees have been chopped down for that. I think of the Cathu State Forest in my own electorate, which was sold off by the former Labor government.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member, I will bring you back to the long title of the bill.

Mr COSTIGAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate your guidance. As I say, that is a lot of trees involved in the printing of those pages.

Mr Power interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: I take that interjection from the member for Logan. It is a cure for insomnia. He should go back to *Play School*. I reiterate that this bill amends 29 acts of parliament—almost 30 acts of parliament. I see the member for Moggill sniggering and I note his body language. He is right. It is just absurd. This bill is like a super deluxe burger on steroids. There is a bit of everything in it. There is some good stuff in the burger, but also there is some bad stuff.

That bad stuff includes the removal of the provisions regarding the foreign landownership register and the transparency that goes with that. As regional Queensland's only independent MP I welcome foreign investment in this country. In fact, we would not have the Bowen Basin as we have it today without foreign investment. That is something that both sides of the parliament can agree on. We heard the minister for state development crowing about Olive Downs. It is great for the communities of the Mackay-Whitsunday region, but we still wait for the opening up of the Galilee Basin.

Mr Ryan: It is different.

Mr COSTIGAN: I take the interjection from the minister. It is very different to what we see out of Canberra with the Foreign Investment Review Board. The lack of transparency in relation to these changes concerns me enormously. It concerns the tourism industry. It concerns the agricultural industry. We have seen the comments that have been flagged by a number of members in this parliament in relation to this debate on the back of the feedback from AgForce. Speaking of feedback, what was it—15 business days between when the bill was tabled and the closing of submissions? Wham bam thank you ma'am. It was all over like that. That is not good enough.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr COSTIGAN: It is interesting to see the guidance coming from the member to your right, Mr Deputy Speaker. However, going back to the wideranging provisions of this bill, the member for Oodgeroo touched on Indigenous economic opportunities. That should not be lost on members. We need to be empowering our Indigenous communities in terms of economic advancement and opportunities. The establishment of CleanCo is one of the provisions. I would have liked to have seen the establishment of 'Clean Coal Co'. What a novel concept that would have been—a high-efficiency, low-emissions coal-fired power station in Collinsville to bring power prices down. But we have CleanCo. I wonder what that means to my constituents in the Whitsundays who are fed up with power prices going through the roof, whether they are irrigators in the canefarming sector or mums and dads in households. They have had enough of that.

Submissions closed within 15 business days of when the bill was tabled in the House. How big is it? It is bigger than Ben Hur, bigger than 10 bears, bigger than some of the egos across the chamber.

Mr Dick: Bigger than every cliché you can think of.

Mr COSTIGAN: You are looking in the mirror, Minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, member for Whitsunday, not across the chamber.


Mr COSTIGAN: We have seen the comments from AgForce and the QIC making known their concerns. From what I have read in relation to this bill I share those concerns. It is a massive bill, an omnibus bill. There are 29 acts of parliament that will be impacted. It was interesting to hear the comments earlier in the debate from my former LNP colleague, if I may say so, the member for Southern Downs when he was touching on the reaction from one former treasurer of Queensland, Hon. Keith De Lacy. It is interesting to see that played out here in the parliament given the context of this. Keith De Lacy obviously has some reservations about it otherwise we would not have heard boo from him in relation to these matters.

There are some good things in this bill, but there are some lemons too. The shadow minister knows it, members on this side of the House know it and I certainly know it. I have enormous concerns with the time frame for scrutiny. The removal of the foreign landownership register does concern me. Comments have come through from AgForce, the agricultural sector, the grazing sector in the Mackay-Whitsunday hinterland and the tourism sector. Without foreign investment where would we be? We have Daydream Island back on line on the back of foreign investment. Foreign investment was

complementary with local investment, as can be seen with the Oately family who are in tourism in my electorate. A small operator like Helen Scott on Long Island is complementing foreign investment in relation to Hayman Island, which is coming back on line, and Daydream Island, which has already come back on line.

I have concerns with the transparency that goes with the changes to the foreign landownership register. It is important that my constituents and the people of Queensland more broadly understand that it is completely different to what comes out of Canberra with the Foreign Investment Review Board and the shareholding minister being the Treasurer and signing off on that. The thresholds have changed over the years. That gets a lot of media attention, as honourable members would be aware no matter where they sit in the chamber. The foreign landownership register, under the auspices of the Queensland government, is very different to the FIRB and its provisions. My concerns are that there will be a change in terms of transparency. I do not think that is a step in the right direction. I think it is important that my concerns are flagged in the chamber. It is a massive bill. It is too big. It is way too big, in hindsight, and there has not been proper scrutiny and a proper amount of time for that scrutiny involving the key players, which is a pretty wide gamut across the length and breadth of this state.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker I remind the House that myself and the clerks attempt to listen to all contributions and obviously we will rule on things that we think are unparliamentary. We do not necessarily hear absolutely everything and we perhaps do not share the views of certain people in this House around what is unparliamentary. If you have a concern around a member making a statement that you believe is unparliamentary, the appropriate way to deal with that is to rise to your feet and take a point of order.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (11.56 am): I rise as the shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships to make a contribution to the debate on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. For legislation such as this—an incredibly large, so-termed omnibus bill that spans some 234 pages and amends no fewer than 29 separate acts—I will keep my contribution primarily confined to the amendments affecting Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As I have said, this bill contains amendments impacting no less than 29 acts. As per the bill's explanatory notes, this bill specifically amends 'the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Act 1991 to reduce the regulatory burden and clarify the interpretation and application of these acts', as well as amending 'the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Act 2013 to provide a more efficient process for the transmission of leases where the original lessee dies intestate (without a will) and to extend the statutory review period of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Act 2013 from five to 10 years'.

Specifically in this legislation, clauses 11, 12, 16, 19, 22 and 94 each relate to various matters under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 and these seek to replace the current regulation making process with a ministerial declaration process. As articulated by my Liberal National Party colleague the shadow minister for natural resources and mines and member for Burdekin, Dale Last MP, we will not be opposing these specific amendments. Whilst supportive of these amendments, the LNP has also listened to the concerns of affected stakeholders. I note there were concerns which were raised by the Cape York Land Council in its submission to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee and I take this opportunity to thank the council for taking the time to contribute to the parliamentary committee's examination of the bill.

Whilst acknowledging that these specific amendments will reduce the government's legislative burden by replacing a subordinate legislation process with a ministerial declaration process, I do note that within this legislation it is proposed that a public register is kept of ministerial directions. We do know that there are real concerns amongst various Indigenous organisations about what is often seen as Labor's Clayton's and duplicitous support for resources projects, particularly in Cape York, and we have heard the comments recently by Gerhardt Pearson in relation to that and also what is happening in the Galilee Basin. Certainly enhancing and expanding Indigenous opportunity across our state is very important, particularly self-determination for our first nations peoples and economic opportunity as well. That will successfully ensure that Closing the Gap metrics in relation to health and education and economic opportunity are achieved in this state.

I also acknowledge the contribution made by the Queensland Law Society. In its submission to the parliamentary committee, it noted—

The proposed amendments appear appropriate to the extent that reducing the burden of administrative processes will assist traditional owners negotiating with the State for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander freehold grants under these Acts.

I take this opportunity to reflect more broadly on the size and scope of the bill. I know many members on this side of the House have raised these issues. Since coming to power in 2015, the Palaszczuk Labor government has continuously and strenuously trumpeted its supposed commitment to being an open and transparent government. However, as the past four years have shown and as every Queenslander knows, particularly in my electorate of Moggill, that is simply not the case. This bill, from its crafting through to its examination, is just the latest in a long line of poor legislative and consultative processes that have been undertaken by the Palaszczuk Labor government. As I noted at the start of my contribution, the bill before the parliament extends over more than 230 pages and amends 29 individual acts. It is simply not good enough and ultimately it is an insult to the many stakeholders who will be affected by this bill incorporating so many changes that the Labor government has offered so little time for those changes to be fully considered.

I have heard contributions made by many Labor members who have said that stakeholders, including the Queensland Resources Council and the Queensland Law Society, were satisfied with the bill's process. However, that is misleading at best. One needs only to read the first page of the Queensland Law Society's submission to the committee to understand that this process of examination was far from ideal and that the length of time allocated was less than optimal. In foreshadowing the length of its submission, the Queensland Law Society outlined that—

Due to the size of the Bill, QLS has limited its comments to those aspects outlined below. There may be other unintended consequences which we have not been able to identify due to time constraints.

I repeat—

There may be other unintended consequences which we have not been able to identify due to time constraints.

It is a real and valid concern that, given the limited time for scrutiny, there will be unintended consequences. There has not been adequate time for stakeholders to make their submissions or for appropriate oversight to understand what some of those potential unintended consequences could be. How can we expect there to be good, sound legislation when even the Queensland Law Society has to point out that the processes of this Labor government are very flawed?

For the benefit of the Labor government and members opposite, I draw the attention of the House to the testimony of Mr Bill Potts, the President of the Queensland Law Society, during the public hearing into the bill on 25 March this year. It is very important that the parliament hear his words. When Mr Potts was asked by my colleague the Liberal National Party member for Bundaberg for his point of view on the consultation process with respect to this omnibus bill, Mr Potts stated—

Can I say this: consultation is something that we have for many years both promoted and, where necessary, insisted upon. Where there is no upper house of review, the committee system becomes so much more important.

Later he stated—

... we have as part of our central ethos, our central mission, good law. We want there to be evidence based law. The more consultation we get, the better, particularly where there are some acts involved.

This is just anecdotal: recently we were given four days to respond. Clearly, that is just not in anybody's interests. The more time we get the better, the more opportunities we therefore have to work on those unintended consequences across a whole range of subject matter experts.


Similar sentiments were echoed by the Queensland Resources Council. At page 1 of its submission to the parliamentary committee, this Labor government's significantly flawed processes were laid bare. The QRC stated—

Even for an omnibus Bill, this legislation is extraordinarily broad in scope, amending according to the references in the Minister's Explanatory speech, a staggering 29 different Acts. The breadth and complexity of this Bill makes it very difficult for any stakeholder to be confident they have understood all the ramifications of these amendments in the 15 business days between the Bill being tabled and submissions falling due for the Committee.

This is not the Liberal National Party finding fault with the Labor government's legislative and consultative processes; these are well-respected stakeholders, the Queensland Resources Council and the Queensland Law Society, that first and foremost want to ensure that good law, backed up by good consultation and examination, passes through this parliament and that appropriate time and consultation take place with respect to scrutiny when we are enacting such far-reaching legislation. To that end, on this side of the House we wholeheartedly support such sentiments. I call upon the Palaszczuk Labor government to actually listen to the community and provide the open and transparent government that they have been promising over the past four years. That simply has not been happening.

Finally, I commend the contributions made by my colleagues in opposing a number of the clauses in this bill, particularly those concerning the removal of the foreign landownership report, clauses 36 and 37; allowing the state to access private land without consent, clause 45; and the extension of ministerial decision-making powers, clause 260. I call upon all members of the House to support the Liberal National Party amendments. I certainly commend the Liberal National Party shadow minister, his response to this bill and the amendments that he will be moving.

I conclude by saying that it is only this side of the House that supports the resources sector in Queensland. That is well and truly known by Queenslanders. On Saturday, those who live in rural and regional Queensland will have a clear choice. If they elect a Bill Shorten federal Labor government, Bill Shorten and federal Labor pose not only a real risk to our economy but also a sovereign risk here in Queensland and right across Australia. I say to those who live in rural and regional Queensland: if you support the resources sector and the mining industry, you must back the Morrison federal LNP government.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.06 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. Certainly we welcome a number of elements of this bill. In particular, we welcome the way it modernises the Water Act to encourage greater gender diversity on water boards. The Greens support and welcome that, given that only 10 per cent of category 2 water board directors are female. It is the kind of initiative that the government should be commended for. Certainly we welcome the adoption of this kind of initiative far more broadly.

Unfortunately, there are some elements of the bill that we do not support. In particular, we oppose clauses 213, 214 and 215 of the bill. This part of the bill changes the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Act 2018 so that it refers to the remediation of rather than rehabilitation of abandoned mines. The government has provided the rationale that this is necessary to distinguish between the rehabilitation obligations that a mine operator must meet under the Environmental Protection Act and the activities that the government undertakes on legacy and abandoned mine sites.


We share the concerns that have been raised by stakeholders in respect of this aspect of the bill. As the WWF says, rehabilitation is the act of restoring something damaged to its former condition whereas remediation is the process of correcting a situation that is dangerous. Under this proposed change, only dangerous things would need to be addressed and the current requirement is that they be restored to pre-mining condition. We believe that that should remain.

Further, as the Environmental Defenders Office and the Lock the Gate Alliance pointed out in their joint submission, a review of the abandoned mines program is currently underway. That is a key element of our ongoing mining rehabilitation framework. As those organisations say, the existing program has consistently failed to deliver a measurable and sustained reduction in the state's exposure to environmental, social and economic risks posed by the state's abandoned mines. Currently a review is underway to see how we can improve the standard of how we manage those abandoned mines. It makes no sense to legislate a drastic change while the review is underway. As those submitters say, the proposed amendments are a retrograde step.

The state needs to raise the bar with respect to the rehabilitation of abandoned mines, not lower it. It is well established that Queensland has a serious problem with 15,000-odd abandoned mine sites around the state and they were not covered in the government's recent legislation on mining rehabilitation. That legislation only covered mines that are yet to be approved. Even most of the currently operating mines are left largely untouched by the government's new legislation with respect to final voids. We are talking about mines where the owner has walked away or gone bust, or where the mine was dug decades ago before any regulation at all existed. When you have that kind of issue, where the abandoned mines program is so underfunded that it is completely failing, the answer is not to relax the rules; the answer is to improve your performance.

One issue on which I would seek clarification is around the amendments to the Aboriginal Land Act. This bill proposes to replace what is currently a process of declaration by regulation with a ministerial declaration process, enabling the minister administering the act to make a declaration about land available for grant as inalienable Aboriginal freehold and other matters.

The Cape York Land Council expressed concerns that this ministerial delegation process will prompt the declarations made to be characterised as administrative in character and so be subject to judicial review rather than parliamentary oversight. It seems clear from the explanatory notes that this is what is intended. I am seeking clarification from the minister around the policy rationale for abandoning parliamentary oversight in favour of judicial review which is, as we all know, expensive, time consuming and difficult.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.10 pm): I too rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. Firstly, I thank the committee and the secretariat staff for all their work. This bill amends 29 separate acts and is 234 pages long. I was commenting to some of my colleagues after looking through the explanatory notes that this is certainly a very broad bill. It covers an enormous number of areas. One certainly understands the concerns of the Queensland Law Society when it stated that it makes it very hard for the committee and lawmakers to properly scrutinise this legislation.

One aspect of the bill I will cover is the issue around foreign ownership. This is a topic that quite a lot of my residents bring up with me while I am out and about in my electorate, whether it be on the roadside, whilst doorknocking or at functions. A lot of my residents express concerns about foreign ownership and knowing what is transpiring in that regard.

One of my fears with regard to removing this provision from state legislation is the potential for misinformation and Chinese whispers around foreign ownership. This could be the case if the detail around who owns properties, especially agricultural properties, is not available to people. A lot of people are concerned about agricultural properties being sold to foreign interests. Whilst it is still important to have foreign interests investing in Australia, knowledge around what is transpiring with regard to these properties is crucial to a lot of people's mindset.


When I spoke with one of my constituents recently I brought this topic up with him. This constituent's name is David Chan. He was horrified that that provision is being taken out of legislation. Whilst it is still partly covered in Commonwealth legislation, the state legislation does have additional detail about properties in terms of their location and uses. I am sure even the constituents of members opposite would be very concerned about the removal of this from legislation.

Another issue the opposition has highlighted is the concern around accessing private property to get to state controlled land. The member for Maroochydore mentioned—and I certainly agree with her—the potential for biohazards. We have to ensure that there is no transfer of seeds from weeds onto people's properties.

I have had a little bit to do with farming over the years and there is nothing more concerning than having a species of weed introduced onto your property. It has the potential to cause an enormous amount of grief. For example, if silver leaf weed were introduced onto a person's property by another entity and it affected one's avocado trees it would be very concerning. It can grow over and cover those trees and can kill them. It is very hard to get rid of.

That brings me back to my constituent David Chan. He was horrified by this part of the bill. He said that if anybody else in South-East Queensland had vehicles travelling across their property to get to state controlled land they would certainly be very upset. They would demand some type of compensation for the restoration of their property. An issue that the member for Condamine brought up was the lack of detailed compensation for these individuals. A biohazard such as a weed infestation could cause an enormous amount of grief for landowners.

I will keep my comments brief because there are other members of the LNP who are very keen to speak on this bill. Unfortunately, we only have a very short time left because, as normal, the time for debate of this bill in this chamber has been axed. I will leave my comments at that.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (12.15 pm): It is hard to find words to adequately describe this bill. Even the term 'omnibus' fails to properly describe its size and audacity. The Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 is truly unique. Originally sprawled across its 234 pages were 360 clauses amending 29 acts. We are now considering amendments to 32 separate acts after three were added yesterday. Ranging from Indigenous and general land access to foreign landownership to the establishment of governance agreements for natural resource statutory bodies, this bill covers a lot of territory.

The question arises: what does this bill actually seek to achieve? With no substantive recommendations or amendment made by the committee that considered it, nor the acceptance of any of the sensible suggestions from the many submitters and with only 15 days to consider the details and get submissions in, most have been left searching why there was the need to rush this through. I think I may have the answer.

At its core, this bill is an excellent example of this Labor government's sense of self-entitlement and a complete disregard for transparency. Given the mandate to form government in our great state, those opposite obviously feel this mandate has entitled them to the right to do whatever they please. In

an obvious attempt to avoid the delays that have plagued some of the bills recently passed by this House, the government is now changing tactics and looking to ram through as many changes as it can get in a single bill, with zero regard for proper scrutiny. Put simply, the objective of this bill, in my opinion, is to force through as much change as possible with the most minimal effort.

This attempt has been about as subtle as a sledgehammer. Whilst few have had the chance to go through this bill with a fine toothcomb, the LNP has not been caught napping. We have reviewed this bill in as much detail as possible. I stand today to join my colleagues in opposing three significant amendments to the bill.

Before I continue, I would like to thank the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee and their secretariat for their work on this bill. Thanks particularly to the members for Condamine, Bundaberg and Buderim for their well-informed statement of reservation.

Clauses 36 and 37 of this bill propose to omit section 16 of the Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988. This amendment will remove the requirement for the state's register to develop a report on foreign ownership of private land in Queensland and remove the requirement for this report or any that may be developed to be presented to this House for examination. Foreign ownership is a topic of discussion around many kitchen tables and there is not a week that goes by that one of my communities does not raise this as an issue. Any erosion in controls and reporting is a huge red flag and something that just does not fit with my communities' expectations.

AgForce Queensland, one of the state's chief agricultural industry bodies, also strongly opposed this change in their submission to the bill. In their submission, AgForce noted that, while the Commonwealth government also currently produces a report on foreign ownership in Australia, this report differs in composition and the definition used to define foreign ownership. AgForce strongly suggest that to ensure Queenslanders have the most up-to-date and relevant data on land ownership in their state it is essential that this change be scrapped. As a party determined to ensure all Queenslanders receive fair treatment and transparency from government that those opposite fail to provide, the LNP supports AgForce in this request and calls on the government to scrap clauses 36 and 37.

Another clause hidden away in this bill's mammoth contents that has stirred concern amongst submitters is clause 45. This clause opposes an amendment to the Land Act 1994 which would give an authorised person the right to enter freehold land in order to gain access to adjacent state land without a warrant or consent of the owner. Put simply, this is another direct attack on the property rights of Queenslanders by a government with its priorities way off track. This bill breaches fundamental legislative principles by providing the government with the power to authorise access to private property with little regard to the rights and liberties of the property owner. It is simply outrageous to believe that an authorised person's ease of access should come before the rights of that property owner.

On top of this, like many of the bills offered by this government, this bill disproportionately affects rural and regional Queensland's farming families. While for many having an unknown person access your property without consent and with limited notice may be a violation of your rights as a property owner and a safety concern for farming families, this could also be a major biosecurity threat. We have heard of case studies that are great examples of the threats from weeds and other pests.

Our farmers toil night and day to provide for us through drought and disaster, yet this government seems to want to continue to kick them while they are down. Our farmers deserve the right to know why their land is being accessed and who by with sufficient time to prepare for it or contest the request if they see fit. Being given a sheet of paper at the last minute like this bill proposes will just not cut it, and the LNP will not support this amendment.


The bill also makes amendments to the Water Act to clarify requirements for the selection and appointment of directors on category 2 water authority boards. I have one of those category 2 water boards in my area, being the Glamorgan Vale Water Board. I want to pay tribute to the water board, especially chairman Doc Hannah and its members: Geoff Beattie, Brett Freese and Tony McKew, ably assisted by their board secretary, Judy Seppanen. They do a great job. They are celebrating their 50th anniversary in November this year. This is not a very good 50th birthday present when our residents will no longer have a democratic vote to determine who is on their board. This is a decision being made in Brisbane, and our community just does not accept that.

In meeting its obligation the board strives to efficiently deliver rural water at a fair price through objective planning and upholding the principles of the standards that the government has set, and this board has been doing that successfully for 50 years. Let us put this into perspective. This is not a

SunWater or a Seqwater. This area covers approximately 540 landholders. The board members are not very well paid. This is basically a volunteer job, and they do so many other things for our community. Having others coming from Brisbane to fill those board positions is not acceptable. The best communities in the world are those that help themselves, and these category 2 water boards have done that for many years very successfully.

Ultimately, this bill is an example of the audacity that comes from a government rife with feelings of complacency, content with simply skating by in between bills designed to push their left agenda. This bill is the product of a government going through the motions. Its only objective is to force through as many amendments as possible in a single bill. Indeed, to paraphrase the comments of Queensland Resources Council CEO Andrew Barger, in introducing this bill, the minister must have considered whether it would have been easier to list the bills that this bill does not amend.

As US founding father and president James Madison said, 'It is of little avail to the people if the laws be so voluminous that they cannot be read or so incoherent that they cannot be understood.' This bill fits that descriptor. It is the product of a government ill fit to serve the people of Queensland, and they will suffer the consequences of that when a Deb Frecklington LNP government retakes those benches in 2020.

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (12.25 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the omnibus bill before the House, the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. We had the member for Greenslopes complaining that the LNP members had pointed out that the bill is a large omnibus bill that sprawls across around 250 pages and amends now 32 separate acts. He noted that someone mistakenly called it an 'ominous' bill, but let us be honest: it is a pretty ominous omnibus bill. We had the member for Capalaba, the Chief Government Whip, in his contribution get the number of acts wrong at 24—even he lost count. I understand that since yesterday morning it is now up to 32 acts. That is a lot of acts being amended in one bill.

It is bad enough that we have the government stifling debate in the House on some bills by their guillotines, but now we see the new tactic of making sure that there is limited debate by shoving heaps of amendments together in one bill like this one, which amends 32 acts. With 10-minute contributions, members have around 18 seconds per act to contribute. Obviously this means that the legislation brought to the House is under less and less scrutiny—an obvious tactic being employed.

We had the member for Greenslopes go to the library to do some research to enlighten us new members about omnibus bill history, as pointed out by the member for Ninderry. Yes, I am still pretty new here. I thought to myself that maybe it is completely reasonable for stakeholders to be expected to make submissions on a bill in the short 15 business days they were given to make submissions.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order, members!

Mr HUNT: I thought I had better check with the stakeholders to see whether that is reasonable to the stakeholders. What did they say?

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please direct your comments through the chair, member for Nicklin.

Mr HUNT: What did the stakeholders say? Did they agree with the member for Greenslopes and other members who think it is reasonable? No, they did not. We will see what the Queensland Law Society submission said. These are people who read bills for a living. The Law Society outlined the size of the omnibus bill and the difficulty in properly analysing all of the changes within the short time frame in order to meet the submission date. The Queensland Law Society do not agree that it is good enough. They do not agree that they had time for proper scrutiny. They said—

The most difficult position that we have in assisting the parliament in its important business is hoping that we have not missed anything ...

That is what the Queensland Law Society said. We are talking about lawyers here who examine and interpret legislation for a living. The Queensland Resources Council, another stakeholder, said about the bill in their submission—

Even for an omnibus Bill, this legislation is extraordinarily broad in scope, amending according to the references in the Minister's Explanatory speech, a staggering 29 different Acts.

That is now up to 32, as I pointed out. They continue—

The breadth and complexity of this Bill makes it very difficult for any stakeholder to be confident they have understood all the ramifications of these amendments in the 15 business days between the Bill being tabled and submissions falling due for the Committee.

I note that the bill deals with several issues, including Indigenous and general land access, gas production tenure management, foreign landownership registers, the Surveyors Act, the establishment of CleanCo and category 2 water governance arrangements. The bill covers a lot of areas, some of which we on this side of the House support and others we do not. For example, one of the provisions that caused most concern among submissions to the bill was the removal of the requirement for the state government to continue to produce its annual foreign landownership report. I guess we could expect this removal of the requirement from a government that we have become used to hiding information from Queenslanders. It is not surprising. It is the same lack of transparency and accountability that we see every day with this government. Queenslanders have a right to know the details of who and what land is owned by foreign individuals and organisations without having to pay a search fee, but I guess this is another way of this Labor government sticking their hands in our pockets. I note that AgForce do not support these changes. They see this as weakening reporting of foreign ownership of agricultural land in Queensland.


Those on this side of the House are also concerned about changes to the Land Act 1994 that allow an authorised person without consent or warrant to enter freehold land if they need access to adjacent state land. The LNP will oppose clause 45 that introduces a new section 431ZD to the act granting this power. AgForce also rejects the need and legitimacy for extending the state's right to access freehold land to access state controlled land. We have seen this overreach before in this parliament with the tree police. It breaches fundamental legislative principles by providing the government with powers to authorise access with insufficient regard to the rights and liberties of landholders. The LNP do not believe this is a legitimate reason to be able to enter private freehold land without consent or a permit.

We will also be opposing extending ministerial decision-making powers, which is clause 260. These are amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 that provide increased ministerial powers that allow a minister to cancel, vary or insert conditions for an exploration permit in an exceptional event. The LNP will oppose clause 260 that creates a new section 141A in the act. This section allows the minister, as I said, to impose, vary or remove a condition of an exploration permit at any time without application or seeking the views from the permit holder if an exceptional event has occurred. Exceptional events are natural disasters or financial crises that negatively affect the resources industry. I note that the Resources Council has raised serious concerns about granting this ministerial power, pointing out rightly that it opens up considerable risk to investments that can be ended on the stroke of a minister's pen.

We also saw submissions of concern from the Queensland Law Society—again pointing to the fact that a minister would be given the power to unilaterally impose, vary or remove a condition in an exploration permit without application by the holder where the minister considers the conditions must be amended because of an exceptional event affecting the permit. Their submission states that their concerns are that the holder is 'not given the right to be heard in respect of the exceptional event or the proposed change' and 'does not afford the holder a formal right of appeal in respect of the Minister's decision.'

I note that both the QRC and QLS have concerns about the broad definition of 'exceptional event' within the bill and that it is too open for exploitation. We also know this government's attitude to mining and the risk it poses to the future of the industry. The QRC and QLS are right not to trust this government with these decision-making powers.

In the bill before us, we also have amendments to the Surveyors Act and the Surveyors Regulation. I note the time and I know that a lot of members want to make a contribution. There are many other aspects to this bill, but with 18 seconds or thereabouts per act it is just not possible to cover all aspects of the bill in our contributions to the debate. I will leave it there and give other members a go.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (12.34 pm): I rise to speak to the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I share the concerns of members on this side of the House, including I note the member for Maiwar. He expressed concerns about certain elements of the bill that his party cannot support but he is caught up in the trap of the fact that this is an omnibus bill. This

means that, if he supports certain principles that he wants to be seen supporting, he has to support the bill, even though there are other elements that he and his party may not support. That is the issue that the LNP is finding as well.

We think this is the latest example of the Labor government's lack of openness, transparency and accountability. That is, of course, what they came into government trumpeting some 4½ years ago. I want to refer to an editorial I read yesterday in the *Maclean's* news magazine about another jurisdiction in Canada. I think it is very fitting and I will read some elements of it that apply to this bill because it applies specifically to omnibus bills. It states—

At the end of George Orwell's political fable *Animal Farm*, Clover the weary cart-horse finds she can no longer tell the difference between her former human oppressors and her current pig masters, who once claimed to be her liberators. She "looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which."

And Queensland—

... voters are likely experiencing a similar sensation these days. While Prime Minister Justin Trudeau—

and in our case Anastacia Palaszczuk—

... strode to victory ... on a promise to do things differently than his predecessor ... it has recently become impossible to say which is which—particularly when it comes to their abuses of parliamentary democracy.

This is especially when we talk about openness, transparency and accountability. The point of this editorial is about omnibus bills, and that is the whole point of that quote. It continues on about omnibus bills and states—

Lumping many disparate bits of law-making into one bill makes it impossible for Parliament to properly consider each individual piece of legislation. It also denies the public the ability to focus or speak out on items of significance to them, since so many things are going on at once. And this allows governments to avoid the necessary scrutiny that democracy demands.

Those on the other side of the House can bleat all they like, but the point is, as has been made by speakers on this side a number of times, the amount of time given to stakeholders and members of parliament for the consideration of this bill means we could see a government that is trying to do this, as the quote continues—

Trying to sneak controversial measures past Parliament and the public via omnibus legislation is an affront to democracy.

I table a copy of that editorial from *Maclean's* news magazine.

Tabled paper: Article from macleans.ca, undated, titled 'Another omnibus budget Bill and a test of Parliament's will' [772].


It is relevant to Canada but it is also relevant here in Queensland. It is probably because the minister has four jobs. He is a doctor, he is a lecturer, he is a minister and he is an MP. He has obviously said to his department, 'Listen, I don't have time to do bills in the House. Can you just lump amendments to 32 acts into one bill and we'll do it in one omnibus bill and I won't have to come back too often because I've got all these other jobs to do.'

We have not had a single substantive recommendation made by the committee, despite the fact that stakeholders raised some legitimate and reasonable concerns. Serious questions need to be asked about why these laws are being rushed through parliament by the Labor government. We have heard the quotes about the Queensland Resources Council saying that it is 'extraordinarily broad in scope'. The Law Society outlined the difficulty of properly analysing the changes given the short time frame set by Labor. They said—

The most difficult position that we have in assisting the parliament in its important business is hoping that we have not missed anything.

As I said, this bill covers a lot of territory, some of which the LNP supports and others it does not. We have mentioned we will be opposing three separate amendments. Firstly, we will be opposing scrapping the foreign landownership report, which is in clauses 36 and 37. The LNP will always oppose moves to reduce transparency on foreign landownership in Queensland. Secondly, we will be opposing allowing the state access to private land without consent, which is in clause 45. It breaches fundamental legislative principles by providing the government with powers to authorise access with insufficient regard to the rights and liberties of landholders. Thirdly, we will be opposing clause 260, which creates a new section 141A in the act.

The amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 have provided increased ministerial powers that allow a minister to cancel, vary or insert conditions for an exploration permit in an exceptional event. The bill also deals with several issues including inter alia Indigenous and general land access, gas production tenure management, foreign landownership registers, the Surveyors Act, the establishment of CleanCo and category 2 water governance arrangements. This bill flies in the face of an open and transparent government.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.39 pm): I rise to speak to the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. There is a lot to this bill. I will qualify my contribution by saying it is very difficult to get around a large electorate and then come down here and be across something so big when we do not have parliamentary staff. We do our best to pick up on some of the points that we feel impact and stand out to us, so I will reflect on those. I am sure there are some parts of this bill that are very practical and will improve the current legislation that is in place. I will try to be balanced in my contribution.


The first thing I would like to discuss is the removal of the requirement to table an annual report on foreign ownership. Discussions about foreign ownership often get dragged into discussions about being xenophobic. However, I think foreign ownership is a really important issue in rural Queensland. We cannot talk about it without really investigating people's concerns. I think that was best articulated by Dr Mark McGovern, who talked about levels of rural debt, the composition of ownership in those rural areas and how that is perhaps changing. The question is not so much who owns it or who is coming in. It does not have to be bogged down in, 'We do not want foreign owners,' or, 'We want to reduce the level of foreign ownership.' It is not always about that; it is about their motivation in buying here and how they can compete with our Aussie farming families in these circumstances. That becomes a question, and a completely different subject, about access to capital and overseas subsidies versus our Australian farmers, who are not supported in the same way by their government. There is obviously clear motivation for overseas governments to provide incentives for their people to expand their agricultural base and I would argue we do not do the same thing here.

It is very important to monitor foreign ownership and its impacts on other policies or things we are not doing in terms of agriculture or even acknowledging that that might be a problem. I really think it is a problem. The towns I represent are all suffering population decline and decline in services in so many ways. That comes back to the composition of what is happening out there and the composition of the ownership of the family farms. Foreign ownership is a really important issue that impacts much more broadly on the towns and the few cities that exist in rural Queensland, so it is a really important part of government policy. Along with the KAP, I must strongly oppose any reduction in transparency.

The other issue that stood out to me was the measure to facilitate balanced gender representation on category 2 water authority boards and modernise the selection and appointment process for directors. I appreciate the sentiment behind what the government is trying to do. I have no problem with women expanding their presence in the workforce, but I really object to setting defined targets of half female representation on a board, of having direct, quantifiable targets. We believe it should be merit based. The member for Hinchinbrook is sitting beside me and I know there has been an issue with the Herbert River drainage board, which is a category 2 water authority. It creates a lot of tension, especially in rural communities where we do not often have a broad base of people to draw from. We do not see blokes trying to get on the CWA board or other boards that they may not be suited to. Likewise, on occasion there might not be people available with the skills or the merit to be appointed to these category 2 boards. In those cases we will deliberately be devaluing—and that works both ways. It will work in the same way if it is a women's board and we are forcing men onto it. I think that is a clumsy way of trying to address the issue of promoting more females to those positions. We would strongly object to that.

There are provisions that tidy up some things in the Vegetation Management Act, and we appreciate that. I hope the government will reciprocate in the same way with the amendments I will be introducing to the Vegetation Management Act into the parliament in the future.

The last issue I raise is private holder land rights. Again, I am not fully across that one, but it certainly rings alarm bells because there is a lot of tension in that space and a lot of the moves by the government in those remote areas and rural areas cause a lot of grief and are often unnecessary. There are some real concerns for us there. At the start of this contribution I acknowledged that there are some positive components to this legislation—and I can see what the government is trying to achieve there—but there are definitely some components of this bill that the KAP and I are bitterly opposed to.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (12.45 pm): I would like to make a contribution to the debate on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Like those before me, I would like to start by firstly saying how large, how complex and how rushed this entire process has been. I listened intently to the contribution of the member for Greenslopes yesterday in which he was trying to justify the fact that this piece of legislation amends 32 separate acts. He was trying to justify that that was reasonable because a previous government had put forward an omnibus bill that amended 20. His justification for saying that 32 was somehow okay was that someone else had done 20. This bill is so complex in nature, and to hear the member for Greenslopes criticise the Queensland Law Society for

daring to say that it was too much and criticise a policy officer and say that somehow that makes them incapable of doing their job I found offensive. We can disagree on policy, we can disagree on legislation—we can disagree on all of those things—but to criticise someone who dares to ask for more time to have a look at something that is so complex and amends so many different pieces of legislation I found offensive. Likewise, I also found offensive the fact that he took the member for Coomera to task for pronouncing ‘omnibus’ wrong and that somehow that was the extent of his contribution.

There are elements of this bill that we would like to support, and I make that very, very clear. However, there are other elements in this bill that are offensive.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Member, in accordance with the business program agreed to by the House, the time for debate has expired.

Mr Crisafulli: Here we go again, 32 acts and I get 32 seconds.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: You had a minute and a half. Nevertheless, the time for the debate has expired.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will wait for silence before I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (12.47 pm), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their participation in this debate. I thank the member for Bancroft, the chair of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, and all the committee members for their contributions to the debate on this bill.

This bill makes amendments to existing acts and associated regulations within the Natural Resources, Mines and Energy portfolio. The bill demonstrates the government’s continued commitment to ensuring sustainable management of Queensland’s important land, water and mineral resources for the future benefit of all Queenslanders. I note and I welcome the member for Burdekin’s indication that the opposition will not oppose these commonsense refinements to the regulatory frameworks governing sustainable management of our land, water and mineral resources.

During the debate there were a number of misleading comments made by those opposite that misinterpreted provisions in this bill, and I will start with CleanCo. There was a claim by the member for Burdekin that CleanCo will not work, referencing comments made by stakeholders. I can report to the member for Burdekin that he cannot be further from the truth. This government is adopting their recommendation to establish a third generator, and modelling undertaken for the government shows that CleanCo will have a \$7 per megawatt hour impact on wholesale prices and this will save households \$70 annually. I would also like to quote the ACCC, which on 29 March released the *Monitoring of supply in the National Electricity Market report* at the behest of the federal energy minister, Angus Taylor. This report stated—

While CleanCo takes a different approach to that contemplated by the ACCC ... the establishment of CleanCo is a positive step given the significant size of the portfolio and the presence of significant assets in Swanbank E and Wivenhoe.

We welcome the ACCC’s endorsement of CleanCo. We note that the ACCC’s report, which was heavily promoted by the Morrison government, recommended the privatisation of Queensland’s assets. Unlike those opposite, we will not support this under any circumstances.

In terms of the QCA report, again, the member could not be further from the truth. This year’s draft determination of regional power prices released in February stated—

ACIL Allen also attributed the projected decrease in price volatility to the Queensland government’s directive to establish CleanCo.

It was also said that CleanCo’s utilisation of low- and no-emission generation assets will likely place continued downward pressure on peak price outcomes. It is evident that CleanCo will drive downward pressure on wholesale power prices.

On the topic of power prices, let us look at recent comments of those opposite. The member for Warrego said, ‘The last 10 years we have seen our electricity prices rise by around 100 per cent.’ Why do members opposite go back 10 years? There is only one reason they use 10 years: because it takes us back to before March 2012. If we do not use the Newman years, we find that residential power prices did not increase at all. We find that prices in small businesses increased by 0.2 per cent. If we slot in

the Newman years, it doubles at 43 per cent. That is why members opposite never start from 2015. They never say, 'Oh, seven years ago.' It is always '10 years ago' because they need to include those years to get that power price sting.

On another note, it is disappointing but unfortunately not surprising that, in a statement of reservation contained in the committee's report, the opposition bemoan the scope of these amendments. While they seemingly could not identify a single point with which they disagreed, they could not help themselves but to bag the process. I particularly note their grievance that this bill amends 29 existing acts or regulations. How many times have we heard that? We heard speaker after speaker and seemingly it is all they had to contribute. Every single contribution started with the same lines.

I contrast this position with the written submission that the parliamentary committee received from the member for Broadwater. How I wish he had more time! As opposed to his colleagues, the member for Broadwater suggested in his submission to the committee that amending 29 acts and regulations was not enough; he wanted more. The member specifically asked the committee to include further amendments—'Let us make it bigger.' Unfortunately, they were outside the long title of this bill and unfortunately they are not even part of my portfolio, but he wanted to include them in this bill. 'Let us make it bigger,' he said. While his colleagues all said they wanted less, the member for Broadwater wanted more, a bigger omnibus bill. Clearly, the member for Broadwater had not read the script. He has single-handedly undermined the only comment that opposition members of the parliamentary committee were capable of making on this bill.

I thank the member for Condamine for recognising the importance of the amendments to the Vegetation Management Act and to the Planning Act and for giving them his support. Thank you, comrade.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Through the chair, Minister.

Dr LYNHAM: However, the member for Buderim expressed his view that these changes would not be necessary if they were dealt with when we amended the Vegetation Management Act last year. Of course, that is misleading. As I said very clearly in my second reading speech, the judicial ruling in relation to the definition of 'infrastructure' related to provisions that existed as far back as the year 2000. These amendments became necessary only after the court handed down the decision. If this is the bar the member would like to set, I remind him that the LNP did not clarify these provisions when in government.

There was plenty of opportunity when former ministers amended the Vegetation Management Act in the following bills—minister Seeney, Economic Development Bill 2012; minister Cripps, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Landholding Bill 2012; minister Cripps, Land, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013; minister Cripps, Vegetation Management Framework Amendment Bill 2013; minister Cripps, North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013; and minister Nicholls, Treasury and Trade and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. Minister Powell introduced the Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. Minister Dickson—who can forget him?—introduced the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013. Minister McVeigh introduced the Biosecurity Bill 2013. Minister Powell introduced the Environmental Offsets Bill 2014. Minister Seeney introduced the State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. Minister Cripps introduced the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land (Providing Freehold) and Other Legislation Bill 2014. Minister Powell—again—introduced the Environmental Protection and Other Legislation Bill 2014. Minister Cripps introduced the Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2014.

As I said in explaining these amendments, these are important changes to ensure that landholders are able to build the firebreaks as they have always done to protect houses, buildings and other structures from the risk of bushfire. We did not change legislation at all.

I turn to the important contribution of members in relation to the bill's water compliance and enforcement provisions. Queensland's obligations under the Murray-Darling Basin's Compliance Compact are an important demonstration of this government's commitment to more transparent, sustainable and equitable rural water management. As part of the commitment, the bill strengthens compliance and enforcement provisions under the Water Act 2000 to ensure that water users take water in accordance with the water entitlement and are in no doubt of the penalty for noncompliance. These amendments will give Queenslanders the confidence that this government is serious about sustainably managing its water resources.

I note comments from members of the opposition about gender equity on water authority boards. As the member for Mount Ommaney said during the debate, do not dress this up as a city versus country issue. Make no mistake: it is not a city and country issue; it is a gender equity issue. More than ever, women in the regions need to be recognised as key contributors. Women deserve a seat at the table, including on category 2 water boards. The member for Scenic Rim clearly has not read the water authority board provisions in the bill. I am concerned about the misinformation he stated that he has been feeding his constituents. Despite his comments yesterday, I refer the member for Scenic Rim to clause 331, section 609, and to the explanatory notes on page 115. These amendments do not remove or ban elections from category 2 water authority board processes. Let us be clear: category 2 water authority boards are statutory authorities. Being a statutory authority carries certain obligations.

I also make the point that, if the burden of being a statutory authority is too great on a board, they can pursue the option of moving to an alternative governance arrangement under existing act provisions. These amendments make it clear that a board is required to seek and nominate suitable candidates for the position of director to recommend to the minister. A board might seek suitable candidates via election or nomination. The provisions clarify that a suitable candidate is, by definition, a person who can do the job, a person who has the qualifications, experience and standing appropriate to perform the functions of office. Balanced gender representation is a key consideration for a board in seeking suitable candidates. This is recognition that it is now 2019 and not the Dark Ages. These amendments will improve balanced gender representation on the boards of category 2 water authorities and ensure directors have appropriate skills and experience. Importantly, the amendments support good governance of category 2 water authorities so that they can continue to perform their water related activities.

The amendments to the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009 will validate infrastructure charges notices issued by distributor-retailers. This will provide continued consistency with the local government infrastructure charging framework, which was recently amended by the Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019. This will also ensure that charges issued by distributor-retailers for water and sewerage infrastructure are recoverable so that all distributor-retailers, developers and local governments will operate under the same infrastructure charging framework.

The resource authority amendments in this bill are largely targeted at our important exploration industry, which is vital to the ongoing success of our resources sector. My department has worked together with the resources industry over many years to progress this large body of work. I am pleased to say that this bill continues our commitment to improve the state's resource tenure management system. As the world transitions to a zero net emissions economy, discovery of new mineral and energy resources is essential to drive emerging technologies. Our exploration industry is absolutely vital in ensuring that these discoveries are made. To support this sector, the bill provides flexibility to respond to on-ground findings and adequate time to make informed investment decisions while ensuring effective land turnover.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.



Dr LYNHAM: The bill also provides certainty for communities and landholders as well as for the coal and mineral exploration sector by introducing capped terms for exploration permits. These changes will lead to a focus on quality and timely exploration activities to drive future regional economic growth.

Clause 260 provides a ministerial power to impose, vary or remove conditions of an exploration permit only when necessary and only due to an exceptional event. This power does not—I repeat, does not—include the cancellation of an exploration permit. I repeat again: it does not include the cancellation of an exploration permit. The perverse representation of those opposite is clearly designed to mislead. How many times were we subjected to misleading fearmongering from those opposite regarding this point? Clearly, they stood in this parliament without understanding the bill.

Mr Brown: They didn't read it.

Dr LYNHAM: I take that interjection. I doubt that some of them even read the bill. The purpose of the power is to alleviate industry pressures following an exceptional event by providing assistance to explorers by way of a reduced or delayed work program or relinquishment requirement. An exceptional event has been clearly defined in the bill as—

exceptional event, affecting an exploration permit—

- (a) means an event that—
 - (i) affects the carrying out of authorised activities under the permit; and
 - (ii) is beyond the control of the holder of the permit; and
 - (iii) could not reasonably have been prevented by the holder of the permit ...

This definition will also be supported administratively by an operational policy. I reiterate: the power is not for cancellation. It would be used to provide urgent relief. It is for the explorer's benefit. We want to encourage exploration. It would be used to provide urgent relief for exploration permit holders in difficult circumstances beyond their control. Although there are no specific appeal rights provided in the bill, the ordinary judicial review procedures will apply to this decision-making power. Clause 260 works together with the other amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 to support the exploration industry across regional Queensland to ensure its long-term success.

The bill introduces an improved dispute resolution process into the Land Act to deal with disputes that may arise about the terms of a sublease. This amendment provides a more accessible option for disputing parties to resolve their dispute through either mediation or arbitration. The existing option of seeking adjudication in the Queensland Land Court remains.

As a responsible land manager, my department wants to ensure that land under its direct control is well managed. Sometimes this means that departmental officers need to cross privately owned land to access state land to undertake authorised compliance or management activities where there is no direct access or the access is unsafe or impractical. Most of the time landholders are very accommodating in providing access to the land, but in some circumstances consent is not provided. This power provides authorised officers with statutory access if it is necessary in those very, very limited circumstances. Authorised officers will always seek voluntary consent in the first instance, and the power comes with safeguards to ensure that the rights and interests of landholders are protected. Adequate prior notice must be given providing details about the purpose and duration of access and any equipment that may be taken across the land. An authorised officer is also required to comply with any necessary biosecurity requirements. While it may not be called compensation, make-good provisions introduced into the bill will enable landholders to enter into a remediation agreement with the department if any damage does occur. Let us be clear: there is a whole raft of safeguards that go with this and also it is relevant to only 54 parcels of land across this entire state.

The Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988 amendments will remove the requirement to table an annual report in parliament of foreign ownership of land in Queensland. The amendment will remove potential ambiguity and duplication with the federal register of foreign ownership. Queensland is the only state in this country that produces this report. It is important that a national approach, with a consistent methodology to be able to provide this information in a transparent way, is taken. The amendment only removes the obligation to publish and table the report. The Registrar of Titles will continue to collect the data and will be able to produce reports if and when required. In fact, during the committee hearings the member for Buderim asked this question of a member of my department, who said—

It is like a number of reports that the department periodically produce. We do not need to have a head of power in legislation, for example, to produce a report. Maybe a topical example is the Statewide Landcover and Trees Study. You will not find that referenced in the Vegetation Management Act, but obviously it is a piece of reporting that there is a lot of public interest in. By, if you like, policy, the government produces that report annually.

The member Buderim responded—

I accept that sound explanation ...

Those opposite accepted the sound explanation provided just a matter of weeks ago. This is now exposed as simply pure political games.

I heard some members opposite refer to evidence presented to the committee opposing the amendments. It is worth noting that there was, however, evidence presented in favour of the amendments. The Queensland Law Society in its written submission stated—

QLS supports the amendments to omit section 16 and the requirement for the registrar to create and table an annual report on foreign ownership under the *Foreign Ownership of Land Register Act 1988*, given that the Commonwealth Government now publishes an annual report on foreign ownership of agricultural land. This removal simplifies and streamlines the statute book.

In light of the federal reporting framework in relation to foreign land ownership, there is now an unnecessary duplication of reporting requirements under the State and Commonwealth frameworks. This duplication imposes significant compliance costs and red tape on businesses and their advisors.

What do those opposite want? Do they want increased duplication, increased compliance costs and increased red tape? I remember at some election campaigns that those opposite were going to decrease red tape and decrease duplication. What has Barnaby been doing these past six years? Not much.

Government members interjected.

Dr LYNHAM: I have only 30 seconds left, so I cannot go through all of the disasters of Barnaby Joyce. I would like to thank officers of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and Queensland Treasury for their work in the development of this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

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


Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 35, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 36 and 37—

 **Mr LAST** (2.08 pm): I rise to oppose these clauses and to elaborate on the information I provided as part of my speech in the second reading debate with regard to these clauses.

AgForce does not support these changes and sees this as a weakening of the reporting of foreign ownership of agricultural land in Queensland. Indeed, we have heard from a number of speakers in this place during the last two days expressing their concern about the abolition of that foreign ownership register in Queensland. By removing this section, Labor is taking away a key source of data and transparency that Queenslanders deserve when it comes to land ownership. As Queenslanders, we deserve to know who, how much and what types of land are owned by foreign individuals and companies. Having data is essential during any discussion about foreign landownership in Queensland. A discussion about this topic without facts can be dangerous and contrary to Queensland's interests. We do not know what a new federal government will do regarding federal reporting into foreign landownership, but to assume that it will continue is erroneous. We need to look after ourselves in Queensland. We need to have this reporting structure in place. If we look at the latest Queensland departmental report, 11,463,240 hectares of land in this state is held by foreign nationals, with the largest holder being the United Kingdom.

The federal report fails to make detailed comment on the following important aspects: a definition of who is considered to be foreign, in particular with respect to corporations; the difference in what interests in land are required to be reported, in particular with respect to leases for terms between five and 25 years; and the value of annual acquisitions. Acquisitions are not broken down to a foreign state level for all reporting metrics. Rather, there is one total figure of landholding across the country as to which foreign states own how much land. It fails to break down the figures related to each Australian state. The Commonwealth report is very high level whereas the state's report provides useful and comparable information at a local government level on changes in foreign ownership levels. This level of reporting is important in informing public discussion about the value of foreign investment in our national interests, particularly around agricultural land in the regions. The LNP will always oppose moves to reduce transparency on foreign landownership in Queensland.

Mr BOYCE: With regard to the scrapping of the foreign landownership report covered by clauses 36 and 37, I have particular concerns about this. Can the minister explain to me and the general public why Queenslanders are better off not knowing who is buying and owning our land in Queensland and, furthermore, what will be achieved by doing this? I can see no good in it whatsoever. I believe this is a deliberate ploy by the government to keep people in the dark and restrict them from knowing who owns our land. The Labor government has previously sold billions of dollars worth of state owned assets and now it seems that the state itself has a 'for sale' sign on it, except the public will not know about it. People have a right to know about foreign investment and who is gaining a foothold in this state. This is why I oppose this part of the bill. This is a government that is yet again not being accountable or transparent.

Dr LYNHAM: Firstly, I want to thank the member for Burdekin for agreeing with me in his contribution to the debate on this clause that Barnaby Joyce is doing a pretty crook job regarding this particular area. I look forward to working with a federal government that we can work with rather than a federal government that on this point in particular has done nothing regarding unnecessary duplication of the foreign register of land. It will be great to work with a government that will work with the states. As I said before, this is the only state government that has a foreign register. Members opposite are right: it is different. There are different metrics used, and that is why it is confusing. That is why it is important that we work to make sure that we have one metric for the public to use to determine how much land, especially agricultural land, is owned by overseas investors.

For instance, the Queensland report does not differentiate between land uses. The state report has never reported on agricultural land or the type of agricultural use as a separate category. Agricultural land is the overwhelmingly major land use that contributes to total foreign owned land area. That is in the federal report. Members opposite—there is a little bit of fearmongering going on again—should be referencing the federal report, which is freely available now. I am reducing red tape, reducing unnecessary duplication and making sure that we have the one register for the public so it is a simple metric for the public to review.

Division: Question put—That clauses 36 and 37, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 46:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellow, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

NOES, 42:

LNP, 36—Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 2—Bolton, Costigan.

Pairs: Boyd, Stevens; King, McArdle.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clauses 36 and 37, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 38 and 39, as read, agreed to.

Clause 40—



Dr LYNHAM (2.20 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 40 (Amendment of s 100 (Public notice of closure))

Page 38, line 29, 'or'—

omit, insert—

and

This amendment corrects a drafting error in the road closure notification provision of the Land Act. As currently drafted, the provisions do not reflect the policy intent or current notification practices for road closures. The amendment will ensure that all relevant registered owners and lessees are appropriately notified when an application for a partial road closure is made.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 40, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 41—



Dr LYNHAM (2.21 pm): I move the following amendments—

2 Clause 41 (Replacement of ch 6, pt 4, div 3A (Mediation for disputes about terms of particular subleases))

Page 49, line 19—

omit, insert—

after the appointment of the arbitrator; or

- (c) if the parties to the dispute agree to extend the period mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b)—before the expiry of the extended period.

3 Clause 41 (Replacement of ch 6, pt 4, div 3A (Mediation for disputes about terms of particular subleases))

Page 51, line 2, 'and'—

omit, insert—

to

4 Clause 41 (Replacement of ch 6, pt 4, div 3A (Mediation for disputes about terms of particular subleases))

Page 51, after line 16—

insert—

- (4A) Also, the Supreme Court may, on the application of a party to the dispute, set aside the decision if—
- (a) the decision was induced or affected by the improper behaviour of a party to the dispute; or
Examples of improper behaviour—
fraud, duress, undue influence
 - (b) at any time during the arbitral proceeding, the party was a person with impaired capacity for a matter within the meaning of the *Guardianship and Administration Act 2000*; or
 - (c) a breach of the rules of natural justice happened in relation to the making of the decision.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 41, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 42, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



Dr LYNHAM (2.22 pm): I move the following amendment—

5 After clause 42

Page 52, after line 16—

insert—

42A Amendment of section 390C (Definitions for chapter)

Section 390C, definitions *occupier* and *of—*
omit.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 43 and 44, as read, agreed to.

Clause 45—



Mr LAST (2.23 pm): I rise to speak to clause 45 and indicate that the LNP will be opposing this clause, which deals with access to private land without consent. AgForce rejects the need and the legitimacy for extending the right of the state to access freehold land to access state controlled land. This bill is evidence of the further socialisation and erosion of property rights, with no compensation to the landholders.

As of December 2018, there were approximately 50 parcels of unallocated state land identified as having problems with access. There have been occasions where it has not been possible for the government to negotiate access into or across that adjacent land. We are now seeing that Labor wants to attack the fundamental rights of property owners on the basis that it cannot resolve 50 land access issues.

This amendment breaches fundamental legislative principles by providing the government with the powers to authorise access with insufficient regard to the rights and liberties of landholders. The government should have to make contact with landholders before it enters their properties. I note that the minister has said that it would be in very rare circumstances where this power would be exercised, but the clause being inserted into the act does not say that. We are dealing with what is written in black and white. In those terms, it is access to land without consent.

This amendment is the latest in a series of efforts by this Labor government to erode the property rights of landholders and embolden bureaucrats with the power to enter land without consent or a warrant. This new power continues to undermine the already damaged relationship between landholders in this state and the Queensland government. The LNP does not believe that there is a legitimate reason to be able to enter private freehold land without consent or a permit.

Mr MILLAR: I am also concerned about clause 45, which allows state access to private land without consent. This is a breach of property rights. This very much goes against the grain. In small communities there are graziers and farmers but there are also public servants. Allowing this power of entry is only going to cause some concern. We need to make sure that landholders are phoned, or are told that they are having their land accessed by public servants.

This amendment also goes against what the government has introduced in terms of biosecurity. I note that the minister for agriculture is here. He would know firsthand about the biosecurity arrangements on grazing properties throughout Central Queensland and North Queensland. At those

properties there is a sign on the gate telling people that, if they are to access that land, they must call the manager, or the owner of the place. Yet this government is putting in new rules allowing the government to access private freehold land without consent.

I think this amendment is evidence of the further erosion of the property rights of landholders with no compensation. It erodes the trust between the government and freehold landholders across Queensland. I call on the minister to explain why people right across Queensland put up biosecurity signs on their front gates that stipulate, 'Please do not enter. Please phone ahead. Please call the manager,' yet, in this bill, state access to private land without consent is allowed. It just does not make sense. It goes against the important work that Biosecurity has put in place right across this state with signs hanging up on gates saying, 'Please do not enter. Please phone ahead. Please get consent before you get on this place.' Could the minister explain how this amendment affects the biosecurity arrangements put in place by the current minister for agriculture?

Mr LISTER: I also rise to speak against this clause. In my electorate of Southern Downs, the difficulty faced by landholders is along the lines of that explained by the member for Gregory. Biosecurity is vitally important. That is why landholders hang a sign on the gate that says, 'If you want to come onto my property, you have to contact me in advance.'

This issue is not just a question of property rights in isolation; it also relates to the biosecurity arrangements that landholders have to adhere to. Making sure that a landholder is compliant with biosecurity is vital to their business and it is extremely expensive. In recent times in my electorate there have been invasions of properties and we have seen how important those biosecurity arrangements are. In addition, this amendment is an affront to the property rights of good law-abiding people. To grant the authority to a public servant or a bureaucrat to enter a property that exceeds the authority held by a police officer who, ordinarily, would have to obtain a warrant, is truly absurd.

The symbolism of this amendment is the bush being again attacked by this government. Earlier, we heard the references to how this amendment undermines the trust between the government and landholders who already feel that they are besieged by government decisions made in Brisbane. I completely support those comments. Those people in the bush who own their properties and work hard ought to have exclusive rights over them.

Recently, we have seen a progressive and, in fact, persistent addition of a clause similar to this amendment in bills that have been introduced into this place. What is the government's fascination with being able to go onto someone's property without a warrant? I would like to know. I echo the comments by the shadow minister, the member for Burdekin. We are dealing with the bill in black and white. The bill does not say, 'We will consult. We will make sure that people are warned in advance. We will be nice about it.' The bill is what it is and, in its current state, it provides for people who are not police to enter properties without a warrant under certain circumstances. We think that is abhorrent. It is an affront to property rights and I urge every member to oppose it.

Mr BOYCE: I oppose clause 45 allowing the state to access private land without consent. Alarm bells are going off in the Callide electorate. This Labor government is once again taking away and further eroding the rights of landholders in Queensland. This further erodes the fundamental legislative principles by providing the government with powers to authorise access with insufficient and total disregard for the rights of landholders. Once again we see the farmer and grazier run over with absolutely no recourse whatsoever and again no transparency and no accountability.

Dr LYNHAM: Clause 45 introduces a new power of entry. I find it amazing that we hear mostly from those opposite that we have to manage our state land better than we are. We have to manage weeds. We have to get in there and manage state land. Now they are trying to prevent access onto that land. There are 54 parcels of land that we have to traverse and just about all the owners will enter into a voluntary agreement with the state government so that we can traverse their land. Those opposite would know of instances where there is a road reserve but it is difficult terrain and sometimes the only access is through a property.

Mr Millar: Get their consent!

Dr LYNHAM: We are.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! Through the chair. You know the standing orders.

Dr LYNHAM: It is going to be used as a last resort where there is no other direct access onto state land or access is unsafe or impractical and voluntary consent to enter the adjacent land has not been given. There are safeguards. There is a requirement to provide advance notice of at least 10 days. If any damage is done there is remediation. Biosecurity measures must be adhered to. This is simply

fearmongering from those opposite. On one hand they want us to manage state land in an appropriate way and on the other hand they do not want us to get to that state land. This is pure duplicity and double standards from those opposite.

Division: Question put—That clause 45, as read, stand part of the bill.

AYES, 47:

ALP, 45—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 41:

LNP, 36—Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Costigan.

Pairs: Boyd, Stevens; King, McArdle.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 45, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 46 and 47, as read, agreed to.

Clause 48—



Dr LYNHAM (2.37 pm): I move the following amendments—

6 Clause 48 (Amendment of sch 6 (Dictionary))

Page 63, line 20, from 'definition'—

omit, insert—

definitions occupier and of—

7 Clause 48 (Amendment of sch 6 (Dictionary))

Page 64, line 5, before 'chapter 7'—

insert—

chapter 6A and

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 48, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 49 to 212, as read, agreed to.

Clause 213—



Mr BERKMAN (2.38 pm): As I raised in my contribution to the second reading debate, I want to make sure that we have on the record the concerns of those submitters on these sections of the bill that are lowering the bar from a requirement to rehabilitate to a requirement to remediate—that is, returning the land to its condition before mining activities to simply making it safe. In circumstances where we have a resource industry that is already getting away with leaving scars all over the landscape and has done for decades, we need to be tightening up the system, not lowering that bar and making it easier for them.


The response from the department that is noted in the committee's report is essentially to suggest that this change is to reflect what is current practice. Again, should that really stand as justification for us to lower that bar to make it easier for mining operators rather than to require them to rehabilitate, to more fulsomely return the land to its original state? The same concerns apply for clauses 214 and 215.

Dr LYNHAM: Importantly, neither the standard of work nor the actual activities undertaken by the unit are changed by these amendments; only the term used to describe them is changed. Remediation is a term for the abandoned mines, the old historic mines sites, and rehabilitation is a definitional term used for mines that are presently in operation that will undergo appropriate rehabilitation. Can I assure members of the House that we have now some of the world's leading mine rehabilitation legislation in place as part of our FA act. There is now new money from this act for remediation of our historic mine sites. There are more stringent requirements for rehabilitation.

Members of the Palaszczuk Labor government can be justifiably proud of the legislation we have introduced into this House to ensure that not only are mines rehabilitated but also there are appropriate finances available for remediation of the historic abandoned mines in this state.

Clause 213, as read, agreed to.

Clause 214—

 **Mr BERKMAN** (2.41 pm): I will not restate my concerns as I have set them out for clause 213 and I will not rise again for clause 215. However, my concerns stand for those clauses.

Clause 214, as read, agreed to.

Clauses 215 to 258, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—

 **Dr LYNHAM** (2.42 pm): I move the following amendment—

8 **After clause 258**

Page 148, after line 16—

insert—

258A Insertion of new s 139A

After section 139—

insert—

139A Periodic reduction deferred if higher tenure application undecided


- (1) This section applies if—
 - (a) the holder of an exploration permit has made an application for a mineral development licence or mining lease in relation to an identified area (the **higher tenure application**); and
 - (b) at the end of a period mentioned in section 139(1), the higher tenure application has not been decided.
- (2) The area of the permit is not required to be reduced under section 139(1) by the identified area until—
 - (a) if the higher tenure application is granted—the day the tenure is granted; or
 - (b) if the higher tenure application is withdrawn or refused—20 business days after the day the application is withdrawn or refused.
- (3) Also, if the higher tenure application is withdrawn or refused, the holder of the permit may, before the end of the period of 20 business days mentioned in subsection (2)(b), amend the holder's submission under section 139(5) to the chief executive.
- (4) The chief executive must consider an amended submission given under subsection (3) instead of any earlier submission made by the holder.
- (5) In this section—

identified area means the sub-blocks of land identified under section 139(5) as the sub-blocks of land to which an exploration permit will not apply after a reduction required under section 139(1).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 259, as read, agreed to.

Clause 260—

 **Mr LAST** (2.42 pm): The amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 have provided increased ministerial powers that allow a minister to cancel, vary or insert conditions for an exploration permit in an exceptional event. Clause 260 inserts a new section 141A, which allows the minister to impose, vary or remove a condition of an exploration permit at any time without application or seeking the views from the permit holder if an exceptional event has occurred. Exceptional events are listed as natural disasters or financial crises that negatively affect the resources industry. The minister may change a work program condition to suspend or defer all exploration activities for a period due to a weather event.

The new ministerial power that grants the minister the power to terminate and change exploration licences is open to exploitation. The Queensland Resources Council has raised serious concerns about granting this ministerial power, as it opens up considerable risk to investments that can be ended by the stroke of a minister's pen.

The Queensland Law Society has concerns that a minister be given the power to unilaterally impose, vary or remove a condition in an exploration permit without application by the holder where the minister considers the conditions must be amended because of an exceptional event affecting the

permit. The Queensland Law Society has concerns that the holder is not given the right to be heard in respect of the exceptional event or the proposed change and does not afford the holder a formal right of appeal in respect of the minister's decision. That is concerning.

Both the QRC and the QLS have concerns about the broad definition of 'exceptional event' within the bill, as it is too open for exploitation. Resource businesses deserve more certainty than to be held captive to the ebbs and flows of political wills. We have already seen how politics can interfere with the approval of mining projects in Queensland with the disgraceful interference in the Carmichael project by this government.

Mr BOYCE: I oppose clause 260, which extends ministerial decision-making powers. Once again, to allow the minister to impose, vary or remove—I repeat, impose, vary or remove—a condition—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Member for Callide, it being 2.45 pm, I ask you to resume your seat.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with the business program agreed to by the House, the time for consideration of this bill has expired. The minister's amendments Nos 15 to 17 are outside the long title of the bill and therefore require leave of the House. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 9 to 17, as circulated, be agreed to and clauses 260 to 360 and schedule 1, as amended, stand part of the bill.

Amendments as circulated—

9 Clause 273 (Insertion of new ch 15, pt 15, div 2)

Page 160, after line 21—

insert—

- (3) However, if the application is related to a reduction in the area of the permit, the application is taken to be withdrawn and section 857 applies in relation to the permit.

10 Clause 273 (Insertion of new ch 15, pt 15, div 2)

Page 161, after line 30—

insert—

(3A) However—

- (a) if an application mentioned in subsection (2), made before the commencement, is related to a reduction in the area of the permit, the application is taken to be withdrawn and section 857 applies in relation to the permit; and
- (b) if an application mentioned in subsection (2) or (3), made after the commencement, is related to a reduction in the area of the permit, the application is invalid and section 857 applies in relation to the permit.

11 Clause 273 (Insertion of new ch 15, pt 15, div 2)

Page 162, line 13 to page 164, line 30—

omit, insert—

857 Relinquishment requirements for existing exploration permits

- (1) This section applies to an exploration permit in force on the commencement.
- (2) Despite new section 139(1), if the permit is renewed after the commencement, the area of the permit is required to be reduced only by 50% of the area of the permit, as existing on the commencement, by the day that is 5 years after the permit is first renewed after the commencement.
- (3) Despite new section 139(1) and subsection (2), if the permit is an exploration permit for coal to which the Common Provisions Act, section 232(1) applies, and no agreement has been made in relation to the permit under section 232(2) of that Act, the area of the permit is not required to be reduced by any amount.
- (4) Subsections (2) and (3) apply despite any condition about reducing the area of the permit determined by the Minister under section 141(1)(j) before the commencement.
- (5) New sections 139 and 139A apply in relation to a reduction in the area of the permit under subsection (2) as if it were a reduction under new section 139(1).
- (6) For subsection (5), a reference in new sections 139 and 139A to section 139(1) is taken to be a reference to subsection (2).

12 Clause 276 (Amendment of s 35 (Call for tenders))

Page 168, line 27 to page 169, lines 1 and 2—

omit, insert—

(3) Section 35(5)—

omit, insert—

(5) Subsection (2)(h)(i) does not limit the Minister's power to decide conditions of the authority if it is granted.

13 Clause 277 (Amendment of s 41 (Deciding whether to grant authority to prospect))

Page 169, after line 10—

insert—

(4) Subsection (3) does not limit or otherwise affect section 42(3)(a) or (3A).

14 Clause 313 (Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary))

Page 192, after line 9—

insert—

exploration project means a project involving 2 or more authorities to prospect that have a unifying exploration purpose.

15 After clause 357

Page 230, after line 14—

insert—

Part 1A Amendment of Planning Act 2016**357A Act amended**

This part amends the *Planning Act 2016*.

357B Insertion of new ch 8, pt 6

Chapter 8—

insert—

Part 6 Validation and transitional provisions for particular matters**348 Validation of particular development approvals**

- (1) This section applies in relation to a development approval, whether or not the approval is still in force, that—
 - (a) was granted or amended on or after 15 September 2000 but before the commencement; and
 - (b) relates, or related, to the clearing of native vegetation.
- (2) The grant or amendment of the development approval is, and is taken to have always been, as valid as it would have been if a reference to infrastructure in a relevant provision always included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.
- (3) Anything done under the development approval is, and is taken to have always been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if a reference to infrastructure in a relevant provision always included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.
- (4) To remove any doubt it is declared that a reference in this section to the grant or amendment of the development approval includes the imposition of conditions on the approval.
- (5) In this section—

relevant provision, in relation to the grant or amendment of a development approval, means—

 - (a) if the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, as in force before 4 October 2004, applied to the grant or amendment—the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, schedule 8, section 22, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (b) if the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, as in force on or after 4 October 2004, applied to the grant or amendment—the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, schedule 10, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (c) if the repealed *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* applied to the grant or amendment—the repealed *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*, schedule 26, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (d) if this Act applied to the grant or amendment—the *Planning Regulation 2017*, schedule 24, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*.

349 Particular existing applications

- (1) This section applies in relation to an application for the grant or amendment of a development approval—
- (a) made on or after 15 September 2000 under this Act, the repealed *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* or the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*; but
 - (b) not decided before the commencement.
- (2) For the purpose of deciding the application, a reference to infrastructure in a relevant provision includes, and is taken to have always included, a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.
- (3) In this section—
- deciding**, an application, includes dealing with the application.
- relevant provision**, in relation to an application for the grant or amendment of a development approval, means—
- (a) if the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, as in force before 4 October 2004, applies to deciding the application—the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, schedule 8, section 22, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (b) if the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, as in force on or after 4 October 2004, applies to deciding the application—the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, schedule 10, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (c) if the repealed *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* applies to deciding the application—the repealed *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*, schedule 26, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (d) if this Act applies to deciding the application—the *Planning Regulation 2017*, schedule 24, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*.

350 Validation of particular operational work

- (1) This section applies in relation to operational work, that is the clearing of native vegetation, if the work was carried out—
- (a) on or after 15 September 2000 but before the commencement; and
 - (b) without a development approval.
- (2) The carrying out of the work without a development approval is, and is taken to have always been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if, at the time the work was carried out, a reference to infrastructure in a relevant provision included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.
- (3) In this section—
- relevant provision** means—
- (a) in relation to operational work carried out before 4 October 2004—the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, schedule 8, section 22, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (b) in relation to operational work carried out on or after 4 October 2004 but before 18 December 2009—the repealed *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, schedule 10, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (c) in relation to operational work carried out on or after 18 December 2009 but before 3 July 2017—the repealed *Sustainable Planning Regulation 2009*, schedule 26, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*; or
 - (d) in relation to operational work carried out on or after 3 July 2017—the *Planning Regulation 2017*, schedule 24, definitions *essential management* and *routine management*.

Part 1B Amendment of Planning Regulation 2017**357C Regulation amended**

This part amends the *Planning Regulation 2017*.

357D Amendment of sch 24 (Dictionary)

Schedule 24—

insert—

infrastructure, for the definitions *essential management* and *routine management*, includes a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.

Note—

See also schedule 2 of the Act, definition *infrastructure*.

16 After clause 359

Page 230, after line 26—

insert—

Part 2A Amendment of Vegetation Management Act 1999**359A Act amended**

This part amends the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*.

359B Amendment of s 70A (Application of development approvals and exemptions for Forestry Act)

Section 70A(6)—

insert—

infrastructure includes a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.

359C Amendment of pt 6, hdg (Transitional and declaratory provisions)

Part 6, heading, 'and declaratory provisions'—

omit, insert—

, declaratory and validation provisions

359D Insertion of new pt 6, div 14

Part 6—

insert—

Division 14 Validation provisions for particular matters**145 Definition for part**

In this part—

amended extractive industry definition means the schedule, definition *extractive industry*, as in force immediately after the commencement.

146 Validation of particular decisions under s 22A

- (1) This section applies in relation to a decision of the chief executive under section 22A made on or after 21 May 2004 but before the commencement.
- (2) The decision is, and is taken to have always been, as valid as it would have been if, at the time the decision was made—
 - (a) a reference to built infrastructure in section 22A or the schedule included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose; and
 - (b) a reference to extractive industry in section 22A had the meaning given by the amended extractive industry definition.
- (3) Anything done as a result of the decision is, and is taken to have always been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if, at the time the decision was made—
 - (a) a reference to built infrastructure in section 22A or the schedule included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose; and
 - (b) a reference to extractive industry in section 22A had the meaning given by the amended extractive industry definition.

147 Validation of use of particular forest products

- (1) This section applies in relation to a forest product cleared on or after 21 May 2004 but before the commencement.
- (2) The use of the forest product is, and is taken to have always been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if, at the time the product was used, a reference to infrastructure in section 70A(5) included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.

148 Validation of accepted development vegetation clearing code and particular activities

- (1) This section applies in relation to an accepted development vegetation clearing code made before the commencement.
- (2) The making of the code is, and is taken to have always been, as valid as it would have been if, at the time the code was made—
 - (a) a reference to built infrastructure in the schedule, definition *relevant infrastructure activities* included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose; and
 - (b) a reference to extractive industry in section 19O had the meaning given by the amended extractive industry definition.

- (3) Activity to which the code applied or applies is, and is taken to have always been, as valid and lawful as it would have been if, at the time the code was made—
- (a) a reference to built infrastructure in the schedule, definition *relevant infrastructure activities* included a reference to a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose; and
- (b) a reference to extractive industry in section 190 had the meaning given by the amended extractive industry definition.

359E Amendment of schedule (Dictionary)

- (1) Schedule—
insert—
built infrastructure includes a building, or other structure, built or used for any purpose.
- (2) Schedule, definition *extractive industry*, paragraph (b), example, 'infrastructure'—
omit, insert—
structures

17 Schedule 1 (Legislation amended)

Page 232, after line 2—

insert—

Nature Conservation Act 1992

1 Section 43L(2)(a), 'Minister administering the *Land Act 1994*'—

omit, insert—

chief executive (lands)

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 260 to 360, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 18 to 20 and the long title of the bill, as amended, be agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

18 Long title

Long title, after 'the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*,'—

insert—

the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*,

19 Long title

Long title, after 'the *Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004*,'—

insert—

the *Planning Act 2016*, the *Planning Regulation 2017*,

20 Long title

Long title, after 'the *Valuers Registration Act 1992*,'—

insert—


the *Vegetation Management Act 1999*,

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

MOTION

Revocation of State Forest Areas and Dedication of Protected Area

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (2.47 pm): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
 - (a) revoke by regulation the setting apart and declaration of parts of two State forests; and
 - (b) dedicate by regulation the revoked areas of the aforementioned State forests as national park;
 under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz—

Description of areas to be revoked

Yurol State Forest	An area of about 284.4 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Yurol State Forest revocation: sketch A”.
Ringtail State Forest	An area of about 72.99 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Ringtail State Forest revocation: sketch B”.

Description of area to be dedicated

Tewantin National Park	An area of about 357.39 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Tewantin National Park addition: sketch C”.
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2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts for submission to the Governor in Council.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to a strong and expansive protected area estate that represents and protects Queensland’s unique flora and fauna and commercial interests. Since 2015, in Queensland protected areas have increased by over one million hectares, up from 7.56 per cent to 8.22 per cent of the state. At the 2017 state election, the government committed to release and implement a Queensland protected area strategy, including a continued nature refuge program and expanded NatureAssist toolkit to support landowners. Since being re-elected we have established a new tenure category called ‘special wildlife reserves’ that provide national park level protections for private land with significant ecological value. Despite the significant benefit to all Queenslanders in protecting and conserving our culture and environment, and providing incentives for private investment to assist the expansion of the protected area network, those opposite voted against the legislation.

The proposal before the House is for the revocation of about 284.4 hectares from Yurol State Forest and about 72.99 from Ringtail State Forest which are located about 14 kilometres north-west of Tewantin. It is proposed for the areas to be dedicated as national park and added to Tewantin National Park. The Yurol and Ringtail state forests upgrade project is the first of its kind in Queensland and demonstrates the government’s continued commitment to a balanced outcome for conservation and public benefit, delivering significant regional environmental, social and economic benefits.

This \$3.5 million investment to retire the land from plantation forestry for conservation purposes is being jointly funded by the Department of Environment and Science, Noosa Shire Council and Noosa Parks Association. Not only does the proposal contribute to the Palaszczuk government’s commitments to increase the protected area estate in Queensland, it also delivers further protection to our native flora and fauna, including the koala.

We have established the Queensland Koala Advisory Council which is working with the department to develop the new koala conservation strategy and will play an important role in its implementation. In December 2018 new koala habitat mapping was introduced to update the essential habitat mapping under the Vegetation Management Act 1999, identifying an additional 190,000 hectares of high-quality koala habitat in South-East Queensland that will be better managed to prevent the loss of biodiversity.

The Koala Expert Panel’s recommendations focus on a coordinated approach of different measures that, when combined, are effective at reducing the decline in koala populations. Before plantation establishment, these forestry areas supported regional ecosystems that are now endangered and of concern in South-East Queensland. Given their habitat values for koalas and other species of wildlife, the protection and restoration of these forestry areas will provide significant biodiversity benefits.

The addition of about 375.39 hectares to Tewantin National Park will conserve endangered and of concern regional ecosystems, high and very high riverine wetland values and enhance a significant vegetation corridor containing essential habitat for 25 threatened species and three near threatened

species, including the giant barred frog, the Richmond birdwing butterfly, the Mary River cod and, of course, the iconic koala. The koala is listed under the Queensland Nature Conservation Act 1992 as vulnerable across its entire range in Queensland. Evidence of continued declines has led the Palaszczuk government to heavily focus our koala conservation efforts on eight coastal local government areas from Noosa to the Gold Coast.

In this case, we have worked collaboratively with the Noosa Shire Council, Noosa Parks Association Inc. and HQPlantations Pty Ltd to transfer land from plantation forestry to protected area. This is further evidence that this Labor government is willing to explore innovative partnerships for the betterment of conservation and the Queensland community. This partnership model has the potential for broad uptake amongst local government, industry and rural enterprise sectors to identify and implement priorities for koala habitat protection and restoration on state lands.

The proposal is the first phase of converting sections of both Yurol and Ringtail state forests to protected area status in a series of stages that reflect current vegetation conditions and land use. This staged approach will allow timber harvesting to be phased out over approximately five years and increased protection and restoration activities to begin as soon as possible. Once complete, it is expected that an extra 2,400 hectares of habitat will be protected for future generations.

Subject to the surrender of the plantation licence over part of Ringtail State Forest, access to this area is proposed to be granted to the Noosa & District Landcare group, in partnership with Queensland Koala Crusaders and the Body Shop to undertake a significant tree planting project. I understand that Noosa Shire Council is prepared to commit ongoing funding from its environment levy and Noosa Parks Association Inc. will look at both funding and community based project support with groups such as Noosa & District Landcare.


Over the next five years other opportunities may arise for conservation groups and industry to undertake restoration works over areas affected by harvesting activities in readiness for these areas to be afforded the highest level of protection available in this state. Yurol and Ringtail state forests adjoin sections of Tewantin National Park and form a link between Tuchekeoi and Great Sandy national parks.

These state forests are within a regional and state significant south-east-north-west coastal terrestrial corridor that connects to the Mary River riparian bioregional corridor, linking remnant tracts of vegetation and providing coast-to-inland connectivity. The protection of the remnant vegetation areas of these state forests and the restoration of pine plantation areas with native species will create an extensive koala corridor which will help safeguard the koala in the Sunshine Coast region.

I commend and thank the organisations and individuals within the Noosa Shire Council, Noosa Parks Association and HQPlantations who worked with officers in my department for their role in designing and delivering this landmark partnership. In particular, I acknowledge Mayor Tony Wellington who has demonstrated an incredible commitment to this project and Dr Michael Gloster OAM, president of the Noosa Parks Association, who saw the opportunity to protect this important habitat. I also thank David West, group manager stewardship at HQPlantations, for demonstrating exceptional corporate citizenship in partnering with the council, Noosa Parks Association and the government to get this great win for the community, our threatened species and, importantly, the koalas in the northern Sunshine Coast hinterland.

The proposal will not extinguish or affect native title rights or interests in relation to the land. Indeed, it goes some way toward acknowledging the cultural and spiritual significance of the koala to first nations people and builds upon the foundations we are laying to co-steward our protected area estate with first nations people who have successfully managed country for over 3,000 generations.

I also point out that, as part of a whole-of-government approach, my colleague the Hon. Mark Furner, the minister responsible for forestry, has supported this upgrade from state forest to national park. Essentially, what was previously a mix of commercial native forest, hardwood and softwood plantations will be afforded a high level of protection and significant recreational and environmental protection benefits for generations to come. It is a win-win proposal that warrants support from those on both sides of the House. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (2.57 pm): In following on from the minister I agree with her final point. This does deserve support from both sides of the House. The opposition will be supporting her revocation. We will also be supporting the establishment of the national park.

I too wish to commend the partnership that has been formed and the good work of the Noosa Shire Council and Noosa Parks Association. I also wish to acknowledge HQPlantations. There is a touch of irony in what we are discussing. It is those opposite who sold the state's forest plantations. It

is those opposite who benefited to the tune of about \$613 million when those forest plantations were sold. Today we are discussing \$3.5 million that will be used to retire a state forest to the very worthy cause of national park. Would it not be wonderful if we still controlled those assets? Would it not be wonderful if we had done something a little better with those proceeds than what those opposite did?

Mr Minnikin: Who sold assets?

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth. Every day we come in here there is a finger-pointing exercise about the sale of assets. History will show clearly that only one side of politics sold assets. Only one side of politics kept its word. The HQPlantations proceeds would have been put to great use. This is very relevant to the debate.


I will follow the minister's contribution about how important this is for the protection of koalas by saying that it is indeed a worthy parcel of land for that. I use this opportunity today to again call on the government to fast-track a koala conservation strategy across this state. There has been too much talk and not enough action when it comes to koala protection. The northern part of the Gold Coast is ground zero at the moment for koala populations. We need action there before it is too late.

I also wish to highlight the importance of having a protected area strategy and protecting valuable parcels of land. The Queensland Audit Office in November last year delivered what was a scathing report about the record of this government. It said that the department 'lacks cross-program coordination and is unlikely to effectively conserve and recover many threatened species'. The government is yet to release a finalised Queensland protected area strategy after almost three years.

The minister spoke about the proportion of public land in this state. The minister highlighted that we are now at about 8.5 per cent. That is half of what we have signed on to deliver by 2020 under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity—half. That deadline is breathing down our neck, yet we are still not at 10 per cent. So much more needs to be done and it needs to be done in a coordinated way. Hence the reason why a protected area strategy that has been mulled over and has gone around and around in circles for too long needs to be delivered. That is why the tough decisions on striking a balance between protecting the right of somebody to use their land and protecting a special species need to be taken, but it takes political courage to do that. That cannot come soon enough.

I will make a contribution now about the management of this land. It is great to have members in this House who have considerable state forests and, indeed, national parks in the areas they represent—such as the member for Callide and the member for Southern Downs. Time and time again we hear from those in the community, those passionate about the environment, those passionate about the management of feral weeds and pests, that often the worst neighbour you can have is the state government. It is one thing to lock an area up—and that is often for a noble cause and for a worthwhile cause—but it is another to manage it to get the best environmental outcome. No-one wins when an area is put under lock and key and the only people who can enjoy it are the feral animals. No-one wins when an area is locked up and important species of plants get overrun by noxious weeds. No-one wins in that scenario.

So it is that the opposition wholeheartedly supports this motion. We call on the government to manage these areas well. We call on the government to look for these opportunities in the future. We highlight the partnership that exists between different levels of government and, indeed, a body who would never have had control had the asset not been sold in the first place.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (3.03 pm): I am pleased to support the minister's motion that seeks to dedicate parts of the Yurol and Ringtail state forests to national park. I will spend more than one minute speaking on this matter, as opposed to the member opposite.

Koala habitat mapping has shown that all remnant vegetation on Yurol and Ringtail state forests is koala habitat and, importantly, most of this is core koala habitat. The dedication of parts of these state forests as national park will complement koala conservation activities in adjacent areas that encompass both rural and urban koala populations.

We recognise that koalas in South-East Queensland are facing numerous and real impacts as a result of habitat loss, disease and threats introduced by population growth and climate change. The South East Queensland Koala Population Modelling Study undertaken in 2015 presented findings of an independent assessment of the conservation status of the koala in seven local government areas. This data did show a declining koala population, despite dedicated policy and planning responses.

The Palaszczuk government has responded and commissioned a Koala Expert Panel to provide advice on actions to ensure the long-term persistence of koala populations in the wild within South-East Queensland. The Koala Expert Panel has conducted an extensive review of Queensland's koala

policies and provided their findings to the Queensland government in a report titled *Queensland Koala Expert Panel: a new direction for the conservation of koalas in Queensland*. The panel's report sets the agenda for a comprehensive and cohesive approach to the management of this threatened species.


One of the critical issues was the panel's contribution to the draft statutory regional plan for South-East Queensland ShapingSEQ. ShapingSEQ is vitally important in defining South-East Queensland's desired long-term settlement pattern and to help plan and manage growth across the region. The panel's comments suggested greater emphasis be placed on the preservation of the koala and reaching an appropriate balance between development and koala preservation.

In response, ShapingSEQ does place a high priority on the delivery of an SEQ koala conservation strategy, to be led by the Department of Environment and Science, which is intended to deliver the Queensland government's response to the panel. The panel's feedback to the regional plan has also included specific reference in the 50-year vision within ShapingSEQ to maintain the SEQ koala population through innovative protection of their habitat and management of threats across the region's landscapes as well as encouraging interconnected habitats.

Current and future land use planning is critical. I know this is of particular concern within parts of my electorate which are being increasingly urbanised. I regularly point to PDA guideline No. 17—'Remnant vegetation and koala habitat obligations in Greater Flagstone and Yarrabilba PDAs'. The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that, as a result of the development within these PDAs, there is no net loss of remnant vegetation containing endangered regional ecosystems within the region and an appropriate contribution is made towards the achievement of a net gain in bushland koala habitat within the region.

We know that one of the key ways this can be achieved is through the identification of priority areas in the landscape for koala conservation. Mapping will not only inform where priority areas should be but also identify threats, opportunities and constraints. The Noosa koala corridor pilot is a great example of this—a collaborative project that will rehabilitate core koala habitat within the Noosa hinterland, enhancing and linking fragmented habitat. Exotic pine plantations within Yurol and Ringtail state forests will be re-established as native forest providing important koala habitat and connecting existing koala habitat in the region.


The Yurol and Ringtail state forests connect core koala habitat between the Tewanin section of Noosa National Park to the south and Cooloola to the north-east. The minister's motion to dedicate parts of the Yurol and Ringtail state forests to national park is important in ensuring a network of interconnected koala habitat is maintained to sustain South-East Queensland's koala population over the long term. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.08 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak briefly on the revocation of parts of two state forests, Yurol and Ringtail, within the Noosa electorate. This is both the end of a long-held vision and process involving many and the beginning of a new journey where over the next five years a total of 2,400 hectares will join the Tewanin National Park. As we have heard, with only 8.2 per cent of Queensland under conservation and a target of 17 per cent envisioned by 2020, this revocation is a vital addition for both Noosa and Queensland.

Of specific mention is the partnerships between community, industry and two levels of government—the first of its type in Queensland—that made this possible. Noosa Parks Association, the Noosa Shire Council, the Queensland government and HQPlantations identified these connected priority areas for koalas and the significant role this land plays in their recovery actions across Noosa and the broader Sunshine Coast region.

Noosa residents are already asking how long until they will get to enjoy the first walks. Even though it will take five years for the plantation timber to be removed and then roughly 10 years for some height in the native regrowth and plantings through community groups and initiatives, I have no doubt the journey and walks along the way will be appreciated at all stages of growth. This project and partnership is especially important to the current and future generations of our flora and fauna and all Queenslanders who will benefit from venturing through these lands.

I acknowledge and appreciate the points made by the member for Broadwater and the importance of managing these lands, including the wild dogs we have been experiencing. I thank Minister Enoch and those who were previously involved along the way, including Minister Miles, departmental and council staff, HQPlantations, Noosa Parks Association members and volunteers and all who supported these endeavours. They are to be congratulated and should be very proud for making a 25-year-old vision become a reality.

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (3.10 pm), in reply: I thank all of those who contributed to this motion and the support they have provided to ensure we can expand our protected area estate and provide that vital corridor and habitat for species like the iconic koala. I think it is appropriate that I address some of the issues that were raised by the opposition spokesperson for the environment, the member for Broadwater. He mentioned his concerns about threatened species in particular. I just want to put on the record that the former Labor government put in place a threatened species strategy but, unfortunately, the former LNP government did not implement that. This left us in a situation where the Queensland Audit Office, rightly so, had concerns about how we protect our threatened species. The Palaszczuk government is moving to ensure that we do have a threatened species strategy once again in this state, along with our commitment to ensuring that biodiversity is upheld in Queensland.

I also point out that, in the questioning about biodiversity and in the support of protecting vital habitat, we did see from the LNP an absolute all-out disagreement and a backing away from any protection of lands when they fought against the vegetation management laws in this state. When we consider the kind of broadscale tree clearing we were seeing in Queensland as a result of the former Newman government, our sensible vegetation management laws ensure that we will see the ending of broadscale tree clearing and the protection of vital habitat for species in this state.

All that aside, I do acknowledge the comments made by members that they are supporting this motion. Once again, I want to acknowledge and congratulate all the work of Noosa Parks Association, Noosa council, HQPlantations, the Department of Environment and Science, the member for Noosa and all those individuals who made a commitment over many years and who have been advocates for this partnership to ensure that we see this large tract of land become part of our protected area estate as a national park. With that small contribution, I commend the motion to the House.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN (RISK MANAGEMENT AND SCREENING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 13 November 2018 (see p. 3388).

Second Reading

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.14 pm): I move—
That the bill be now read a second time.

The Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 was introduced on 13 November 2018 and referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for examination. I thank the committee for their thoughtful consideration of the bill. I would also like to thank the stakeholders and organisations who took the time to make submissions on and attend the public hearing in relation to the bill. I am pleased to inform the House that on 14 February 2019 the committee tabled report No. 12 and made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I welcome the recommendation of the committee. In doing so, I note the statement of reservation from the opposition members of the committee and I will address some of the points raised in this statement throughout my contribution today.

I also foreshadow that I will be proposing amendments to be moved in consideration in detail. They will: address minor technical matters which were identified post introduction of the bill; respond to submissions made by stakeholders; and ensure the most effective transition with regards to the issuing of blue cards, post commencement of the government's no-card no-start laws. In addition, I will be moving further amendments which will: elevate additional offences to the list of serious offences and disqualifying offences under the act; and introduce new arrangements for blue card applicants and cardholders charged or convicted of a serious offence.

The bill before the House reflects the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety and protection of Queensland's children. Working with children checks are an important element of this protection. However, it is important to reiterate that a working with children check is but one component in a much broader framework for keeping children safe in our community.

As part of its comprehensive review of the blue card system, the Queensland Family and Child Commission found that the blue card system is already one of the strongest working with children check systems in Australia. The Palaszczuk government has been strengthening the overarching working with

children system since the QFCC handed down its 81 recommendations. The QFCC identified the need for an overarching review of the act to implement its recommendations to keep pace with changing community expectations and emerging risks, simplify the laws and make it easier for stakeholders to understand their obligations.

This government is committed to meaningful and considered legislative reform to further strengthen the blue card system—noting that the bill before the House is the first of a series of sweeping legislative reforms to the system. Firstly, the bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to implement a no-card no-start arrangement. This means applicants will not be able to commence paid employment while their blue card application is pending. This will reduce the risk to children and further strengthen the robust blue card system that the QFCC noted Queensland already has. Consistent with the QFCC's findings, the committee observed that support for the no-card no-start requirement was predicated on the streamlining of the blue card application process and improved processing timeframes.

This is why the Palaszczuk government has injected \$17 million over the next three years into modernising the blue card system. This includes: the development of an efficient online application process; a streamlined and strengthened identity check system; and the development of an online organisational portal which will allow organisations to manage their blue card obligations administratively online. We are building this critical information technology infrastructure with users of the blue card system in mind.

Let us not forget, there are 740,000 current blue card holders in Queensland. That is almost one in six Queensland adults who hold a blue card. In addition, there are also over 32,000 organisations that are part of the blue card system. For this reason, it is vital to ensure that users are ready for the changes when they go live in early 2020. This is not something that can be rushed; it must be done properly and in consultation with stakeholders.

No-card no-start will bring paid employees into line with volunteers and business operators and will prohibit an employer from employing a person in child related employment unless the person holds a working with children clearance and the employer has notified the chief executive about the employment or proposed employment of the person. As part of this notification, employers will be required to take reasonable steps to verify their employee's identity and to notify the chief executive either via the new online organisational portal, which is currently under development, or through a paper based form of this employment arrangement.

By establishing a link to the employee, an employer becomes a 'notifiable person' under the act and the chief executive will provide updates to the employer if the person's blue card status changes. These updates will be communicated to the employer through the organisational portal in real time. To emphasise the significant responsibility that employers have as the gatekeepers of child related employment, increased penalties will be imposed against an employer who engages an employee without a working with children clearance if an aggravating circumstance applies. The same is applicable to employees as well. It will become an offence, under new section 176A, to start or continue in regulated employment without a blue card, with a five-year maximum penalty available in certain circumstances.

Implementation of no-card no-start requires not only legislation and technology changes but also the development of a range of accompanying resources, a stakeholder engagement and education campaign and change management strategy. This government is committed to getting this right. No-card no-start will be in place by early 2020.

This brings me to the second core objective of the bill giving effect to a range of other recommendations made by the QFCC across the two reports into the blue card system. At this point I wish to thank Cheryl Vardon, Principal Commissioner and Chief Executive of the QFCC, and her staff for the significant body of work they have undertaken. I also thank organisational members of the implementation reference group for sharing their perspectives and views.

Under the existing framework, a person must have an agreement to work or volunteer with a regulated organisation before they can apply for a blue card. The application must be completed by both the employee and employer. To complement the no-card no-start reforms, the bill abolishes this requirement. This will mean that a person can make an application on their own initiative and become job ready before entering child related employment. Applicants who seek to undertake volunteer work will be required to first establish an agreement with a regulated organisation to provide volunteer

services in order to have their application processed free of charge. This approach strikes a balance between the need to continue to encourage volunteering in the community and the sustainability of the blue card system.

Before speaking to the additional safeguards the bill introduces, I will outline the current robust decision-making framework which Blue Card Services applies when assessing a person's application for a blue card. Firstly, it is important to once again note that the QFCC found Queensland has one of the strongest screening systems in Australia. It is important to note this because the opposition have done their very best to talk down the system—the very system that operated virtually untouched under the Newman LNP government. Where a person has known police information, Blue Card Services undertakes a thorough assessment which is underpinned by a robust decision-making framework focused on the safety of children. The most significant offences are categorised under the act into two groups: 'disqualifying' and 'serious'.

Currently, a person who has a conviction for a disqualifying offence and has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment is automatically prohibited from making an application for a blue card. It is an offence for this category of person to make an application. It is important for the public to note that the Palaszczuk government decided to retain this up-front offence to send a strong deterrent message to applicants: if you are automatically disqualified from participating in child related activities under the act, do not bother applying for a blue card; we do not want you working with our children. The offence, which the opposition proposes to remove, carries a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment. If a person is charged with a disqualifying offence, either while holding or applying for a blue card, the card is either automatically suspended or the application is withdrawn—in both cases until the charge is finalised.

For serious offences, strict decision-making tests apply. Currently, if a cardholder is charged with a serious offence, the person's blue card status is reassessed with the presumption that the chief executive will reissue the person a blue card unless there are exceptional circumstances. While this reassessment occurs, the cardholder can continue to engage in child related work, but the person's employer is notified that the cardholder has been charged with a serious offence so that the employer can take risk mitigation steps.

The chief executive must issue a negative notice to an applicant or an existing cardholder if the person has been convicted of a serious offence, unless the chief executive is satisfied there is an exceptional case in which it would not harm the best interests of children to issue or continue the blue card. The 'exceptional case' threshold is a high bar to satisfy. Blue Card Services take a conservative approach when assessing whether exceptional cases exist and can take into account a range of factors including the length of time since the offending, patterns of behaviours, the relevance of concern to child related activities and evidence of attempts to address behaviour or triggers for offending.

As part of its *Working with children checks report*, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended the expansion of the range of disqualifying offences to include a discrete set of offences including kidnapping and abduction of a child, and animal related sexual offences. The QFCC adopted this recommendation but, importantly, noted the need to consider any unintended consequences from the blue card system automatically disqualifying people with convictions for kidnapping offences that arise in a family law context. It is against this background and framework that the bill, as introduced, strengthens existing safeguards. In line with the Royal Commission and QFCC, the bill expands the range of disqualifying offences to include:

- bestiality;
- kidnapping of a child;
- kidnapping for ransom of a child;
- child stealing; and
- abduction of a child under 16.

Unlike the proposed opposition amendments, the government bill has regard to avoiding the unintended consequences foreshadowed by the QFCC by making clear that the abduction, child-stealing and kidnapping offences will only be treated as disqualifying if the context in which the offence was committed was not familial.

The bill also makes the murder and rape of an adult disqualifying offences. Currently, they are treated as 'serious offences' under the working with children act. While the royal commission and the QFCC did not recommend the inclusion of these two offences, the government made these changes in response to community concerns and to provide even greater protection for Queensland's children.

In line with our commitment to keep our communities safe, the Palaszczuk government will move amendments during consideration in detail, which will elevate the following offences from serious to disqualifying under the act:

- torture of a child;
- attempt to commit rape of an adult;
- assault with intent to commit rape of an adult;
- cruelty to children under 16;
- trafficking in children; and
- domestic trafficking in children.

We will also designate the following offences as disqualifying offences:

- choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting; and
- servitude offences if the victim is a child and provide that they are a serious offence if the victim is an adult.

The government will also elevate manslaughter to a serious offence. This recognises that manslaughter can involve a very broad range of factual circumstances ranging from where the offender did not intend to cause any physical harm, let alone cause death, to circumstances where the offender intended to kill or cause grievous bodily harm but is found guilty of manslaughter because of the operation of a partial defence, such as diminished responsibility. We heard this range of offences that fall within manslaughter when we debated the child homicide bill recently in this chamber.

Courts have long acknowledged that manslaughter attracts the widest range of possible sentences of all serious offences on this basis. As a result, it is appropriate that this offence be categorised as 'serious' under the working with children act; to designate the offence of manslaughter as a disqualifying offence would most definitely lead to unintended consequences and cases of injustice. It is the government's intention that the changes to the disqualification framework will commence on 1 July 2019. I will, therefore, be moving further amendments to the transitional arrangements provided for under the bill to ensure that any current blue card holder at commencement who has an historical conviction for one of these new disqualifying offences will be reassessed to determine their suitability and for the protection of children. These cardholders will be required to be reassessed by Blue Card Services on the basis that a negative notice must be issued, unless it is an exceptional case. The cardholder will not be required to cease child related work, but their employer will be notified that the cardholder is being reassessed due to recent law changes.

I would now like to foreshadow additional amendments which I will move during consideration in detail which will introduce a new framework for applicants and cardholders who have been convicted or charged with a serious offence. The amendments will ensure that people charged or convicted of a serious offence are unable to work with children until they have been issued with a blue card. The amendments provide that:

- a blue card holder who has been charged with a serious offence will have their blue card suspended; and
- an applicant will have their application withdrawn if the person is charged with a serious offence. Blue Card Services would not be required to make a decision in relation to a suspended cardholder until the charge is finalised or deal with an application while the charge is still pending.

The amendments also introduce, as an interim arrangement until no-card no-start commences, that an applicant with a conviction for a serious offence must not commence paid child related work until their application has been assessed and a blue card issued.

Moving back to the statement of reservation, I note that the opposition members of the committee objected to the retention of the eligibility declaration process. This process has existed for many years. It allows a disqualified person who has been convicted of a disqualifying offence but sentenced to no term of imprisonment to be declared eligible to apply for a blue card. Let me be clear about how this process actually operates. For the purposes of the blue card system, a term of imprisonment is broadly defined to include actual and all types of suspended periods of imprisonment and intensive correction orders. An eligibility declaration can only be issued if the chief executive is satisfied that the case is an exceptional one in which the best interests of children would not be harmed by allowing the person to apply for a blue card.

A person cannot work with children while Blue Card Services assesses an eligibility declaration application. The decision of whether to grant or refuse an eligibility declaration is not subject to review. Where an eligibility declaration is issued, a blue card application can then be made, and if the application is made the blue card must be issued on the basis that the consideration in the eligibility declaration process involved the equivalent of the comprehensive assessment undertaken when a person makes a blue card application.

In their statement of reservation, opposition members point to recommendation 29 of the QFCC's report which calls for the removal of the eligibility declaration process. However, such a statement only tells half the story and neglects to look at the recommendation in its entirety. Can I be clear for everyone in this House. Yes, the QFCC did recommend the removal of the eligibility declaration process. However, in the same recommendation, the QFCC also specifically acknowledged and recommended the continuation of the chief executive's discretion for applications involving a conviction for a disqualifying offence where the applicant was not sentenced to a term of imprisonment. In other words, the QFCC recommended the removal of the eligibility declaration process only if there was an avenue for a person convicted of a disqualifying offence with no term of imprisonment still to apply for a blue card.

When members of the opposition state that the QFCC recommended the removal of the eligibility declaration, it should in no way be interpreted as saying that the QFCC recommended it; in fact, it did the complete opposite. It recommended the retention of 'exceptional circumstances', as do many other stakeholders in relation to this act and how it applies. The QFCC's recommendation goes to a process. It recommends that the process cease but that the eligibility still be allowed. It is just a different process for considering those individuals applying who are otherwise disqualified. However, as I said, this up-front offence under the bill, the offence which prohibits a disqualified person from making a blue card application, was retained. The declaration and the offence go hand in hand. If we are to remove one, we need to remove both.

The bill also strengthens safeguards by removing the ability for a person to undertake child related work without a working with children clearance if they meet one of the exemptions provided for under the working with children act. These include, for example, if the person is a volunteer parent, in certain circumstances, or is a volunteer under the age of 18. Currently, such a person can undertake child related work which is not considered regulated employment under the working with children act when the person has been issued with a negative notice or is subject to other high-risk orders or reporting obligations. Importantly, the bill responds to a recommendation of the QFCC by introducing a new category of persons—a 'restricted person'.

The definition of 'restricted person' captures negative notice holders; persons with a suspended working with children authority; disqualified persons; and persons who have been charged with a disqualifying offence. A restricted person is prohibited from relying on the exemptions to which I referred earlier in order to work with children.

I note that stakeholders support these amendments, which are consistent both with the QFCC and royal commission recommendations, but raised concerns about the difficulties in giving effect to the requirement in practice. In particular, stakeholders were concerned about how an employer will be able to identify a restricted person. I note that resources will be developed in consultation with stakeholders to support organisations to better identify and risk-manage a restricted person.


Finally, I turn to the outstanding element of the statement of reservation by the opposition members of the committee. Opposition members pointed to the fact that Blue Card Services does not consider applicants' international criminal history. Currently, upon application for a blue card, Blue Card Services undertakes a national criminal history check in respect of the applicant. The LNP Commonwealth government has highlighted the complexity in relation to obtaining international records for applicants for working with children checks and that it would explore avenues through which international records could become more accessible, but the Commonwealth is yet to provide a solution to how we do this and share this information with states.

Gaining access to records of other countries will depend on factors such as the political relationship of the country and Australia, respective privacy frameworks, record-keeping practices and information technology capabilities. It is important to note that, although the QFCC recommended the implementation of international criminal history checks and this government supports the recommendation, there are significant issues to overcome before operationalising this recommendation.

To legislate now not only would be premature but also would result in delays of the no-card no-start system because significant resources would need to be diverted to implement the recommendation. Further, without federal cooperation, to implement now would simply result in a self-disclosure system, and any person who is intent on harming children will not self-disclose serious offences against children.

The Queensland Law Society notes that implementing international criminal history checks may prove to be operationally unviable. In the view of the Queensland Law Society, the potential for cost, delay, translation, jurisdictional variations in offences and inaccuracy of international criminal history checks would render this process impractical, including the obvious problems with looking behind a conviction. In light of the issues raised, the government will continue to examine the issue of international criminal history checks but will not make amendments for such checks in this bill.

In conclusion, the amendments made by this bill and the government's proposed amendments for consideration in detail are evidenced based and will further strengthen and improve the operation of the system to enhance the protection of children in line with the government's commitment to keep communities safe. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (3.37 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 and to confirm that the opposition will support the bill and the government's amendments. It is extraordinary that here we are again, 20 years after the introduction of the first blue card bill. At that time it was known as the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000. It has now been renamed. For 20 years we have had a series of papering the cracks, plugging the holes, responding to crises and crisis management—and here we are again. Even in the last three weeks when the opposition put forward its amendments the government wrote its own amendments which pretty much mimic the opposition's. Here we are again. Over 20 years this act has been amended by over 70 amending bills as Labor governments throughout that time sought to paper over the cracks, plug the holes and manage the crisis.

I decided to do a little bit of research ahead of today's debate and I uncovered a litany of media releases by Labor governments over the last 20 years that highlight their complete mismanagement of not just the blue card system but also the child safety system right throughout Queensland. There have been a whole bunch of media releases. I will quickly run through some of the things that they realised over the last 20 years they had to fix—bus drivers, foster carers, taxidriviers, mature age students, family day care, school camps, lollipop people—

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I appreciate the history lesson—and I am sure we will avoid the time when the LNP were in government—but this is not relevant to the bill. These reforms occurred in previous bills before the parliament and do not go to the bill currently before the House. I ask that the member be brought back to the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Member for Toowoomba South, I would ask that you return to the bill we are currently debating. If you would not mind tabling those, as you suggested, we will move on.

Mr JANETZKI: With pleasure, Madam Deputy Speaker. I table those now.

Tabled paper: Bundle of Queensland government media releases, undated, regarding working with children and blue cards [\[773\]](#).

I note the comment from the Attorney-General about the record of the Newman government with respect to child safety and the protection of children in Queensland. The Carmody inquiry saw some of the most far-reaching and transformative reforms introduced into Queensland law. The Carmody inquiry led to a change of culture around child safety in Queensland.

The history lesson that is necessary when considering this bill goes precisely to the bill before the House. Over time we have seen the plugging of holes and the papering over of cracks. What we have seen over the past couple of years that has necessitated this bill are problems that have been talked about by many stakeholders for years and in consideration of over 70 amending acts over the years. I go back to the contribution of Denver Beanland, the then member for Indooroopilly, when this act was first introduced in 2000. He said—

I have major concerns about the availability of adequate resources to enable implementation of provisions contained in the legislation.

Today we are still talking about a lack of resources. We are talking about a manual system. The Attorney-General has finally got together no-card no-start. No-card no-start is finally being talked about. I think the Attorney-General said in her contribution that implementation would occur in early 2020. We know the Labor government's record on implementing IT projects, so let us see how that stacks up in early 2020.

In 2004 the then member for Southern Downs and then opposition leader talked about some of the issues we are now debating. He said—

It depends upon the government's capacity to be able to properly administer the system to ensure that those people who have convictions or matters of concern that would stop them from getting a blue card are actually detected and stopped from getting a blue card ...

These are precisely the questions we are considering again here today as over 20 years the Labor government has not addressed them properly. The then shadow minister for child safety and member for Burdekin, Rosemary Menkens, in 2006 talked about university students and said—

They have shown me documents that indicate that their blue card applications have been delayed by almost six months.

She went on to say—

But a huge amount of red tape ... has been set up that is causing a great deal of difficulty.

The blue card system has been mired in bureaucracy, indecision and crisis. I will reflect on one of the media statements I tabled. Then premier Beattie, in one of the most self-congratulatory media releases of all time, talked about 110 ticks for child safety in Queensland.

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

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, Attorney. I can predict the point of order. I return the member to the bill we are currently debating.

Mr JANETZKI: The bill before the House is an attempt to finally catch up with what the Liberal and National parties, and the LNP since it merged, have been saying for 20 years.

I note the presence in the House of the member for Currumbin, who was child safety minister at the time. In 2008 she made a contribution to the House in debate of one of these 70 amending bills over two decades. The member for Currumbin raised the prospect of photographic identification. She also raised the prospect of even politicians having blue cards, given our day-to-day interaction with young people around Queensland. Again, we are making suggestions. We have been leading the argument with the government to do something to address the problems in the blue card system. Here we are after 20 years, still talking about the same issues.

The then member for Hinchinbrook when he was shadow minister for disability services and multicultural affairs said that the LNP throughout two decades had always supported what the government had proposed in relation to blue card regulation.

As I have said, the member for Currumbin had a number of excellent amendments that would have seen enhancements to the blue card system had they been listened to and acted on. The then member for Hinchinbrook rightly said—

The system has merit and is supported by the opposition—

as it will be again here today. He went on—

The system, while not as transparent or enforced as it could be, does provide a familiar framework for Queenslanders and they have some confidence in it. Why, then, has this bill not expanded the blue card system? Why has the government not taken the opportunity to provide an integrated, transparent, strong system which is tailored to the individual sectors of applicants affected by this bill?

Those comments were made in 2010. On it goes, over two decades. The Labor government has been in permanent crisis management mode.

Mr Boyce: Well, it is the Labor Party.

Mr JANETZKI: I take the interjection of the member for Callide. It is the Labor government's way to manage things. Only when a crisis reaches boiling point will it finally act. That is the case with this bill. I will turn to the particular moment of crisis shortly. I will highlight one last contribution from the past, when the Liberal National Party was seeking to improve the system but the Labor government of course had its way. In 2016 the member for Mudgeeraba said—

Although the opposition will not oppose this legislation in its entirety, it will oppose changes that refer the blue card services to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General from the Queensland Police Service as that would undo a recommendation of the Carmody inquiry. We on this side of the House recognise the importance of the Carmody inquiry to child safety in this state.

Those opposite may not want to hear it, but it was the Carmody inquiry that led to many of the wonderful reforms and the protections afforded to children around Queensland that we see implemented today. The member for Mudgeeraba went on to say—

I want to ensure that the implementation of the inquiry's recommendations is not undone under this government.

Mrs D'ATH: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The inquiry that the shadow Attorney-General is now referring to made no recommendations about blue cards, so it is not relevant to this bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: I accept your point of order; however, the Carmody inquiry did relate to child protection. Member, I ask you to come back to the bill we are debating here today.

Mr JANETZKI: I am more than happy to pick up where the Carmody inquiry left off. It was then that the Labor government took power again in Queensland and we started to see many of the problems resurface. I table a series of media articles in respect of some of the issues relating to blue cards right throughout Queensland.

Tabled paper: Bundle of media articles, various dates, regarding working with children laws [774].

I will run through a couple of the issues that have arisen under the blue card system that have forced the Attorney-General and the Labor government to finally step up and act. Again, it has taken far too long and a moment of crisis. I note that in 2016 the Sunday paper revealed that migrants' overseas criminal histories were not being checked. It was revealed that blue cards were being handed to migrants to work with children in Queensland without any checks on their overseas criminal history. The *Sunday Mail* revealed that in one case a refugee was handed a blue card just four years after he arrived in Australia with no passport or any other identification documents. He was later charged with a string of child sexual abuse offences.

In 2016 the *Courier-Mail* ran an editorial that said that blue card loopholes are playing right into sick criminals' hands. This story highlighted how criminals were exploiting legal loopholes to obtain a blue card and went on to say that they, too, know how to use weaknesses in the law to their own advantage. In 2016 the *Courier-Mail* ran an article titled 'Blue cards still not on Santa's list' which stated that shopping centre Santas did not need a blue card despite coming into contact with hundreds of children each year and concerns were being raised about that loophole as well.

In 2017 the *Townsville Bulletin* revealed that parents were seeking urgent action from the Labor government to close a blue card loophole linked to Townsville students allegedly being shown naked pictures by a teacher's aide. A German national, 25, was accused of showing three grade 4 boys a naked photo of himself at a Townsville primary school. He did not hold a blue card. In 2017 an international student charged with the rape of a woman was cleared to receive a blue card, allowing him to work with children. The reason the accused sex offender was allowed to work with children was that his victim was not a child. That decision shocked child advocate groups, as one would expect, and of course the opposition.

It took these moments of crises—and, as I have said in the past, Labor governments have pretty much just acted when there has been a crisis, and this government has done exactly the same thing here again. There is no foresight and no planning. It has acted in a moment of crisis. This was its opportunity to close these loopholes and ensure the safety and protection of Queensland children. Instead, in the bill before the House—and I note that the Attorney-General will be moving amendments, as we will also—as it stands, the loopholes are wide enough to drive the proverbial truck through.

Under Labor's bill, violent child killers will not be automatically disqualified from applying for a blue card. A person convicted of the manslaughter of a child in cases where the offender engaged in acts of violence which caused the death of the child will be eligible to apply for a blue card. It is extraordinary. Other instances are where there is torture of a child or someone commits an act of cruelty against a child, kidnaps a child, chokes or suffocates in the domestic setting, child stealing, abduction of a child under 16, incest of an adult, attempt to commit rape of an adult, and the list goes on. These are all disqualifying offences in New South Wales.

Over a period of time there have been a range of questions on notice that have been asked. Some of them have been avoided, let us say, by the Attorney-General or by members of her department. Others have been answered satisfactorily, but there are a number of questions on notice that were very revealing and I want to put some of that before the House today. In 2017-18, 21 offenders convicted of disqualifying offences who should not have been working with children were working with children. Since Labor has been in government, between 2015-16 and 2017-18, 66 offenders convicted

of disqualifying offences who should not have been working with children were working with children. These disqualified offenders had worked with children for an average of one to two working weeks before their blue card was cancelled or withdrawn.

In November 2018 there were 2,917 blue card applicants working with children without their criminal history having been checked. Of these offences that I have mentioned, I cannot think of one plausible reason why a person who commits any of these crimes should be eligible to work with a child and I do not understand why it has taken a litany of newspaper headlines and of shocking stories right throughout Queensland to make this government take some action, to do something—anything. It has taken all of that to finally get this Labor government to act in the best interests of children in Queensland.

Returning to the bill, under Labor's bill offenders convicted of disqualifying offences can apply for an eligibility declaration to enable them to work with children despite Labor's own review conducted by the Queensland Family and Child Commission recommending that the eligibility declaration be removed, although I note what the Attorney-General has said in that regard. The blue card review report revealed that the vast majority of applications approved have been for historical unlawful carnal knowledge convictions or similar. Under Labor's bill, rapists and murderers convicted overseas will be allowed to work with Queensland children. Does the Labor government believe that a conviction overseas is not as serious as a conviction in Australia?

Labor is ignoring the recommendation made by the Queensland Family and Child Commission for laws to be changed to require applicants to disclose their international criminal history and for Blue Card Services to then obtain an international criminal history check. Applicants do not have to disclose whether they have a criminal history overseas, and the disclosure of criminal history and criminal history checks should be expanded to ensure international criminal histories are considered in accordance with recommendations 30 and 31 of the blue card review by the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

Sometimes I wonder why the Labor government would not want to implement all of the Queensland Family and Child Commission review recommendations, but then I realised that the Labor government opposed the creation of the Queensland Family and Child Commission when the LNP was in government. The Attorney-General herself opposed the creation of the Queensland Family and Child Commission, and that should not be forgotten.

Mrs Wilson: Disgraceful!

Mr JANETZKI: I take the interjection from the member for Pumicestone. It is a disgrace and it should not surprise us that it would then seek to ignore the recommendations of the Queensland Family and Child Commission when it does not even believe in it in the first place. I am not surprised that the recommendations of the commission, which does an outstanding job, would be ignored by the Labor government. The blue card review had 81 recommendations and the government did offer its broad support but, as I have said, it is not surprising that it has ignored some of the recommendations and it only came in the most tragic circumstances with the death of Tiahleigh Palmer. Again, our children in Queensland—and we have seen it this week with watch houses—are being let down by this Labor government. We know that children are being let down. Children who have been killed have been let down by this Labor government in Queensland. Youth crime is out of control and the Queensland people have been let down by the Labor government in Queensland. Child Safety, with instances such as Mason Jett Lee, has been let down by this Labor government in Queensland over and over again.

Labor has now promised to implement a no-card no-start policy, which again is supported by the opposition. In fact, some aspects of that were recommended in contributions made by the member for Currumbin 10 years ago, so finally we have a Labor government that is catching up. It is only 10 years behind the time.

Mr Boyce: They're a bit slow; that's all!

Mr JANETZKI: It is a little bit slow on the uptake. The advice from the Attorney-General in her contribution today was that the no-card no-start project would be completed by early 2020 with \$17 million over three years. Frankly, the opposition will be watching the implementation of that project like a hawk. I do not trust the Labor government to deliver an IT project on time or on budget. We only need look at the Health payroll. We only need look at the projects—

An opposition member interjected.

Mr JANETZKI: I take that interjection; we should not look at that. With regard to this no-card no-start project, we know that Blue Card Services is working with a heavily manual system such as records kept in filing cabinets and under desks. This is a necessary system. The opposition supports it. It needs to be completed and it needs to start protecting Queensland children as soon as possible.


However, this means that we are still at least a year away and we will continue to see convicted sex offenders unlawfully obtaining a blue card to work with children. That risk will still prevail. While the Attorney-General refused to answer in a further question on notice what the disqualifying offences were, a quick search of schedule 4 of the act reveals disqualifying offences, as we know, to include the rape of a child and making child exploitation material.

These people should never have received a blue card in the first place. Until no-card no-start is implemented, the government will continue to run the risk of those people who have committed the most heinous crimes receiving a blue card in Queensland. I want to raise a side point in respect of the implementation of the no-card no-start project. Under section 23(1)(e) of the Legislative Standards Act, which applies to legislation introduced into this House, the government of the day is obliged to give an assessment of the administrative cost to the government's implementation of a bill before the House, including staffing and program costs. I draw the attention of the House to the explanatory notes associated with the bill under the heading 'Estimated cost for government implementation'. All that the government has included under that heading is—

As part of the 2018-19 Budget, the Government allocated \$17 million over the next three years to implement the 'No Card, No Start' laws and an online blue card application system.

I would hazard a guess that, in the past three weeks since the Labor government took away our amendments and copied them, there would have been some administrative costs incurred and that would have blown out that estimation. There has been no estimation of the administrative and staffing costs associated with the implementation of this bill in the explanatory notes. There is just a bland reference to \$17 million for this online system that we know is still a year away. Convicted rapists and other offenders will still be getting a blue card for another year and the Attorney-General will not know anything about it. All we get in the explanatory notes is a glib reference to \$17 million over three years when we know that, for the past three weeks, a raft of officials and departmental officers have been busily trying to work out which of our amendments to copy and bring into the House. I want to draw attention to this matter, because I think there is a vast underestimation of the costs associated with this bill.

We should not be surprised that this Labor government is incapable of implementing an IT project on time and on budget. We should not be surprised that, despite the extraordinary community outcry and headlines relating to shocking cases throughout Queensland for a number of years, this Labor government has taken so long to act. The opposition will be supporting the amendments, as it has done over 20 years and as every shadow minister has supported over 20 years. What a sad indictment on this government that it takes a crisis, whether that is a crisis in a watch house, a crisis in Child Safety, children dying, or children being neglected, for it to act. Why does it take this Labor government, and Labor governments over generations, so long to act in the interests of Queensland children? It will only ever be the opposition that will deliver a safe environment for our precious children and our most vulnerable Queenslanders.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (4.03 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This bill gives effect to our government's no-card no-start election commitment so that people are prevented from commencing paid work while a blue card is pending in addition to implementing the recommendations arising from the Queensland Family and Child Commission reports *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* and *Recommendation 28 supplementary review: a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services*. Importantly, this bill is the first stage in a series of legislative reforms that will implement the bulk of the QFCC recommendations from its final report and lay the foundations for other reforms to be progressively implemented over a period. All submitters to the inquiry, with the exception of Sisters Inside, supported the bill. The committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed.

Under a former Labor government, Queensland became one of the first jurisdictions to introduce a working with children check scheme in Australia. That is something that we are proud of. It is a reform that changed this space. As I said, despite the diatribe we just heard, we are proud of it and continue to be proud of it. The blue card system has become indelibly linked with our commitment to keeping children safe. Although it is only one of many tools used to protect our children, the blue card system is a system that the community has confidence in. It is one that we should continue to review to ensure that it best serves the purpose for which it was designed, which was to mitigate risk to children through screening and ongoing monitoring.

Despite the shadow minister's comments, I think a continuous review, particularly of a system that is so important and held in such high regard, is good governance. It is good policy. The shadow minister referred to the government going back and making amendments to the legislation 70 times.

That is 70 times we have thought, 'We can do this better for Queensland children.' I am not going to apologise for the government making 70 amendments. I would not apologise if the government made 700 amendments. We will always improve a system that protects children. Those opposite either did nothing or sacked the people who were doing something. I ask the opposition members to forgive us if we do not take any advice from them and continue to do what we are doing, which is governing for the people of Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms LINARD: No, the members can use the word as much as they want, but just because they say it—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Order! Member for Nudgee, I ask you to come back to the long title of the bill. You are going off on a tangent a little.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The shadow Attorney-General referred to all of this history for the bulk of his contribution that the member for Nudgee is now going to. The member is being directly relevant in responding to the shadow Attorney-General.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I was not in the chair at that stage, so I am taking things as I hear them. I would like the member to come back to the long title of the bill.

Ms LINARD: I will keep talking about the working with children check, because we are proud of our record. We are proud that we stand up for children and protect children in this state. Just because some may choose to use the word 'crisis' does not make it true. We are proud of our record. I stand by our record. I thank the Attorney-General for being the strong advocate that she is and for introducing these further amendments to the legislation.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission review of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, commissioned by this government, represented a whole-of-system review. Significantly, that review found that Queensland's blue card system is one of the strongest systems in Australia and has enhanced protection for children in regulated environments. However, where improvements can be made and the system further strengthened, we will do so. Accordingly, this government has broadly supported the intent of all the recommendations made by the commission.

This bill represents an opportunity to start that work. It will implement the bulk of the recommendations contained in the commission's final report. Although I will not prosecute again all the issues raised in the committee's inquiry, as these are available to members in our tabled report, a number of key matters are particularly worthy of mention. The bill uncouples an employee's blue card from an employer and removes the requirement for an agreement to work before the person applies for a card. People who intend to work in child related regulated work will be able to apply for a working with children card independent of employment. A blue card application for a volunteer remains linked to the regulated organisation. It would be an offence for an employer to employ or continue to employ a person in regulated employment unless the employee holds a working with children clearance and the employer has notified the chief executive about employing that person.

Under the no-card no-start policy, people who propose to work in regulated employment will in future apply for a working with children clearance before an offer of employment. The committee noted in its report that the provisions of the bill, which implement the no-card no-start policy, will address the concerns raised by LawRight and other stakeholders in regard to people who commence employment and are later assessed as ineligible for a working with children card. As an employee will no longer be able to commence regulated employment without a working with children card, disruption to employment will not occur.

During the inquiry hearing, the blue card review team and stakeholders also reported a range of concerns about delays in application and assessment processes that had an impact on a person's employment in a regulated organisation. Some of those concerns will be addressed by potential employees obtaining a working with children clearance before the offer of employment.

The department advised that the online automated systems aim to significantly reduce processing times and, in line with the royal commission report, it is proposed that processing will be reduced to an average of five business days if a person has no assessable police or disciplinary information. This will make an appreciable difference and was welcomed by stakeholders.


The bill also delivers a suite of other important safeguards, including simplifying and modernising key terminology that is used throughout the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act to make it easier for stakeholders to understand their obligations and expanding the range of

disqualifying offences under the act. Stakeholders and the committee supported these amendments. The Attorney-General has indicated her intention to move amendments during consideration in detail to elevate additional offences to the list of serious and disqualifying offences and I wholeheartedly support these stronger protections for children across Queensland.

I also note that the Attorney-General has addressed the committee's comments in regard to proposed sections 344B(3)(e), (4) and (5) in relation to privacy legislation and privacy principles raised in the Information Commissioner's submission to the committee. I thank her for her responsiveness in this regard and, of course, support the clarifying amendments.

The Palaszczuk government made a commitment to implement a no-card no-start policy during the election held in late 2017. This bill gives effect to that commitment. The safety of Queensland children will always be our highest priority. The blue card system is a system that the community has confidence in and is one that we should continue to review to ensure it best serves the purpose for which it was designed. Importantly, this bill is the first stage in a series of legislative reforms that will implement the bulk of the QFCC recommendations and lays the foundation for other reforms to follow.

I thank the Attorney-General and her department for their assistance during our committee inquiry, submitters for their valuable contributions as part of the inquiry, my fellow committee members, our committee secretariat and Hansard. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (4.11 pm): On 13 November 2018 the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice introduced the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and it was referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee due to the heavy workload of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee with a reporting date of 14 February this year.

The explanatory notes state the objectives of the bill are to give effect to the government's election commitment to amend the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and introduce automated blue card application processes to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending and to implement recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission reports *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* and *Recommendation 28 supplementary review: a report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services*.

This bill will see the expansion of the list of disqualifying offences, establishment of a no-card no-start policy—which means a person cannot start paid employment until they have an approved blue card—introduction of a new and long awaited online organisational portal and further minor amendments as per recommendations of the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

On 17 October 2018 the member for Traeger introduced the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill, similar to the one that he introduced in 2017 which lapsed as an election was called. This bill was also referred to our committee for detailed consideration with exactly the same reporting date of 14 February. Both of these bills were investigated concurrently and propose amendments to the issuing of blue cards. However, the private member's bill relates exclusively to blue cards in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and it is not being debated today.

I acknowledge the work of the committee, the department and our hardworking secretariat. However, I truly question the delay of debate on this bill. How can child protection be a priority of the Palaszczuk government when a report was tabled back in September 2017 and this bill has been allowed to sit waiting to be debated since February of this year? Here we are in May finally getting the chance to debate this very important topic. This bill is the result of the 2016 blue card review report, which made 81 recommendations, as well as the recommendation 28 supplementary review. The latter review, a response to the tragic murder of schoolgirl Tiahleigh Palmer, made three recommendations which would establish a register of home based care services and a centralised system for recording or reporting.

During my 15 years in this place the topic of child protection and promises to strengthen the system through legislation with various measures has been raised many times, as honourable members heard from the shadow Attorney. Premier Beattie even called a snap election in January 2004 when shocking statistics of failures in child protection were revealed. That was when I came into this House. Former governor Leneen Forde lifted the lid on abuse of children in care in Queensland when in June 1999 the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions was tabled in the Queensland parliament. This inquiry found significant evidence of abuse and neglect of children in Queensland institutions in the past and identified ongoing concerns about current practices in relation to child protection.

The primary focus of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is to make amendments to the blue card system, which comprises three core components: the blue card, or working with children check; the ongoing monitoring of the Queensland police information of all cardholders and applicants; and the requirement for organisations to develop and implement child and youth risk management strategies. While the blue card system disqualifies certain people up-front and prevents people from working with children whose past behaviour indicates they are not eligible—I should say ‘or worthy’—to enter regulated employment or carry on a regulated business, it is not required for every environment where a child may be present. Underpinning all of these reports is the need to improve children’s safety. It must remain uppermost in our minds. It is a crying shame that Labor, despite saying it is serious about child protection, when it has the opportunity to tighten the cracks in the system would choose to leave children exposed to predators and leave unacceptable loopholes.

It is what this bill does not address that concerns the LNP, which we outlined in our statement of reservation, which is attached to report No. 12 of the 56th Parliament. Some disqualifying offences have been expanded, but there are still too many gaps and that is not good enough for Queensland’s children. Under Labor’s bill, violent child killers are not automatically disqualified from applying for a blue card, and rapists and murderers convicted overseas could still be working with Queensland children. We heard from the Attorney on this. Offenders convicted of disqualifying offences can apply for an eligibility declaration to enable them to work with children, despite Labor’s own review conducted by the QFCC recommending that the eligibility declaration be removed. I note the Attorney circulated amendments this morning and I will not detail them here except to say they still fall short of what the LNP propose.

A question on notice revealed that between 2014-15 and 2017-18, 46 persons convicted of disqualifying offences were given the green light to apply for a blue card. Of these 46 disqualifying offences, 31 were for unlawful carnal knowledge which means that we have people convicted of rape and other sexual offences gaining access to children through their work. The very fact that Labor’s blue card still retains the eligibility declaration despite the QFCC recommendation that it be removed must be rectified and eligibility declarations for these categories of disqualified persons must be overturned otherwise this bill would give a false sense of security. I find it difficult to fathom how Labor can say child protection is a priority when it leaves open these loopholes which could easily be avoided. Without shaming from the LNP these shortfalls would continue to exist. Remember, it was the LNP who demanded tougher disqualification criteria.


The current blue card has no photograph and relies on a number of manual, paper based processes, taking on average 15.6 business days for applicants who had no assessable information and much longer for those who did. In 2007 I spoke in the debate of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Amendment Bill, which the opposition supported. The purpose of that legislation was to close the loophole in the blue card system which came to light earlier that year during a case heard by the Maroochydore Magistrates Court which dealt with an Ayr massage therapist massaging children without a blue card despite being committed to stand trial on a child rape charge. In debate on the above mentioned bill in 2007 I said I was disappointed there had not been inclusion of photographs on the blue cards as a means of verifying a person’s identity and that during the briefing I was advised by the commissioner that it is felt that the security is sufficient and it is up to the organisation to pick up on their risk management. I was stunned, as you needed photo ID to hire a video at the time. Inclusion of a photograph on the blue card of a person deemed suitable to be working with children should be mandatory.

Independent market research conducted in 2005-06 to measure client satisfaction with blue card application forms showed 87 per cent of respondents endorsed the use of photographs. Recommendation 69 in the blue card review report reflects stakeholder advice that a physical blue card is important to the wider community and is part of Queensland’s child safe culture. Stakeholders supported the inclusion of a photograph on the card, noting that it will reduce the chance of a person fraudulently using another person’s card.

Of course, that is no surprise as respondents in the 2005-06 research showed such strong support. This bill inserts the new concept of a working with children card, which is defined to include a photograph of the person. Therefore, it has taken 12 years for Labor to finally implement this and photo ID will be on the working with children card and renewals. However, that does raise the question—and I hope the Attorney-General may address this: how many thousands of people with existing blue cards will not have a photo on their cards until they renew, unless of course the Attorney-General is going to recall them all and reissue them with a photo?

All too often, the only action taken by government is in reaction to some horrific crime against children. Once again we see a bill with provisions included as the result of a terrible failing of the child safety department under another Labor government, in this instance, the deeply upsetting Tiahleigh Palmer case.

Labor has been in power for the majority of the past 25 years, overseeing an antiquated system that has not kept up with technology. It is a cumbersome, time-consuming process that is notorious for delays and slow turnarounds. Such lengthy delays to reform and streamline the system beg the question: why hasn't the Palaszczuk government made child protection a priority? A lot of the processing was done manually. It is hard to believe how antiquated was the system designed to add a layer of protection for children, yet year after year Labor did nothing to improve it. Blue card services processed 362,766 exemption card applications, renewals and other authorisations. Now is the time to overhaul this very antiquated system.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.21 pm): Today I rise in the House to support the passing of the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I recommend that the House supports the passing of this bill. The bill represents the first stage of a series of legislative reforms that the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice proposes to introduce into the parliament. The bill implements recommendations of the Queensland Family and Child Commission blue card review and measures to strengthen working with children checks.

The Education, Employment and Small Business Committee recommended the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 be passed. The bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly on 13 November 2018 and was initially referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. The Committee of the Legislative Assembly then determined that the bill would be considered by the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee and it was transferred to that committee on 15 November 2018. Concurrent with its inquiry into the bill, the committee inquired into a private member's bill, the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018.

The explanatory notes to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill state—

The policy objectives of the Bill are to:

- give effect to the Government's election commitment to amend the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* (WWC Act) and introduce automated blue card application processes to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending (the 'No Card, No Start' election commitment); and
- implement recommendations from the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) reports *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: Review of the blue card system* (Blue Card Review Report) and *Recommendation 28 Supplementary Review: A report on information sharing to enhance the safety of children in regulated home-based services*.

When introducing the bill, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice said that the government has broadly supported the intent of the QFCC recommendations and the bill is the first stage in a series of legislative reforms that will be brought before the House.

The working with children act provides the framework for working with children checks, commonly referred to as blue cards. Section 6 of that act states that it is to be administered under two principles: that the welfare and best interests of a child are paramount, and that every child is entitled to be cared for in a way that protects the child from harm and promotes the child's wellbeing.

The current blue card checks assess a person's national criminal history information, which captures all charges or convictions for offences in Australia, regardless of when or where the offending occurred. This includes spent convictions and pending and non-conviction charges, as well as situations where no conviction was recorded. The checks also capture child protection offender prohibition orders, whether a person is a respondent or subject to an application; disqualification orders imposed by a court; whether a person is subject to reporting obligations under the Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004 or the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003; disciplinary information held by certain professional organisations including teachers, childcare licensees and foster carers; and investigative information, which is information that the police commissioner may provide in relation to police investigations into allegations of serious child related sexual offences, even if no charges were laid, and this can only occur in very discrete circumstances as defined under section 305 of the working with children act.

The blue card system disqualifies certain people up-front and prevents people from working with children whose past behaviour indicates that they are not eligible to enter regulated employment or carry on a regulated business. Blue card screening is not required for every environment where a child

may be present. Rather, screening occurs in environments where children are receiving services that are mandatory—that is, required by law—for example, schools, foster and kinship care and youth detention. It also occurs where children receive essential services—that is, services regulated by law—for example, education and care services. It also occurs in developmentally focused services—that is, in areas that support and foster children’s development—for example, sporting, cultural and recreational activities.


There are 15 categories of regulated employment and 11 categories of regulated business set out in schedule 1 of the act. Currently, people can only apply for a blue card where they have an agreement to undertake regulated employment with an organisation, either on a paid or voluntary basis, or where they are proposing to carry on a regulated business. A person’s employer is considered a notifiable person under the act. That means the employer will be given notifications from Blue Card Services about changes to the blue card status of the employee, for example, if the person’s application has been withdrawn or blue card suspended. The onus is on the employer to link the employee to the organisation, to ensure that they receive those notifications.

Some of the important terms and concepts in the working with children act include a disqualified person, that is, a person convicted of a disqualifying offence such as a child related sex offence, a child pornography offence or child murder; a person who is subject to a child protection offender prohibition order, sexual offender order or disqualification order made by a court; or a person who is a reportable offender with current reporting obligations.

In 2016 the QFCC commenced a review of the working with children act and its operation and reported in 2017. The review included a consideration of other reports and recommendations, including those of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the 2013 Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry report. The QFCC report, *Keeping Queensland’s children more than safe: review of the blue card system* contains 81 recommendations. The QFCC also undertook a supplementary review, which arose from a recommendation in an earlier QFCC report into children missing from out-of-home care. The focus of the supplementary review was the assessment, approval, monitoring and responding to risks in home based care services, such as foster care and family day care.

As noted above, some of the amendments in the bill arose from recommendations in the report and the supplementary review, and further legislative amendments are anticipated. The blue card review report recommended significant reforms to the blue card system. They included: overarching reforms including changes to legislation and review of whether all similar screening processes could be streamlined or consolidated; strengthening the system, including moving toward national consistency; streamlining the blue card system, including online applications and appropriate proof of identity to improve efficiency; establishing an online organisational portal to help regulated organisations meet their obligations electronically; automating risk assessment, file management and information-sharing processes; and improving support and maintaining public confidence in the system, including an education and community awareness strategy for parents, carers and the community—a specific recommendation about support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and applicants.

A summary of the supplementary review recommended the following: establishment of a centralised register for recording and reporting on all child related employment or businesses conducted from the home; expanded functions for the blue card system to classify and analyse blue card data to identify trends relevant to risks to children; legislative amendments about matters, including the provision of information from police to the blue card system and notification of changes in blue card status to the Department of Education; improved policies and procedures that all adult household members of stand-alone care services are required to hold a blue card, along with regular visitors to all regulated home based services; and work between agencies relating to international criminal history information and a consistent definition of ‘regular visitor’ for home based services. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.31 pm): As all members on this side of the House know, children and young people are the most vulnerable members of our society. They are innocent and they are trusting. They do not have the strength to defend themselves. Sometimes children are simply too scared to even speak up for themselves. Thankfully, most kids grow up in a world that is safe, but sadly many do not. They can too easily become targets for predators. That is why it is vital that governments do all they can to protect kids.

Sometimes the state is the only hope that our kids have left. Sadly, the record of the Palaszczuk Labor government in child protection last term and this term is nothing short of disgraceful. Time and time again they have failed to properly protect our most vulnerable—our kids. Time and time again these kids continually slip through the net.

All too often the Palaszczuk Labor government has ignored the demands for change. They are good at the rhetoric, but when it comes to following through, the words are usually hollow. They have ignored the LNP's demands for new laws that would safeguard children. They have ignored demands for new laws that would deliver justice for child victims.

I thank the shadow Attorney-General, the member for Toowoomba South, for his work in relation to the blue card bill. I also thank the member for Currumbin, the deputy chair of the committee that examined this bill. They and their teams have worked very hard in relation to the bill and the proposed amendments. The member for Currumbin said so eloquently that this is a bill that should have and could have been debated months before it has been. We on this side of the chamber are shocked by the delay. When we are talking about the state's most vulnerable people, it is important that we get to work and debate this bill in a timely manner.

We know that the tragic cases of children like Mason Jett Lee and Tiahleigh Palmer can never be forgotten. Even today we still do not know the full story of the failures that led to Mason's death. The Child Death Case Review Panel report on Mason is yet to be released—more than two years after it was completed. The murder of—

Mrs D'ATH: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The case that the member is referring to I would caution her about because there are still matters before the court. Importantly, it is not relevant to the blue card system. The blue card system is not in any way relevant to those circumstances. We ask that the member be brought back to the long title of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for Nanango, please come back to the long title of the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I say to the House that we are awaiting the Child Death Case Review Panel's report on this case. How do we know that it was not relevant to the blue card system? How do we know because we have not seen the report?

We know that the murder of Tiahleigh Palmer was another damning indictment of the system. Her killer was able to foster kids despite a shocking list of convictions spread over 20 years. The blue card system is meant to protect our kids, but under the Palaszczuk Labor government it has been riddled with holes.

It was in the run-up to the 2017 state election that Labor promised to produce a no-card no-start policy. How long ago was that? It was 18 months ago. We do not know why this policy has been delayed for so long. What we do know is that this delay is completely unacceptable. This should have been at the top of Labor's agenda from day one. This was 18 months ago. We would think that the Palaszczuk Labor government would put the kids at the forefront, but we have had that major delay. Instead, the Palaszczuk Labor government has been busy doing other things, like renaming hospitals, when it should have been protecting our children.

In the meantime convicted child rapists and child murderers who have failed to disclose their convictions have been able to work with children. It has been left to the police to notify Blue Card Services of their offences. We know that at the end of last year almost 3,000 people were able to work with children pending the outcome of their blue card application. Most of these applicants would not have had a serious criminal history, but some of them certainly would have. It is those individuals who pose a dangerous threat to the children.

A question on notice in August last year revealed a shocking number of disqualified offenders were able to work with kids as soon as they applied for blue cards. In 2017-18, 21 disqualified offenders were detected. In 2015-16, 25 offenders were detected. It defies belief that the Palaszczuk Labor government has ignored the recommendations of the Queensland Family and Child Commission on this glaring loophole. These people should not be allowed anywhere near a blue card. They should not be allowed to apply for one, full stop. Another question on notice from the opposition revealed that 35 people with disqualifying offences were granted blue cards by relying on eligibility declarations. Of those, no fewer than 23 had convictions for unlawful carnal knowledge or similar offences.

As a parent there is nothing more frightening than thinking that a sexual predator is out there caring for a child. It is unforgivable that under Labor's amendments violent child killers and child rapists can still apply and possibly hold a blue card. We should never, ever allow a rapist near a child. It is unacceptable that a person guilty of child cruelty, torture or strangulation in a domestic setting can apply—

Government members interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: When we are talking about convicted rapists being allowed near our children, we have members of the Labor Party laughing. I do not take that as an interjection. It is embarrassing from those opposite.

It is unacceptable that a person guilty of child cruelty, torture or strangulation in a domestic setting can apply for a blue card. It is the members on this side of the House who have worked with children and who have worked in the real world—whether it is working in law, being in business, working in schools or working in the police force—who understand this. It is those of us on this side of the chamber who know that these people should never be allowed near our children. We should not have to point this out because everyone in this chamber should agree.


The Palaszczuk Labor government needs to explain to parents why a person convicted of manslaughter of a child or torture is allowed to apply to work with children. Labor must also explain to Queenslanders why a person convicted of disqualifying offences overseas could be given access to children. Why did the Palaszczuk Labor government ignore the recommendation of the QFCC for international criminal histories to be considered? Why does the Palaszczuk government never, ever consider these issues?

Labor's refusal to listen is the reason we have kids being left to rot in our watch houses, kids being locked up for up to 40 days, kids breaking down in police stations and even being driven to attempt suicide. The LNP believes that we need to get these kids out of watch houses and we should do it within 72 hours. We know that the Palaszczuk Labor government must back this. It defies belief that our laws to protect—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The issues that the Leader of the Opposition is now speaking to are not contained in the bill or the amendments circulated by the government or the opposition for that matter. They are not relevant. She should be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for Nanango, you have 44 seconds left. Speak to the long title of the bill.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The LNP would ensure that the blue card system does its job. Blue cards are meant to put a safety barrier between our kids and those who wish to abuse or exploit them, but there are huge gaps in that barrier. Thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government, we have waited too long to fix those gaps. Now that we are finally acting we should fix every single one of those gaps in the system. We owe it to every single child in this state to finally get this right.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (4.42 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate today with respect to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I thank the work of the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee under the able stewardship of the member for Nudgee. This amendment bill seeks to amend the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, the Disability Services Act 2006 and the Public Service Act 2008.

This amendment bill is largely the result of a series of reports authored by the Queensland Family and Child Commission, primarily the *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system*. The review of the blue card system was directed by the Premier and tasked to the Queensland Family and Child Commission with the assistance of an appointed expert panel. Additionally, the *When a child is missing: remembering Tiahleigh—a report into Queensland's children missing from out-of-home care* has provided additional guidance on this amendment bill, particularly with respect to information-sharing provisions. These two reports, in conjunction with the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, provide a solid body of evidence and collective knowledge behind this amendment bill.

In speaking to this amendment bill today I will focus on the recommendations, as seen in this amendment bill, from the QFCC's blue card review report. Whilst my committee, the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, did not inquire into this amendment bill, our committee does have oversight of the QFCC and, in the opportunities that the committee has had with the QFCC commissioner before it, the blue card review has been mentioned a number of times across a range of contexts, foreshadowing portions of this bill.

The blue card system was first introduced almost 20 years ago and I have held blue cards of different varieties in that time for a number of reasons. I note the comment by the commissioner in releasing the report that Queensland has led the way in providing a safe environment for children. The blue card system in Queensland has grown to the point that one in every five Queenslanders holds or

has applied for a blue card. As at June 2016, over 680,000 Queenslanders had held or applied for a blue card. This is a significant number. A largely paper based system with these numbers is not sustainable. It was certainly timely in 2016 that the Premier commissioned a review, not just a review of eligibility and starting time frames but a whole-of-system review.

This is certainly a weighty amendment bill, although apparently not as weighty as the last one on the *Notice Paper*. It is reflective that the amendments that we consider today are not merely window-dressing or bandaid solutions. What we have in front of us is comprehensive and it reaches into just about every element of administration of the blue card system. This is not something that we should take away and read as a broken system but one that is merely evolving, not only changing with workplaces and community organisations but changing with the information that is now available to us—sometimes through hard lessons learned, sometimes tragically through loss of life. Let us consider these amendments with the respect with which they have been developed.

The blue card review report considered, as part of its systemic review, a complete overhaul that seeks to make the processes more accessible and faster, but more fundamentally places the welfare of children at the forefront of all decision-making. The major recommendations of the blue card review report surround widening the scope of the blue card system, reforms to the requirements for working with children checks, reforms to decisions on working with children checks, reforms to capacity building and compliance, reforms to information-sharing provisions, reforms to the application process, reforms to the risk assessment processes, reforms to the outcomes of working with children checks and reforms surrounding the engagement of community members, groups and organisations.

Recommendations 19 and 20 of the blue card review report work in tandem and represent the Palaszczuk government's 2017 election commitment to the no-card no-start policy. This is articulated throughout clause 17. Currently an employee can apply for work without having a blue card and commence employment, submitting a working with children check through their employer. Some weeks later the employer will receive notification about whether the working with children check was clear or otherwise. The concern about this is that employees—some who may have concerning or otherwise disqualifying history—may have a number of weeks work in the company of children before the check is completed.

Recommendation 20 states that the organisation is required to make sure that their employees and volunteers do not start work without the working with children check. Recommendation 19 enables this by allowing potential workers to apply for a blue card prior to seeking work. Previously the application had to be supported by an employer or organisation. Now, prospective workers can make an individual application and present their blue card bona fides when applying for jobs. This makes them job ready.

Further recommendations were around expanding the offences which are considered disqualifying offences and identifying particular offences, and this has been incorporated in clause 70. The Attorney-General has identified those additional offences in the schedule. These are in line with the recommendations from the blue card review. I understand that further amendments by the Attorney-General will strengthen these even further.

The large bulk of the amendment bill is as a result of recommendation 71—the development of an organisational portal. This is where the work that goes into ensuring a functioning system that is responsive but also flexible to respond to individual cases is supported and delivered. This is good news for applicants where the paper based application process will become the exception rather than the rule and this is good news for organisations managing a workforce or team of volunteers in terms of providing up-to-date registers and automated notification systems.

The implementation of this recommendation, due to the scope of the changes this will have on the current system, is no simple feat. It needs to be understood that developing IT systems around a system integral to child safety is not something that can be rushed. I understand the changes are due to commence in 2020. This will grant the necessary time, provided the changes are properly socialised, to allow the many organisations which are volunteer based to update and revise their systems so that their business processes and staff are able to adapt. One does not have to look too far back to see what happens when you make changes of this scale but rush to backend the IT work.

We can add and remove disqualifying offences with relative ease in this House—an amendment here, an amendment there—but to assume that you can wish a whole new interface into being without taking the necessary amount of time to analyse, develop and test is foolhardy. We are creating something that has not been done before in this space. We need to take the time to get it right. The

development of so many business systems has failed—both in government and private—due to rushed implementations. It is not acceptable to take this risk in the child safety domain. In line with the blue card review report, it will be done with the appropriate stakeholder engagement and testing.

For those inferring that this amendment bill is a failure because it does not extend to include a regime of international criminal history checks, I implore them to go back and read the blue card review report. Read the work behind recommendation 30, which stated—

It is recommended that the Department of Justice and Attorney-General consults with the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection on opportunities for sharing information about international criminal histories.


The lack of inclusion of international criminal history checks in this regime is not because there is a lack of will or understanding of the risks. It is the acknowledgement that, as a state, there is a limited ability to carry this off with any form of consistency. To convey to the public otherwise is a fallacy. Perhaps the federal government could come to the table because they are the conduit between the state and international law enforcement for these checks. I have spent many long days in Canberra working with the ACIC and other states on national crime databases, and this is no simple thing—let alone attempting to include an international aspect to it.

If I could conclude on something, it would be for all members in this House and the public more broadly to understand the role of the blue card in the child safety space and also, more importantly, to understand the inherent limitations of the blue card system. Public education was certainly an important aspect of the blue card review report. I applaud the government's response to the blue card review report, but we also must acknowledge that it is only one aspect of the child safety system. It is not the panacea, it will not be the silver bullet, but it provides a structural framework for employees, employers and organisations to work with.

I will include a word of caution directly from the QFCC blue card review report. It said that working with children checks—

... cannot predict whether people will offend against children in the future. They do not guarantee that children will be safe from harm when interacting with people who hold blue cards. In fact, over-reliance on the WWCC may create risks for children, as parents and carers may assume their children are safe when left with people holding blue cards.

There is more to be done. We acknowledge that, but we are by no means done. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (4.52 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow committee members, the secretariat, Hansard reporters and those individuals and organisations who made written submissions on the bill and appeared at the committee's public hearings.

There is nothing more important than protecting our children, and there would be no-one in this House who would deny that. It is the adults who surround them who need to protect them, it is the departments and agencies that need to enforce these protections, and it is parliament—us—that must legislate to ensure the strongest protections are enshrined in law. It is our job to ensure laws are as strong as they can be made, as robust as they can be enforced, and as clear as they can be to send a message that our children's safety and wellbeing is our highest priority.

The member for Nudgee has just put on record in *Hansard* how proud she is of Labor's record of child safety. For her to stand here in this House and say this is totally disgraceful. How can she be proud of what happened to Mason Jett Lee? How can she be proud when she and her government know there are many children still waiting for Child Safety to help and protect them? Tiahleigh Palmer was killed in October 2015 at the hands of a person who was appointed her carer. She was young, she was vulnerable and her death should not be in vain. Tiahleigh's legacy if the LNP has anything to do with it will be for the change needed in Queensland to ensure that no child will ever suffer her fate.

It is a very sad indictment on this government that the report by the Queensland Family and Child Commission into the blue card system took two years to see the light of day. Let us just take a little moment and see what has happened during those past two years and why it has taken so long for us to see the report. There was the \$13,000, 12-metre sign and scaffolding debacle when this government wanted to commemorate a former Labor member of parliament at Suncorp Stadium. Who can forget that? Then they had to go around spending thousands of dollars to change the name of a hospital. We will never let them forget that.

Mr KELLY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask about relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): I encourage the member for Pumicestone to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mrs WILSON: They have focused on the big issues, like cutting back our debate times and reducing our sitting hours.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Pumicestone, I encourage you to come back to the long title of the bill.

Mrs WILSON: This is what has consumed their last two years. The QFCC's review was finalised in July 2017 and released in September 2017 with 81 recommendations being made, and we are now in May 2019. That is almost two years from when this report was completed, and that is disgraceful.

The LNP sees these reports as critical to fast-track reforms, and we have not sat quietly waiting for this government to get these amendments through the House. Given it was an election commitment by the state Labor Party to amend the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, it is unacceptable that they have taken so long to introduce this bill into the House.

This bill is playing catch-up with the safety of children, as it is in direct response to certain incidents, media campaigns and political pressures that have exposed critical failures in Queensland's blue card system. Whilst the bill before us today goes some way to ensuring greater protection of children, it can and should be stronger. I urge those opposite to consider further broadening the range of disqualifying offences to keep violent criminals and sexual predators as far away from our children as we possibly can enforce.

The blue card system has the most important function of reducing the risk of people who work with children either in paid or voluntary roles. While screening is useful in identifying those who are not suitable, the blue card system is not fail-safe and it should never be seen as, 'They're safe. They have a blue card.' This system only—and I say only—picks up on those who have criminal records and provides exclusions for a number of types of offences committed. It will not pick up on those who perpetrate against children and have never been caught, nor will it pick up on those who are under police investigation and not yet charged with any offence but where police may be gathering the evidence they need to lay charges.

Whilst a convicted child killer and attempted rapist will be automatically blocked from applying to work with children, there are still loopholes within the disqualifying framework and they do not include serious violent offences, including manslaughter of a child, child cruelty and torture. Allowing people convicted of these atrocious crimes to be considered for a blue card is outrageous, and it fails to meet the community's expectations on any level. The LNP believes anyone who is a disqualified person should not be eligible to apply for or hold a blue card. We believe a new framework must be applied to blue card applicants and holders charged or convicted of a serious offence.

There is an imperative need to broaden the scope of criminal history disclosure and criminal history checks to ensure that our kids are as safe as they can be. Removing the eligibility declaration of disqualified persons so they will never again have the opportunity to work with children in Queensland will ensure that people who hold blue cards will have their blue card suspended if charged with a serious offence.

In addition, a person's application will not be considered while a charge for a serious offence is pending against the person or if the person has been convicted of a serious offence. Furthermore, we on this side of the House believe that Blue Card Services consider applicants' international criminal history prior to obtaining a blue card. The government's own report *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* recommended new laws to broaden the range of its disqualifying offences. Introducing these disqualifying offences would bring Queensland into line with other Australian jurisdictions including New South Wales. The LNP believes this will ensure anyone convicted of a disqualifying offence will never be able to hold a blue card in their lifetime. This is what we want to see and this is what our community expects.

Whilst the blue card system will never deliver an absolute guarantee that every single person who holds one poses no risk to children, we want—

Debate, on motion of Mrs Wilson, adjourned.

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance



Mr MANDER (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (5.00 pm): I move—

That this House—

1. condemns the Palaszczuk Labor government's catastrophic management of the Queensland economy under a Deputy Premier who even failed to forecast a \$1.3 billion budget blunder;

2. notes that under Labor—
 - (a) Queensland has the second highest unemployment rate in the nation;
 - (b) the Sensis Business Index puts the Palaszczuk Labor government as the least popular amongst small and medium sized businesses;
 - (c) compared to an equivalent time under the LNP government, Labor has seen a drop of 38.5 per cent in business investment equal to \$73.5 billion;
 - (d) Queensland private sector wage growth was less than the national average for 2018;
 - (e) the December 2018 quarter was the worst for construction seen since December 2006;
 - (f) 18,000 jobs have been lost in the manufacturing sector and Queensland has the lowest number of manufacturing workers in three decades;
 - (g) Queensland has more strikes than any other state or territory;
 - (h) the Queensland growth rate for last year was lower than the national average;
 - (i) five new taxes have been introduced, ripping \$2.2 billion from the economy;
3. calls on the Palaszczuk Labor government to stop petty politics in its forthcoming budget and adopt the LNP's policies to—
 - (a) air-condition every state school classroom;
 - (b) fast-track the second M1 upgrades;
 - (c) deliver the second M1;
 - (d) deliver the Mackay Ring Road stage 2;
 - (e) upgrade the Bruce Highway;
 - (f) duplicate the Sunshine Coast rail line; and
 - (g) guarantee no new taxes.

I say thank you to my colleagues for their incredible encouragement. The next sitting week of parliament will be the opportunity for the government to bring down its second budget of this term, the second budget of the current Treasurer. This is also an opportunity—

Mr Krause: The second last.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Scenic Rim; this is also the second last budget of the current Treasurer.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. We have been given clear guidance that we address our comments through the chair, especially addressing and facing the chair rather than the backbench.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Thank you, member for Logan.

Mr MANDER: I will be waiting to see how the Treasurer responds to that particular direction as well.

It is an opportunity for the Treasurer to right the wrongs of her previous budget and the incredibly poor economic record of this government. The economy has ground to a halt under the Labor government. Business confidence has plummeted under this current Labor government in the state of Queensland. If we look at every lobby group and every survey that is done, we see that they all indicate the same thing: people and the business community have lost confidence in the government.

The March Sensis Business Index puts the Palaszczuk government as the least popular government amongst small and medium size businesses for the fourth consecutive quarter. The March CCIQ Pulse Survey shows not only that Queensland's economic outlook has taken a dive but that business conditions and profitability continue to rapidly weaken. The very well credentialed CommSec State of the States report again puts Queensland at second bottom on the list with regard to its economic performance. That is a comprehensive report that looks at a number of economic indicators and we are at the bottom of the pile, and we have continually been at the bottom of the pile for some time.

Then, of course, we have the unemployment rate, and the Premier said that she yearns for the unemployment rate to start with a five.

Ms Fentiman: 6.6 per cent.


Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the minister. What is so important about these unemployment rates is the relative unemployment rates across the country. We have 6.1 per cent and the national unemployment rate under the incredible economic management of the federal coalition government is five per cent. If we look at our New South Wales and Victorian counterparts, we see that

earlier this year the unemployment rate in New South Wales was actually 3.9 per cent and it has now gone out to the low fours, and Victoria is the same. We are constantly behind and now we have over 160,000 Queenslanders who are without a job because of the economic performance of this government.

At the next budget why does the Treasurer not do what the LNP has been advocating, and that is invest in infrastructure that will stimulate the economy? We want to see the duplication of the Sunshine Coast railway. We want to see six lanes from Caboolture to Caloundra. We want to make sure that we have dams across this state that will provide water supply for our regions. We want to make sure that our schoolkids and our teaching staff are comfortable in their classrooms, and in the south-east corner they are not. We are asking for this government to make an investment in our schoolkids because we know that cool kids are smart kids.

One of the most incredible investments we have promised is that we will bring competition to the electricity retail markets in the regions which will result in not just hundreds of dollars less in electricity bills for residents but thousands of dollars for businesses as well.

During the next sitting week of parliament this Treasurer will have an opportunity to right the wrongs of the last budget—the five new taxes that are taking \$2.2 billion out of the economy and have zapped the confidence of business in this state.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (5.05 pm): I rise to oppose this motion and, in doing so, I am very proud to put the Palaszczuk government's record before the House. More than 192,000 jobs have been created since we were elected in 2015. Over the year Queensland has recorded the third largest rate of annual jobs growth across the country. That has all been part of 30 consecutive months of jobs growth in Queensland. That is a record that those opposite can only dream of.

The LNP had only three policies when it came to training, skills and jobs in Queensland: cut, sack and sell. Unemployment rose from 5.5 per cent to 6.6 per cent and 30,000 more Queenslanders were thrown onto the unemployment queue under those opposite. They were economic wreckers and job destroyers. Small business confidence was rocked by their cuts and chaos. It is also now being rocked by the cuts and chaos created by the federal LNP government, fuelled by their inability to settle on a national energy policy and the dodgy deals they are doing with Clive Palmer.


Despite the circus that is the LNP in Canberra, the Palaszczuk government has been focused on ensuring small business can succeed and employ more Queenslanders. This year's budget ensured Queenslanders pay less tax per capita than the southern states. It included \$40 million for a Business Development Fund; continued delivery of the \$650 million Advance Queensland agenda; \$26 million to extend the payroll tax rebates for apprentices and trainees; and \$3.9 billion to extend the wonderful partnership that we have with CCIQ and the ecoBiz program that makes it easier for small business to manage waste and energy costs.

There are also our small business grants. In every electorate I travel to meeting with local members they are so proud to talk about their small businesses doing their bit to grow jobs in local economies, and it is our small business grants that are helping them grow and thrive. We have assisted 2,400 businesses with them telling us that it will help them create nearly 5,000 jobs. The LNP took small businesses in Queensland for granted. It would have all been at risk with the member for Nanango promising to cut \$1½ million from our Advancing Small Business agenda at the last election. Who can forget they slashed the small business commissioner when in government?

Today's motion shows that the LNP clearly are not the sharpest tools in the shed. This week we marked Back to Work's 19,000th Queenslanders getting a job—19,000 Queenslanders back to work—so they decide this week is the week they want to talk about jobs and the economy. We all know the LNP has had it in for Back to Work since day one. Their election costings scrapped the program altogether. That is 19,000 Queenslanders who would not have a job. That is 12½ thousand young unemployed Queenslanders who would still be in the unemployment queue.

We know that not only did the LNP have it in for Back to Work; it also went to the last election promising to scrap Skilling Queenslanders for Work. Our record is more than \$175 million to continue and expand the Back to Work program. I am very pleased that we also have expanded the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, a program slashed by those opposite in government. Deloitte Economics said that for every dollar spent on Skilling Queenslanders for Work \$8 was returned to the Queensland economy. It was a no-brainer. It was a program that worked everywhere across Queensland. Our wonderful NGO partners said, 'Thank you so much for bringing back Skilling Queenslanders for Work and for providing training pathways for young Queenslanders.'

I am pleased to inform the House that since the Palaszczuk government reinstated the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program in 2015 we have assisted more than 40,000 Queenslanders who struggled to find the right opportunity to get the needed skills and training to start their dream career. More than 28,000 participants in a program that members opposite were going to scrap again have a job or are engaged in further training as a direct result of the program. There were 700 jobs in the last month alone. Members opposite wanted to scrap Back to Work and Skilling Queenslanders for Work. They have absolutely no plan for the economy, jobs or skills. All they know is cut, sack and sell.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (5.11 pm): I rise to support the motion moved by the member for Everton. This House should condemn the Palaszczuk Labor government for its catastrophic management of the Queensland economy. We are talking about a government that has created so much uncertainty and sovereign risk in the resources industry that mining companies would rather open a mine in Botswana than in Queensland. The government has done more than the droughts and the flooding rains for which this state is well known to run farmers off their land and cruel Queensland's proud and strong agricultural industry. As we speak, there is more legislation in this House that will do far more to cruel that industry.

The government compounded market downturns in the construction industry through its love affair with new taxes. The December quarter was the worst since 2006. I refer to a media release issued by the Property Council on 8 December 2017 that says—

The Labor party have proposed to increase Land Tax rates by 25 per cent on holdings of more than \$10 million. The foreign investor tax is also proposed to be increased from 3 per cent to 7 per cent.

The Property Council went on to predict—

Put simply, these taxes—if implemented—would be job killers.

Have those words not come to fruition? That prediction of being a job killer has come true. I understand that foreign and local investment has dried up so much that the government is not getting any money from the foreign investment tax because no-one is investing in the industry. What is more, if federal Labor continue down the path of state Labor, there will be increases in taxes through negative gearing and capital gains tax.

The Property Council issued a media release on 10 May saying that this is the wrong policy change and the wrong time. Housing construction is already falling and is a major source of jobs for Australia. The last thing we want is to make this worse. That is exactly what Labor are doing. It is no wonder the economy is in a catastrophic state.

The government did the same thing to the manufacturing sector, driving it into the ground. Some 18,000 jobs were lost across manufacturing industries. The Minister for Manufacturing runs around like the tooth fairy sprinkling money here and there, but neither he nor the Labor government are doing anything to deal with the real issues facing the manufacturing sector. What are they doing around electricity costs, labour costs and red-tape reduction? For starters, they could try what the shadow Treasurer just suggested and adopt the LNP policy of competition in the regional energy market. This would produce real savings not only for households but also for businesses in the manufacturing sector. As the shadow Treasurer said, they could start by investing in infrastructure to get the economy going. The government could fast-track those M1 upgrades, the M1 upgrades to which the federal coalition government has committed funding. Members in this House have lobbied for that for many years but state Labor continues to drag the chain.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is not actually speaking to the motion. The reference in the motion is not to the M1 but to the second M1. The member is not speaking to the motion.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members rising to points of order will not debate the issue. There are references in the motion to the M1—


Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: There are references in the motion to the M1, but I will make this clear: this is a very broad motion around broad economic management. That is the way I will adjudicate during this debate.

Mr POWELL: The government could proceed with the second M1 by starting with the southern portion of the Coomera Connector between Nerang-Broadbeach Road and Foxwell Road as a first stage of dealing with traffic bottlenecks on the M1 through Coomera, Oxenford and Helensvale. The government could sit down and listen to the LNP member for Forde in his Eagleby community to

address the issues raised by that community. These are issues involving the environment, including the extensive Eagleby wetlands and flood plains of the Logan and Albert rivers, the impact on the farming community, and traffic impacts on local schools, retirement villages and aged-care facilities.

The government could deliver the Mackay Ring Road Stage 2, work to upgrade the Bruce Highway in terms of the six lanes from Caboolture to the southern half of Steve Irwin Way and on to Caloundra. They could deliver duplication of the north coast rail, the Sunshine Coast rail. Instead of playing petty politics, they could do what the LNP has committed to, that is, stump up the additional 50 per cent. They should accept that generous Morrison federal coalition offer to get that much needed heavy rail improvement on the Sunshine Coast, a region doing the heavy lifting when it comes to population growth in Caloundra South and Palmview, where there is zero investment from a government not interested in ensuring people are off the roads and on to public transport. They could start by guaranteeing no new taxes, but we know that it will not—they are addicted to them.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (5.17 pm): After 14,000 sackings by those opposite, I think their drafting committee is about to be sacked as well. Look at the motion. They talk about congestion, yet they did not mention the M1 in the entire motion. The only mention is of the second M1. Read the motion. There is no reference to the M1 in this entire motion. What an embarrassment. The opposition cannot even competently draft a motion for the parliament. Members opposite ignored the M1 when in government, with not a single new dollar in the whole term—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you moved this motion and spoke to the motion. I ask you to cease your interjections.

Mr BAILEY: The LNP ignored the M1, with not a single new dollar on it for the entire three years of the Newman government, and again ignores it in this motion. The member for Everton is the most embarrassed person. I heard his interjections before. I would be embarrassed too if I were him, because it shows he cannot even draft a motion.

Let us see another glaring omission from this opposition who claim to be about busting congestion. There is another major project that they say they are very passionate about that is not in this motion: Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3A. Where is it? It is not even in the motion. The opposition has a number of Gold Coast MPs—one wonders what they do down there—but does not even mention Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3A in the motion. You would think the leadership aspirant the member for Broadwater might have got a Gold Coast reference in, but there is no mention of it. I am seeing the confused look on the face of the member for Bonney. He is learning bad habits from the other Gold Coast MPs. There is no mention of Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3A in this motion. How embarrassing!

The motion does have multiple references to the second M1. The second M1 was stopped by the previous government in terms of a range of planning documents. The member for Clayfield committed to it in the election campaign with an absurdly low figure of \$250 million, with another \$250 million magically to come from somewhere else that was not confirmed. A bit over a year ago that figure had changed. It had gone up to \$1.1 billion—still massively short of what that project would cost.

Opposition members say that they are making a suggestion but there was no mention of Cross River Rail, the single most important transport infrastructure project in the country. There is not a single reference to it.

I go to the other parts of the motion and mention Mackay Ring Road Stage 2. Where is it in the federal budget documents? It is in the '2023-24 onwards' column. The colleagues of those opposite in Canberra are not putting a dollar towards it for more than four years, yet we are supposed to think this is a priority of the LNP. The Liberal-National federal budget documents belie that fact.

The motion also mentions duplicating the Sunshine Coast rail line. I am glad that I am speaking after the member for Glass House—the meek and mild, spineless and weak member for Glass House—

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller, I ask you to withdraw the word 'spineless'. It is unparliamentary.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw the term 'spineless' and I maintain the word 'weak'.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. As you made your ruling the Deputy Premier said the words, 'It's true,' to the member for Miller, in direct contradiction of your ruling. Mr Speaker, if it is unparliamentary for the member for Miller, how is it not unparliamentary for the Deputy Premier?

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat. I did not hear any interjection from my right. I was dealing with the matter at hand. The minister has withdrawn the word which is unparliamentary and the debate will continue.

Mr BAILEY: Those opposite had three years in government to do something for the Sunshine Coast and they did nothing. They did not even get the business case going for the Sunshine Coast rail duplication. We have done the business case. We have allocated more than half a billion dollars to the Sunshine Coast rail duplication; there was zero allocated by the LNP. We know that those opposite stand for cuts. That is what they did when they were in government. They made \$600 million worth of cuts in transport infrastructure and cut 14,000 jobs. We know that if they ever got back into government they would do exactly the same thing again.

The problem is that those opposite do not stand up for Queensland. They are weak. They grovel to Canberra instead of standing up for the maroon state. That is what this motion is about. It is an incompetent motion from an incompetent leadership that is weak. I look forward to the leadership challenge, because it is not far away.

Mr SPEAKER: Members for Buderim, Nicklin and Chatsworth, you are all warned under the standing orders. Your interjections were designed to significantly disrupt the speaker on his feet. I did not want to interrupt him because that would just achieve the purpose you were trying to achieve. You are all warned under the standing orders. If the member is not taking the interjections, I will afford them some protection.

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.23 pm): When we hear the minister speak we know that the truth is not being expressed in this place, because it was the Labor government—

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

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! A member rising to their feet for a point of order has a right to be heard. I will hear and rule on that point of order without any coercion, advice or other disruption from other members.

Mr BAILEY: The member for Maroochydore just implied that I lied to this House. I take personal offence and I request that it be withdrawn.

Mr SPEAKER: There are a couple of things, member. Using the word 'lie' is unparliamentary in itself. The member for Maroochydore did not use that word, as I heard it. You have. I ask you to withdraw that word.

Mr BAILEY: I withdraw.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydore, the member for Miller has found those comments personally offensive. Will you withdraw?

Ms SIMPSON: I withdraw. In Queensland there has been an absolute fall off the cliff in respect of construction jobs. We have seen the worst quarter since December 2006 for construction. That means money that is no longer in the pockets of small businesses, medium sized businesses and workers here in Queensland. It is happening under this government's watch. There is a very good reason it is happening under this government's watch: they talk about infrastructure but they do not deliver. In their very first term we saw about \$3 billion a year slashed from the infrastructure spend of Queensland. That is still having a knock-on effect today. Not only did businesses lose confidence; they also lost jobs. Now we see this terrible result for the construction industry in the December 2018 quarter.

Let us talk about small businesses. The Minister for Small Business failed to address the fact that this Labor government treats the small businesses of Queensland like its cash cow. This government has a terrible record in respect of paying them on time. It was the LNP that brought in a requirement that businesses doing business with government be paid within a certain period, but this government has treated them like cash cows and is failing to pay them on time.

In one quarter alone last year, 17.2 per cent of businesses were being paid late by the Department of Education. That is just unacceptable. By the department of agriculture about nine per cent were being paid late. It is about time small and medium sized businesses were treated with respect. Government members rarely speak about red tape for small businesses. There are no transparently reported benchmarks related to red tape, yet red tape is one of the main complaints by small and medium businesses about this government. Is it any wonder, when we get up in this House and present the facts, that—

Dr Lynham interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Maroochydore, please resume your seat. Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, you are warned under the standing orders. You will resume your own seat if you wish to make any contribution in this House.

Ms SIMPSON: The Sensis Business Index ranks the Palaszczuk Labor government as the least popular among small and medium sized businesses. There is a very good reason for that. They are being tied up in red tape by a government that does not even bother to ask them before it introduces legislation that results in them being taxed. There was no consultation with small business before the introduction of a number of these new taxes they have been burdened with. They have been treated like cash cows. They do not get paid on time. This government has no plans to address the incredible situation where small businesses are being asked to pay for the privilege of employing Queenslanders. Small and medium sized businesses are the major employers of Queensland, and it is about time they were treated with respect.

I want to address the fact that this Labor government has not gotten on with the job of building the Sunshine Coast rail duplication. I heard the Minister for Transport trying to blame everybody else, but the reality is that it was the Anna Bligh Labor government in 2009 that deliberately misled the public going into an election, saying that it was going to duplicate that rail line. In fact, the marketplace had been briefed that that project was to continue.


Mr Mander: The work sites were there.

Ms SIMPSON: The work sites were set up. The contractors had been briefed that the duplication works being carried out would continue. After the election, in a most sneaky and dirty trick, that was ripped up.

Mr Powell: They went and built the Springfield line instead.

Ms SIMPSON: They went and built other things, but they ripped it away and deliberately misled people about that project. We are so keen to see this project finally progressed, given that it is an 1880s alignment and we have tilt trains that can do only 50 kilometres an hour on a section of the Sunshine Coast line.

Only the LNP has a policy to treat small businesses with respect and to address the procurement issue to ensure they get paid not only on time but also faster when doing business with government. We have released the fair pay policy for small businesses. It is time they were treated with respect. Then we will see business confidence in government return.

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for the Commonwealth Games) (5.29 pm): I rise to speak against the motion. I am very much looking forward to a small business function tonight with the Minister for Employment and Small Business. How many people have RSVP'd to that function?

Ms Fentiman: Two hundred.

Ms JONES: More than 200 small business people will be joining us tonight. In fact, we are at capacity and I understand that there could even be a waitlist. That is because they know that in Jackie Trad we have a Treasurer who was brought up in a small business. The Treasurer of Queensland is the product of a small business. She grew up in a small business and she has seen firsthand how hard they work and how much respect they deserve, and that is why I am so proud of everything that the Treasurer has delivered in her time in government.

A government member interjected.

Ms JONES: I take that interjection. Those opposite want to rewrite the Deputy Premier's history. They know more about her childhood than she does! That says it all really, doesn't it? We have seen a lot of rewriting of history here tonight—just like we saw last week, just like we saw the parliamentary week before that and the parliamentary week before that. The member for Everton talks about the unemployment rate. What he fails to acknowledge is that when he was sitting around the cabinet table we saw the highest unemployment rate in a decade at 7.1 per cent. What is the unemployment rate today? We are sitting at 5.9 per cent. It was 7.1 per cent under the LNP and 5.9 per cent today.

We also heard the member for Everton make a contribution about fair dinkum jobs. A woman who lived in the member for Everton's electorate who knew that he would not listen to her concerns came to me at my street corner to cry on my shoulder because the member for Everton's government sacked her. That is what the truth is. She had a fair dinkum job—a fair dinkum job that brought home a pay packet for her family. The member for Everton did not think that was a fair dinkum job. He was happy to put her on the scrap heap, just like all of the other people who were working for the good of Queensland. Whether it was admin officers in our police stations or nurses on the front line, those opposite were happy to say that they were not fair dinkum jobs.

That is what is so intriguing about this motion tonight, although that is a bit of a compliment I guess. The member for Everton talks about their commitment to air-condition schools, but in the same motion before the House those opposite condemn any increases in revenue measures. The only way to balance the books is to do what we know those opposite will always do when in government. The LNP and the conservative parties of this country only have one playbook. Members would think that as a referee the member for Everton would know a few plays, but it turns out he was not good at that either! The only thing they have is to cut and sell.

Mr Mander interjected.


Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. You will put your comments through the chair.

Ms JONES: What is absolutely clear in this motion is that the only policy those opposite have is to cut the Public Service, cut front-line services and sell. That is all they have. It is the same trick. I have been sitting and working in this parliament for 20 years and it is the same old same old. It is so boring and tedious that 20 years later we are having the same conversation. We all remember David Watson's capital works freeze. It was the same under their watch. With this motion the LNP highlights that, after all of these years, whether it is in government—that did not last very long—or back in opposition, they have no new ideas, no new concepts, no fresh blood, same old same old. This motion primarily focuses on employment for Queenslanders. We saw exactly what happened when they implemented their policies in government. We saw unemployment rise to the highest level in a decade. Well may you put your heads down, because you know I am stating the facts. You know I am stating the facts because you are sitting in opposition.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, you will put your comments through the chair.

Ms JONES: We know that the opposition members are hanging their heads in shame because they know it is true. We know that in a state like Queensland we need a government to stimulate the economy, and that is why we have a \$46 billion infrastructure pipeline which is underway. What you do not do in a state like Queensland, particularly in small rural and regional towns, is cut the workers in those communities. That is not the way to put pay packets and money into local small businesses. You take the jobs away from the community and then turn around and expect to see an increase in economic activity? That does not make sense. This motion harks to the reality of what those opposite are going to take to this election, what they took to the last election and what they took to the election before that—cut and sell. It is the same old chaos and cuts of their mates in Canberra.

(Time expired)

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (5.34 pm): I rise to speak on the motion moved by the member for Everton. As a new member in this place I am still learning new things every day and one thing that continues to astound me every day as I sit in this historic chamber is the absolute arrogance and incompetence of this Labor government. The two highest priorities of any government is to keep its citizens safe and to provide an economic environment in which they can prosper. There is absolutely no doubt now that this government has dropped the ball on crime, is failing to keep Queenslanders safe, particularly our kids, and is failing all Queenslanders with its economic incompetence.

The Premier likes to make out that she is the battler's champ, trumpeting the 'Queenslander' war cry at every opportunity, but Queenslanders are not stupid and they are starting to see through this charade. The Premier pretends to be the Billy Moore of the Queensland parliament, but the difference is that Billy Moore actually worked hard on the field and put himself on the line for his state. In contrast, this Premier hides when there is hard work to be done and when faced with some stiff opposition. As we count down the sleeps to the first State of Origin in Brisbane in just a few weeks, I hope the Maroons can beat New South Wales to help restore some state pride because, if the state of Queensland was a football team, economically we are a joke. We are being humiliated by New South Wales across the park on all economic indicators. Our captain and coach should have been sacked a long time ago.


Let us take a look at the scoreboard. Private investment over the last year in New South Wales is up \$783 million. In Queensland it is down \$243 million. Business confidence as reported by the Sensis Business Index in New South Wales is positive three points and in Queensland it is negative 23 points. Infrastructure purchases in 2017-18 in New South Wales total over \$12 billion, more than double Queensland at \$5 billion. Unemployment in New South Wales is sitting at 4.3 per cent and Queensland the second highest in the nation at 6.1 per cent. However, it is not all doom and gloom for the Labor Party. I must give credit where credit is due. There is one area where Queensland is smashing

New South Wales and it is an area that no doubt makes the comrades on the other side of the House very proud, and that is Queensland is now the strike capital of the nation. Since the swearing in of this government it has overseen 150,000 working days lost to strikes, almost double that of New South Wales. What does the government say when faced with this embarrassing scoreboard? It passes the buck, but there is nowhere to hide.

That is this government's record. It is all its doing. It has been on that side of the field for 25 of the last 30 years. Thirty years ago Queensland was a powerhouse but now, economically, we are playing reserve grade at best. The Premier has no economic plan, only more taxes, more debt and more unemployment. On every economic performance indicator, this government has dropped the ball. As I have said in this House before, clever accounting and the resurgence of the resource sector is the only thing that is keeping this sinking ship afloat. That is because this is a government that takes no responsibility and continually passes the buck. This is a government that is arrogant and out of touch. This is a government that lacks leadership, lacks vision and fails to foster the economic conditions in which Queenslanders can thrive. In line with true Labor traditions, this government has a clear strategy of shirking the hard work, fudging figures, totally ignoring the real issues and failing to make the tough decisions to deal with debt. As history shows, it is happy to leave the hard work and heavy lifting to a future competent LNP government.

In stark contrast, the LNP has a plan to arrest the debt, bust congestion, provide cheaper electricity and fuel, deliver safer communities, better education, better health services and lower taxes. Only a Deb Frecklington-led LNP has the plan, the motivation and the capacity to return our state to the economic powerhouse it once was.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the member for Gladstone, during the debate there have been a couple of instances of individuals in the House being referred to by their names as opposed to their positions or their electorate. I remind all members to please do so in their future contributions.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (5.39 pm): I am glad the previous speaker talked about Rugby League, because he has a shadow spokesman who could not even count to six when he gave a penalty count against the Cowboys, which lost them the game. He had seven or six. He could not remember what it was.

This government is getting on with the job of delivering jobs in regional Queensland. As we have heard tonight, since the Palaszczuk government came to office in January 2015 we have created over 192,000 jobs in Queensland. That includes 26,000 more full-time jobs in construction and 7,600 full-time jobs in the mining industry. Over the past 12 months, we have created 8,300 jobs in regional Queensland. In my electorate of Gladstone, thanks to previous forward-looking Labor governments, we have seen the LNG jobs boom. The LNG industry is now a \$60 billion industry that supports thousands of jobs. Our LNG exports out of Gladstone Harbour are continuing to grow.

A couple of weeks ago—on my birthday—I hosted the Deputy Premier and Treasurer of Queensland in my electorate. I showed her around the Curtis Island facility. Certainly, it was a pleasure to show the Treasurer the economic boom that the LNG industry is providing to the state of Queensland. Let us not forget that it was not that long ago that the LNG industry did not exist. Now, we need to plan for those jobs of the future, just like we are doing with the jobs of the future in the biofuels industry.

The grant that we provided Northern Oil to establish a biofuels plant in Queensland has been a resounding success, with Northern Oil now converting more than 300,000 litres of waste biofuels every day. That is why Labor has provided yet another grant to Northern Oil for the biohydrogen generation unit at the same facility—because we know, as a Labor government, that future energy generation and the jobs that go with it will be coming from hydrogen. It is predicted that, in Queensland, there will be 16,000 jobs by 2040 in this brand-new industry. Japan alone is looking to power 40,000 electric vehicles with hydrogen fuel cells. I want to make sure that that hydrogen in those vehicles is coming from Central Queensland and Gladstone. Only Bill Shorten and Zac Beers, the Labor candidate for the Flynn electorate, will invest over \$1 billion in Australia's hydrogen industry, including an innovation hub in the Gladstone region—a \$3 million investment in regional Queensland that will see this next new industry boom come in my region.


The Palaszczuk government is also delivering job-creating infrastructure projects in the regions, with a \$1.44 billion investment in infrastructure for Central Queensland in last year's budget, supporting over 3½ thousand jobs in Central Queensland. That investment includes \$352 million for Rookwood Weir; a \$42 million upgrade of the Gladstone Base Hospital, which Minister Dick announced a few years

ago; and a \$65 million high school for the Calliope area, which was taken out of my electorate and given to the member for Callide to help him along the way. In addition to this huge investment in education, we have also invested over \$25 million in new infrastructure in schools in the Gladstone region. The Palaszczuk government has also invested \$50 million in Works for Queensland funding to councils throughout Central Queensland. The mayors of these councils continue to sing the praises of Works for Queensland, which is in stark contrast to the LNP's failed Royalties for Regions scheme.

I ask: what has the LNP done to stimulate regional growth and Queensland's economy? I recognise one thing it did: it is that glistening white elephant, the Northern Australian Infrastructure Facility—the NAIF: \$5 billion over four years under three prime ministers to deliver one facility granting zero dollars for Queensland projects. In Queensland, the state LNP members have no plan for our state or our economy. When it comes to economic management, we only have to look at their record to know that they are failures. As we have heard tonight, when they were in government they sacked 14,000 people. Their only new infrastructure project is the big white elephant sitting across the road. It is great they built it straight out the front of Parliament House and it is great that it has a nice big sharp edge because, as those ex-ministers walk out of here they can look at it and it is like a knife in their guts. They can see it and it is killing them that they have not had a chance to get into the place.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gladstone, I think that language is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BUTCHER: I withdraw. It is galling to have the member for Everton come into this House and complain about wage growth. We have had zero inflation. For three years under the federal government, Queensland has had the slowest rate of growth. Household consumption is down and wage growth has stagnated. While Labor is preparing for the future, the LNP has zero vision for policies, zero credibility and, when it comes to Scott Morrison, zero time left.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.44 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion, because it highlights a clear contrast between an opposition with a vision and a plan and a government running out of excuses and running out of time. For the first term the Palaszczuk government was able to drift along. It adopted a small target strategy. Growth in the public sector masked how bad unemployment was and was becoming. An increase in mining royalties masked the growth in expenditure that it was not able to control like good governments can. The government's failures in the programs and in the ministerial departments had not yet come home to roost.

Midway through this term, it is a vastly different story. Services are in freefall, such as in the health system, which was finally running properly, and law and order issues ranging from what youth offenders do on the streets to the way they are detained. In transport, we have a rail fail. That term is now part of our everyday language. There is also an infrastructure backlog that the government should be ashamed of. At the top of the list is the economic malaise. The government will always talk about unemployment figures, but it will not highlight that not only is Queensland's 6.1 per cent unemployment rate shameful—

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Thuringowa, you are warned under the standing orders.


Mr CRISAFULLI: When we contrast Queensland's unemployment rate against the national average, we see that it is particularly woeful. This motion highlights that business investment in Queensland is in freefall, wage growth in the private sector is far less than the national average and there is a crisis in the construction industry. The other day in regional Queensland I met a builder who said that conditions were the worst he had seen in 40 years. Queensland is the strike capital of Australia. There are five new taxes weighing down our economy, the largest of which were not promised in the lead-up to the last election.

This motion does not say why this is happening. I believe it is because the Deputy Premier and Treasurer has her eye off the ball. Instead of balancing the books, she is overseeing her pet projects. Instead of reining in costs, she has ministers scurrying to her asking for permission for everything they do each and every day. Above all, the major reason is that the Treasurer is conflicted in her electorate. The Treasurer can be a lion around the cabinet table, but a lamb in her electorate. She can be a warrior in William Street, but a wimp in West End.

The Treasurer knows that, in order to survive, she must kowtow to the very people whose agenda runs contrary to what this state needs. Everyday Queenslanders talk about a balance when transitioning from coal to renewable energy, but, in order for the member for South Brisbane to survive, she must

kowtow to a group who do not believe that. So her mind wanders. Instead of balancing the books, she looks afar and asks, 'Is the grass greener on the other slope or do I feel like a Tooheys?' One way or another, someone opposite is going to feel the knife, because in the long term the Deputy Premier knows that she cannot do both: she cannot be an effective member in her electorate and an effective Treasurer. The Treasurer cannot continue to survive in a seat where the views of her constituency run contrary to what this state needs.

In contrast, the LNP has a vision. This evening, our shadow Treasurer outlined a wonderful vision—the delivery of infrastructure, roads, things like the M1, things like the next stage of light rail, hospitals, classrooms, dams and no new taxes. Tonight I say we will govern to fix the mess caused by the catastrophic management of those opposite, we will govern to fix the unemployment crisis gripping this state and we will govern with the humility and discipline to restore confidence in a once-mighty economy.

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (5.50 pm): I am delighted to rise in the House to oppose this motion. One thing is for sure and certain: after that contribution the Leader of the Opposition has absolutely nothing to worry about. The member for Broadwater talks about a vision. What is that vision? It is the member for Broadwater looking in the mirror each morning—and doesn't he like what he sees!

I start my contribution to this debate with a single central proposition: being lectured to by the LNP on economic management is like being lectured to by Peter Dutton on loyalty; it lacks any shred of credibility—not one iota of credibility. The poor old member for Everton was up in his office last night with the quill and the inkwell scratching out a few facts—things that he thinks are facts and I will say a little bit more about that later—cobbling together a few random thoughts in a desperate attempt to demonstrate relevance to the economic debate in the state. What this motion demonstrates more than anything else is the member for Everton's unique and special gift for getting it wrong. Nowhere is that more evident than in this motion's reference to manufacturing jobs in Queensland. What this motion says about the reduction in manufacturing jobs—

Mr Bleijie: 20,000!

Mr DICK: It has gone from 18,000 according to the member for Everton to 20,000 according to the member for Kawana. It is simply wrong. Not only is it wrong; he knows it to be wrong.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt you, Minister. Members, there is far too much cross-chamber crossfire. The member on their feet deserves to be heard.

Mr DICK: They made this claim in question time on 1 May. As honourable members know, I rose at the end of question time, at the first available opportunity, to put the facts on the record. Not my facts—statistics from the Queensland Government Statistician's Office. As I said in the address to the House on 1 May, the Queensland Government Statistician's recent analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics employment data shows that there has been a 5.3 increase in manufacturing jobs in Queensland year on year. What was the national increase? It was 3.2 per cent. The LNP's shameful attempt to compare original points of data from the ABS data series is as absurd as it is misleading. I said in the parliament that the ABS specifically says do not compare those data points. They specifically recommend against it on their website. It is a black and white case of the member for Everton deliberately misleading the House and I will write to you, Mr Speaker, on that. I would encourage the member for Everton to look at what I said in the House immediately after question time on 1 May. It may be useful to look at the video to see who was in the House at that time.

The truth is that manufacturing jobs are up and so is investment. Gross value added contribution to the manufacturing sector in Queensland increased by \$700 million in the last year. We have even more manufacturing jobs on the way. Rheinmetall is coming to Queensland. We are implementing our manufacturing policy. What was the manufacturing policy that the LNP took to the election in 2015? Absolutely nothing. What was the manufacturing policy it took to the people of Queensland in 2017? Absolutely nothing. Those opposite have an unmatched flair for talking Queensland down. What they do not like, what they cannot say and what they cannot stomach are the facts. The facts are that the unemployment rate in Queensland is lower, the budget balance is healthier, exports are higher, state final demand is higher and Queenslanders are far, far happier than when we took over from the toxic Newman LNP government.

There are more Queenslanders working in manufacturing than there were at the end of the Newman government. Manufacturing jobs are up four per cent since we came to government. That goes to the heart of the LNP. It is all talk and no substance. It is all talk and no action when it comes to manufacturing. We will support this vitally strong sector of the Queensland economy for as long as we are in power.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you are under a warning. I will ask you to leave the chamber for the remainder of this debate.

Whereupon the honourable member for Everton withdrew from the chamber at 5.55 pm.

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (5.55 pm): As they say, past performance is a good indicator of future performance and Labor has an abysmal track record when it comes to managing Queensland's money. Looking at point 1 on this motion where we speak about the failed forecast in the MYFER, I can just imagine what happened when officials came and knocked on the door of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer. They would have been asked, 'What are you here for, people in suits?' The people in suits would have said, 'We are actually here from Treasury and we need to talk to the Treasurer about a problem with the midyear numbers.' They would have come in and said to the Treasurer, 'There is a problem. We have a \$1.3 billion writedown about the stamp duty revenue.' The Treasurer would have thought, 'I know what I'll say, I will say "We know, and can I say that's disgraceful and that's outrageous and I'm disgusted and there is absolutely no credibility! It's the federal government!"' The Treasury officials would have said, 'No, actually, we are not from the federal government; we are from the state government. We do not do the MYEFO; we do the MYFER.' The Treasurer then found out that it was her own MYFER, not the MYEFO, that she referred to in the *Hansard* when she referred to this issue back on 3 April.

Let us have a look at the MYFER, written of course by this Treasurer, where she said on page 12 in relation to stamp duty—

The improved position is the result of an uplift in revenue forecasts, supported by coal prices remaining higher for longer than expected, and an improved outlook for transfer duties in 2018-19.

That is what the Treasurer said in the MYFER in early December 2018. We subsequently saw a \$1.3 billion writedown by early April. On page 14 of the MYFER, an absolute contrast to what was written on page 12—

Taxation revenue has also been revised downwards by \$121 million across the period 2018-19 to 2021-22, compared to the 2018-19 Budget estimate which allows for a slowing of growth in the property market.

In December 2018 there was going to be a \$121 million writedown but the Treasurer, by early April, had to admit that there was going to be a \$1.3 billion writedown. She came into the parliament on 3 April and at page 1019 of *Hansard* said everyone knows there has been a property slowdown in New South Wales and Victoria, so that is exactly what has happened here. She had no idea about it four months, just over 100 days, before that.

We see what the Deputy Premier and Treasurer does when it comes to the other aspects of her portfolio. We saw it today in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships when it comes to the issue of whether she is responsible for what happens in other portfolios. Today in question time she threw the Minister for Child Safety under the bus. They obviously do not have a cabinet subcommittee that deals with housing, child safety, education, health and, of course, the minister responsible for the portfolio because today she said she is not responsible when it comes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I said this would be a broad economic debate, but it is not a broad debate about all things in current affairs. I ask you to come back to the motion.


Mr LANGBROEK: Indigenous Queenslanders with a disability and the taxi scheme are also important aspects of economic management. Under this government, we see taxes going up massively. If we look at budget paper No. 2 from last year's budget—we are about to see a new budget come up—five new taxes are ripping \$2.2 billion out of our economy. Those include the grey nomad tax, the land tax, stamp duty and the waste levy. That is an increase of 30 per cent over five years, from \$12.9 billion to \$16.7 billion. What this Labor government does is tax and spend.

The Treasurer cannot manage or forecast the budget. She uses confected outrage all the time, denying Indigenous Queenslanders economic opportunities in mining and development to salve her conscience and safeguard her vote in her inner-city seat of South Brisbane, and dismantling the Family Responsibilities Commission for hundreds of people in Cape York.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr LANGBROEK: She will not commit to fighting federal Labor for a fair share for Gold Coast Light Rail when Labor is handing over \$10 billion to Victoria for a rail project. The LNP has the plans for a second M1. We will fix the M1. Queenslanders need to vote for the LNP at the next election.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (6.00 pm): Listening to the contribution from those opposite, one would have thought that they had managed to secure government for more than one term in the past 30 years. In the past 30 years they have never had more than one term and that has been on only two occasions. Seriously, there is a reason why the people of Queensland have rejected their style of economic management time and time again. It is because the Queensland LNP have demonstrated that they are not on the side of Queenslanders and their only agenda is about cutting, sacking and selling.

Let us go through some of the economic indicators that those opposite do not like talking about. Only today figures released show that Queensland's trend gross state product, that is, how much our economy is growing, grew at 0.5 per cent in the December quarter 2018. That is above the national average of 0.2 per cent. Over 2018, the Queensland economy grew by 2.6 per cent in trend terms, which again is higher than the national average of 2.2 per cent.

Members opposite talked about the transfer duty. I will put that in perspective. Over 2018 in Australia, property prices have fallen by more than five per cent, led by falls of eight per cent and six per cent in Sydney and Melbourne respectively.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms TRAD: All along the east coast, sales have slowed and transfer duty revenues have suffered. In New South Wales, under a Liberal treasurer, transfer duty has fallen by more than \$3 billion since the last state budget. In Victoria, transfer duty has fallen by \$2.6 billion. In Queensland, as I have flagged, transfer duty has also been revised downwards.

I welcome and absolutely relish the opportunity to pit the Palaszczuk Labor government's performance on jobs and economic growth against that of the Liberal National Party, because it is only Labor that delivers jobs for Queenslanders. When the LNP took office, during a global financial crisis they took our unemployment rate from 5.5 per cent and drove it up to a peak of 6.7 per cent in trend terms, but seasonally adjusted to a height of 7.1 per cent—I repeat: 7.1 per cent—which was the highest rate in 11 years.

Since Labor has come to office, we have created more than 192,000 jobs in the economy. We have brought unemployment down from the 6.6 per cent that we inherited to 5.9 per cent in March 2019. We have restored front-line services, creating more than 57,000 jobs in health care and more than 34,000 jobs in education and training. Our job creation has been broad based right across a number of industries: more than 15,000 in construction; 12,000 in agriculture, forestry and fishing; and almost 9,000 in manufacturing. In Queensland real private sector wages have grown 1½ times faster under Labor than they did under those opposite.

We know that for the federal LNP wage suppression and stagnation is not a bug in the system, it is actually their genius strategy. Under the Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government, the share of income going to Australian workers reached its lowest level since records began. Under the Morrison government the bargaining power of workers is at an all-time low and that is reflected in slower wages for workers across the country.

I turn to a number of other issues. Firstly, the Westpac-Melbourne Institute consumer sentiment index saw Queensland consumers register the strongest increase in confidence across the mainland states. Those opposite talked of promising not to introduce any more taxes. I ask them to commit to repealing the taxes that we have introduced. Additional revenue measures: if you do not like them, promise to repeal them.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: I remind members to put their comments through the chair.

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

AYES, 37:

LNP, 35—Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Costigan.

NOES, 46:

ALP, 44—Bailey, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

Pairs: Boyd, Stevens; King, McArdle; Palaszczuk, Frecklington.


Resolved in the negative.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN (RISK MANAGEMENT AND SCREENING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL


Second Reading

Resumed from p. 1674, on motion of Mrs D'Ath—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (6.12 pm), continuing: Whilst the blue card system will never deliver the absolute guarantee that every single person who holds one poses no risk to children, we are the ones who must legislate to make it as strong and robust as possible so that we can limit the risk and rid the system of those who should never be around our children.

The protection of children must be the government's highest priority. I again urge all members of the House to see that more can be done to ensure better protections are in place for our children. This is what the community wants to see. This is the right and responsible thing to do for our most vulnerable. As legislators we need to show all Queenslanders that protecting our children is above politics. Labor members have a chance to do that today.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (6.13 pm): I stand before the House tonight to make my contribution to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018—the blue card bill. As we are all aware, Queensland's blue card system was created with the purpose of contributing to the creation of safe and supportive environments for children and young people. We must remember that the blue card screening system is only one aspect of a broad and robust child protection framework existent within this state.

I am proud to say that the blue card bill affirms the government's election commitment to amend the existing blue card system to introduce stricter safeguards for Queensland's children and young people. The ongoing review has and will ensure further improvements to protect our children. Good governments and good governing make no excuses for the review and ongoing development of a system that manages people, their behaviours—past and emerging—their changing circumstances and their changing criminal status.

This safeguard is embodied in the government's no-card no-start election commitment, which introduces blue card application processes to prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending. The no-card no-start policy strengthens the blue card system by ensuring that all persons working in regulated child related environments have been issued with a working with children clearance prior to commencing work. This will mean applicants can be job ready when they apply for jobs. This will assist employers and employees in this space.

This amendment is consistent with the current working with children act which regards the welfare and best interests of a child as a paramount consideration. The legal effect of the blue card bill prohibits an employer from employing a person in regulated employment unless the person holds a working with children clearance and the employer has notified Blue Card Services that the employer is proposing to employ the person.

To satisfy the notification requirement, an employer will be required to take reasonable steps to verify the employee's identity—for example, by viewing the employee's working with children card, which will include the person's photograph, or another form of photograph identification—and to notify the chief executive. This new requirement builds upon the existing offences which prohibit an employer from employing a person if they know or ought reasonably to know the person holds a negative notice.

It is important to note that there are 740,000 blue card holders in Queensland, which means almost one in every six Queenslanders holds a card. I am pleased to see that, despite the magnitude of bringing such a huge manual system into the 21st century, the automated system will be fully operational by early April 2020.

Through my 23 years as an educator, I have witnessed firsthand the development and improvement of Queensland's blue card system. I also know how invaluable this system is in creating a safe and protected environment for children to experience invaluable services that increase their wellbeing, such as child care and educational, sport and cultural activities. It is particularly important that employers such as school principals have confidence that a prospective employee is cleared prior to initiating employment discussions. I commend the Palaszczuk government for enhancing the protection of Queensland's children by allowing for more thorough safeguards in the implementation of the aforementioned activities.

It is important to note that the no-card no-start requirements do not extend to police officers and, as you know, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, registered teachers who undertake child related work outside their professional duties. This is on the basis that, as we know, they have already been subject to extensive and regular criminal history screening and ongoing monitoring by either the Queensland Police Service or the Queensland College of Teachers.

In addition to further safeguards, the blue card bill also allows for a streamlined and simplified process for a person to make a working with children check application. These reforms give effect to a range of recommendations made by the Queensland Family and Child Commission in its final report on the review of the blue card system. I would like to address two of the key findings made by the QFCC.

The QFCC's first finding indicated the need for a simplification of the existing legislative framework as well as clear and concise information for stakeholders to understand their obligations under the current system. As a result, the blue card bill takes the opportunity to modernise and simplify some of the language in the working with children act. The rewording of the current legislation will ensure that the obligations by persons who are holders of a blue card are met to the highest standard.


The second finding identified by the QFCC has identified the difficulty faced by stakeholders in filling out applications due to their manual and paper based nature, resulting in lengthy process delays. The bill aims to rectify this issue by introducing an efficient, online process to make an application, while also providing a manual option. By providing both options the bill allows for sufficient flexibility based on a person's preference for the form of application.

I note that the development of an online organisational portal is also underway which will assist organisations, particularly large ones, to better manage their obligations under the act. It will further strengthen the blue card system that we have here in Queensland. This position is supported by the QFCC's findings which indicate that Queensland's blue card system is one of the strongest in Australia and since 2001 has enhanced protection for children in regulated environments.

Coupled with the reforms introduced by the blue card bill, Queensland will further strengthen an already advanced set of procedural safeguards and mechanisms to protect children in various activities and services. It is a real shame that we see members of the opposition talking the blue card system down purely for political purposes and contrary to the findings of the QFCC. This is also the very same blue card system that operated under them when they were last in government.

Lastly, the amendments to the government's blue card bill does not rely on an employee's self-disclosure. Knowledge of an employee's history where the prospective employee has worked overseas relies on our international relations, on international and national consistency of practice and on factors outside of our control such as the country's internal processes of record management and information sharing. To communicate otherwise to our Queensland public is irresponsible governing.

I congratulate the QFCC on their final report, and once again I commend the Palaszczuk government for delivering such an invaluable election commitment as the no-card no-start policy implemented in this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.20 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This bill was first referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee but, due to the extra work that they have been dealing with over the last 12 months, the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee, of which I am a member, were happy to take it on. Firstly, I would like to congratulate our chair, deputy chair and other committee members for their hard work. I also thank the secretariat and the Hansard reporters who work hard to ensure that not only the work of the committee is prepared in a timely manner but also the committee report provides good information to the House.

During the committee process, it was I will not say confusing but a little bit confronting to have two bills being considered together at the same time at our public hearings. The second bill that we were considering was the Working with Children Legislation (Indigenous Communities) Amendment Bill 2018, which is a KAP bill to try to fix some of the shortfalls in the blue card system in some of the most remote communities in Australia. I understand that that bill will be brought before the House for debate at some stage. For new members on the committee who were not on the committee during the last parliament when we held hearings in different areas of Queensland, that process was a little bit rushed.


Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Pause the clock. Member for Hinchinbrook, I caution you not to pre-empt any debate on a bill that has not come before the House for debate.

Mr DAMETTO: Thank you for your direction, Mr Deputy Speaker. During our committee hearings, we had the opportunity to hear from people from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, LawRight, the Teachers' Union, the Independent Education Union of Australia, Independent Schools Queensland, Bravehearts and the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. Most people who gave evidence were in support of the bill other than Sisters Inside, who had some problems with the bill and decided that they were not going to support the bill.

Broadly, the bill proposes to amend the working with children legislation to give effect to an election commitment of the ALP referred to as the no-card no-start policy. Previously you had to have a job before you could apply for a blue card. I found myself in this situation when I went to apply for a blue card. It is a good idea to separate work and the blue card itself. When I was running my own small business and had to work in a space where there were children and it was a commercial requirement for me to have a blue card, it was very difficult when talking to the department and filling out the paperwork to meet the requirements of the permit because I was both the employer and the person who was trying to source the blue card. The first time I held a blue card was when I was in the construction industry. Twenty years ago they decided to bring in the blue card system as a requirement for working with children, so my blue card turned into a white card, which is now what is required for workers in the construction industry in Queensland.

In the last 20 years we have had 70 amendments to the blue card legislation, as the member for Toowoomba South pointed out in his speech. I thank the member for that. That indicates that this is a work in progress. The blue card system is not a complete safeguard to stop people from getting their hands on children when they are working in a position of trust. This system is a work in progress. I commend the automatic disqualifying offences that have been added. We would like to see more added, of course. As time rolls on, I am sure that we will see more disqualifying offences added, not only to make children safer but to put families and parents at ease so that when they drop their children off at day care, school or sporting clubs they will be better protected. I see that that will happen in the future. Up until now, disqualifying offences such as bestiality, kidnapping of children and kidnapping for ransom have not been disqualifying offences for a blue card application. That is a little worrying, but it is good to see that those offences are now tied up.

We will be supporting this bill. I commend the hard work that both sides have done over the last 20 years to implement this system. As our bill comes before the House, we hope to see other members support parts of it to try to make this system more workable. We have to understand that in Queensland one size does not fit all. We hope that this will continue to be a learning process so that we can better protect the most vulnerable in our community.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (6.26 pm): The Palaszczuk government is committed to keeping the Queensland community safe. It is that principle that guides our every decision. It is that principle that is at the heart of the legislative changes we are debating in the parliament today.

There is no greater priority than protecting the youngest and most vulnerable members of our society—our children. The legislative changes that we are introducing are a response to the *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system*. We are introducing changes

that will make it impossible for certain people to work with children. We are toughening the provisions. For example, the following people will be automatically disqualified from holding a blue card: a person convicted of torturing a child, a person convicted of attempted rape of an adult, a person convicted of assault with intent to commit rape of an adult, a person convicted of cruelty to children and a person convicted of trafficking in children. Likewise, the following offences will be elevated to disqualifying offences: choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting whether against a child or an adult. Attempt to murder and conspiring to murder will also become disqualifying offences.

Beyond those changes we will also require all persons who work with children to have a blue card prior to starting that work. We will remove the ability for a high-risk person to rely on an exemption. This amendment will strengthen the blue card framework, for example, by removing the ability of volunteer parents and volunteers under the age of 18 who have otherwise been issued a negative notice in relation to paid employment to engage in child related activities. We will establish a register of home based care services. We will require all adult household members of stand-alone childcare services to hold a blue card. We will make the Department of Education the 'notifiable person' for changes to the blue card status of family day care educators and adult household members' family day care residences.

Those opposite have tried to use fear and scare tactics to undermine Queensland's blue card system. The fact of the matter is that the QFCC found that Queensland's blue card system has always been one of the strongest in the nation. Our government made an election commitment to implement a no-card no-start policy during the election held in late 2017. During this debate as well as at other times, we have heard those opposite be selective in the data that they refer to in respect of the motivation behind the no-card no-start policy. We have heard them quote figures around the number of people who have started work whilst waiting for their blue card to be processed and then found out that they were ineligible to hold a blue card. The figures they do not quote are that during their time in government in 2012-13 there were nine people who would have been caught by the no-card no-start rule who started work in a child related activity—

Ms Bates: We were still trying to fix up the mess left by Child Safety.

Mr RYAN: Here we go. They miss the point. We are talking about their overreach and the fear and scare tactics they use, and they do so by being selective around the data. They are happy to quote data around our government's time, but they are not happy to quote the data while they were in government and they had the ability to act. They had a huge majority in this parliament and they could have introduced a no-card no-start framework then. There were nine people in 2012-13, 14 in 2013-14 and 25 in 2014-15. We are closing this loophole tonight. We are introducing a no-card no-start framework to ensure that those people who would be ineligible for a blue card cannot start child related activity.

The key part of my point is that if they are going to quote the data they need to be fair. They need to quote the data about when they were in government as well. This is a problem that should be bipartisan. I am pleased to hear that in respect of this bill it is bipartisan because they are supporting the framework we are introducing in this bill—that is, the no-card no-start policy. It is about making sure that they are genuine about quoting the statistics, that they are genuine about referring to the facts and that they do not attempt to mislead the community narrative by being selective with the data they are quoting.


In respect of the no-card no-start policy commitment that we made at the last election, I want to say that, practically, the implementation of a no-card no-start rule can only happen together with the fully automated system which is due to come into effect in early April 2020. To do otherwise would place unnecessary strain on the framework. We have to make sure that we do not rush significant reform, but we also have to make sure that we are able to practically implement what we are doing. Moving a completely manual system with 740,000 cardholders to a fully automated system takes time and should be done appropriately and responsibly because it is a significant task. We have listened to stakeholders who have requested that we do not rush the implementation of these recommendations because those organisations also need to be ready for the automated system.

The government bill is consistent with the recommendations of the QFCC and also the national standards being negotiated with the Commonwealth and other states and territories. We see with those opposite with their proposed amendments an overreach without an evidence base. We have heard in some contributions from members that they like to hang their hat on recommendation 29, which is in respect of removing the eligibility declaration process. Once again, we see overreach in this regard.

That recommendation clearly states that Blue Card Services retains discretion to issue a blue card to an applicant convicted of a disqualifying offence in circumstances where the applicant is not sentenced to imprisonment. The government bill retains that discretion as recommended and also retains the offence provision relating to the up-front offence of five years maximum which prohibits a disqualified person from applying for a blue card. The eligibility declaration process is the only feasible option that preserves the chief executive's discretion for this cohort of applicants.

The offence was retained because this government is committed to ensuring the blue card system is and remains a robust screening system. Currently, a blue card applicant undergoes a national criminal history check upon application. This check considers all of a person's national criminal history, including juvenile records, charges, spent convictions and convictions not recorded.

The government has given great consideration to the mechanisms underpinning what we are doing today. This is important reform which ensures that we prioritise the safety of young people and we ensure that the blue card system remains a robust safeguard for young children in our community and it protects the most vulnerable. It fulfils our election commitment around our no-card no-start policy, and of course it fulfils our promise to the people of Queensland to always prioritise the safety of the most vulnerable. That principle guides every decision that we make, and it is something that we are delivering on in this bill today. I support the bill and encourage all members to do so as well.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (6.35 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill puts into action the government's no-card no-start election commitment by introducing an automated blue card application process which will prevent people commencing paid work while a blue card application is pending. The LNP supports this measure as it is long overdue. This gaping loophole should have been closed years ago.

The Minister for Police talked about statistics and I am happy to give him some accurate ones. This is the same government that admitted to 'washing data' on child safety and putting statistics through the spin cycle whilst kids like Mason Jett Lee died. Until now, convicted child rapists and child murderers who are supposed to be disqualified from working with children have been able to work with children and continue to do so until such time as the police notify Blue Card Services. Alarming, because of this loophole that Labor have been so slow in closing, there are currently 6,471 persons in paid employment working with children who have not been assessed. In the time it has taken Labor to close this loophole, 5,500 Queensland children remained at risk due to the government's inaction.

In addition, this bill does not go far enough to address the issues in the blue card system, which has been a disaster under the Labor government. The *Keeping Queensland's children more than safe: review of the blue card system* report handed down in 2017 made 81 recommendations to improve the current blue card system. This bill enacts just one of those recommendations, leaving 80 unaddressed.

I share the disappointment of advocates, particularly of the Missing, Abused and Neglected Children's Group, who view this legislation as a failure on Labor's part to properly implement the recommendation of the report and adequately protect vulnerable children. The group had this to say: 'During this review several suggestions were made in regards to the safety of vulnerable children. It is with great disappointment to see that most, if not all, of the recommended changes have not been implemented or acted upon, thus resulting in further murders of innocent, vulnerable children.' I agree with the group when they state, 'It has now become imperative that those changes and further changes be made in order to protect the unfortunate children that are at great risk of colliding with her same fate,' referring to Tiahleigh Palmer.

The government would have you believe that this is just the first stage of a series of legislative reforms and that they are laying a foundation for other recommendations to be progressively implemented. However, when it comes to the safety of Queensland's children, the LNP believes that time is of the essence. Every loophole which is left open by Labor places risks on children that can be easily avoided. There are too many cases of predators slipping through the cracks for Labor to implement their usual snail's pace approach to legislative reform.

While Labor has moved to include murder of an adult and rape of an adult as disqualifying offences for a blue card, their laws just did not go far enough to meet community expectations. That is why the LNP has put forward the sensible amendments that will only make Queensland's blue card system stronger. The community expects the blue card system to protect children, but there are still glaring loopholes in Labor's laws. Our amendments go further to also expand the disqualifying offences

in the blue card system, placing Queensland's blue card system in line with New South Wales and ultimately providing greater protection for Queensland children. Those disqualifying offences should have been included in the government's bill in the first place. We would also ensure that international criminal histories of applicants are examined before they get their hands on a blue card or, worse than that, a child.

Culprits of atrocious crimes will be disqualified from applying for a blue card under our laws. This government has refused to enforce a ban on Queenslanders with criminal records obtaining a blue card in order to work with children. This is despite a government review recommending it. The LNP has been calling for the urgent implementation of recommended changes in a state government review brought down last year, including expanding the list of crimes that would automatically exclude someone from obtaining a blue card.

In Queensland over 78,000 blue cards have been issued since July 2018. In that time 764 applicants were assessed as high risk and were subsequently prohibited from working with children. Given the number of persons working with children, it is vital that only those with the highest of standards are working with our children. It is even more important that persons who have committed offences such as incest and rape are prohibited from working with children. It does not seem to me to be a groundbreaking or controversial notion that anyone convicted and jailed for serious child sex offences, the murder of a child or offences related to child exploitation material is banned from obtaining a blue card. However, other criminals, including drug dealers, armed robbers and wife bashers, can get one if their cases are deemed exceptional and authorities do not believe there is a risk to children.


Labor's disqualifying framework did not include serious violent offences, including manslaughter of a child; child cruelty and torture; choking, suffocation or strangulation in a domestic setting—and, if anybody in this chamber knows Betty Taylor, she will tell them that people are 800 times more likely to be the victim of a family and domestic homicide if they have previously been throttled, so we really need to make sure that that is included—incest of an adult; attempted rape or assault with intent to commit rape; and sexual assault of an adult. I think I speak for most mothers when I say the idea of an individual convicted of any of these offences working with children is shocking and disturbing. It is clearly not good enough that Labor has failed to close those loopholes, which was recommended in their own review.

The 2017 QFCC report into the blue card system was initiated after the death of Tiahleigh Palmer, who was tragically killed by her foster carer, Rick Thorburn. If an expanded criminal history disclosure was implemented on blue cards, Tiahleigh Palmer would still be alive. Thorburn had a rap sheet as long as your arm with offences such as stealing and break and enter spanning from 1977 to 1997, yet under our current system he passed a working with children check, successfully got his blue card, went on to run a family day care business with his wife at the family home and became a foster carer. A man like Rick Thorburn should never have been granted the privilege of working with children and Tiahleigh should never have been placed in the care of a convicted criminal like Rick Thorburn. It should never be forgotten that Tiahleigh Palmer was never missing; Tiahleigh Palmer was right where Child Safety put her: with her convicted killer.

The LNP's laws guarantee that anyone convicted of a disqualifying offence will never hold a blue card in their life, a move supported by the Queensland Family and Child Commission. Last year when asked, the Attorney-General rejected suggestions to expand disqualifying offences. The *Courier-Mail* raised questions as to why murderers and rapists whose offences were against adults were still eligible for a blue card. The Attorney-General dismissed this, stating that, while they are not specifically listed as disqualifying, they would have had their applications rejected. Call me a sceptic, but it seems inappropriate to put our faith and trust into a system that has continuously let predators slip through the cracks. I speak of predators such as the PCYC employee who had been working with children for three years despite having been convicted of child sex offences but obtained a blue card.

Our amendments, now copied by the government, ensure convicted child killers and sexual predators cannot come close to working with kids—not even for a second. We support Labor's bill with our amendments because it is long overdue and reforms the inefficient system currently in place. Last year it was revealed that it was taking authorities an average of four business days to refuse blue card applications after finding out the applicants had been charged with or convicted of a disqualifying offence. It also came to light last year that over 6,400 people in Queensland were working with kids whilst their applications were still pending. The no-card no-start policy directly addresses this disturbing backlog. It is unacceptable that Labor has taken a year to bring forward their urgent fix. This type of loophole should have been closed years ago.

For too long Queensland's blue card system has been a laughing-stock. It was originally supposed to be the gold standard when it came to working with children, but that is no longer the case. Our blue card system has become prone to exploitation and loopholes that have put children at risk. We support this legislation and we support our amendments which go further to secure the safety of our Queensland children.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (6.44 pm): I rise today to speak on the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 that we are debating this evening. Madam Deputy Speaker McMillan, like you, I too worked in the education industry in a number of roles for around 28 years. Over that time hasn't education and particularly making sure we look after our students evolved? When I started teaching we ended up having five Sperry computers put down the back of the room. Of course no-one used them because no-one knew how to use them. Time evolved and students were coming to school knowing how to use computers. With the introduction of the internet it became part of our everyday teaching and learning.

As an advisory teacher at one stage, I was setting up minor computer networks and allowing students to dial in to the internet to do research. At this stage I was doing this work at a primary school and one of the teachers was doing some work around birds. Honourable members can imagine what happened when she dialled up the robin redbreast in her class. It certainly was not a bird that came up; it was a whole range of other issues that really presented a lot of concerns in that class. Since then we have seen the education department starting to manage and filter various sites to protect our kids.

In the evolution of protecting our kids we have also had things like student protection training. When I started teaching I never ever thought I would actually have to do training that would teach us to keep our hands off kids so we would not have to consciously make decisions about what we were doing. As a former PE teacher, as honourable members can tell by my sleek greyhound physique—and you yourself are a former PE teacher, Madam Deputy Speaker—I know that—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan): Order! Member, I think it is time that you come back to the long title of the bill. Turning back 25 years is probably not relevant to the bill.

Mr STEWART: When it comes to student protection, all teachers as well as any other person who works in a school need to make sure they are working within those student protection frameworks. There were many occasions when we had to employ people who were not teachers such as cleaners, ground staff, facility managers and teacher aides. Those sorts of people would have an interview and we would then be employing them, so they needed a blue card. Once they got the job they would need to apply for a blue card. When we were looking to employ them, as an interim step we would do some active searching as best we could in the background to make sure that their previous employers had no concerns around their behaviours. As you would know, Madam Deputy Speaker, that person would put in their application and it was anywhere from 15 days to 40 days before we actually got a response. Looking back retrospectively, that was placing those kids at risk.


These steps are great steps. What we are doing is making sure that every time parents send their kids to school they do so knowing that there are safety measures in place. This is reflected by Dr Perry, who was the CEO of Queensland Catholic Education, who said that she—

... strongly endorses the planned improvements in processing time lines, supported by the implementation of a new online portal system that we have been advised will likely reduce processing times to approximately five working days.

That is a great step forward. If a school was looking to replace a non-teaching staff member and they were waiting anywhere up to 40 days for the applicant to get their blue card, that presented some problems.

This online portal will speed up that process. More importantly, this says to people that if they are thinking of being employed in an environment with children they need to think ahead and get a blue card. Basically, now there is a five-day turnaround. That is a really good step. If you are submitting an application for a job in a school and you do not have a blue card, you should apply immediately so that when the interview occurs you will have a blue card—problem solved.

These are great steps moving forward and I commend the Palaszczuk government. As a former principal, I can say that sometimes I did not know that a person was okay until the blue card was issued. These are great steps, a great move, a great policy and a great bill. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (6.50 pm): Blue cards are a privilege, not a right. This legislation spotlights the importance of the working with children screening system, or the blue card system as it is popularly known. The government is trumpeting these amendments as a no-card no-start regime. I

feel that is misleading. It was always intended as a no-card no-start system. It ceased to be that because of the systemic blockage in processing applications. When it ceased to be that, it ceased to be the screening and licensing system the people of Queensland expected and believed they had.

A question on notice in November 2018 revealed that some 2,917 applications were pending for paid employees who were entitled to start while awaiting the outcome of a blue card application. This may hide the backlog but does so with potentially tragic outcomes. Any of those applicants already working with children could have had serious criminal histories and could be refused. The government should have trumpeted that the suite of initiatives was aimed at making the process easier and faster. I know that people in my electorate are hoping these changes will have the desired result.

For many years, the start of every school year in Central Queensland saw backlogs of people waiting for processing of their blue cards before they could take up child related employment. Part of the problem was the way the system required students working with children to replace the blue card that they had held for student practicums with a new blue card when they graduated to employment. This always coincided with the agency closing down for the annual Christmas holidays. Every year commenced with a backlog.

The system also required jobseekers who required blue cards in their work to have the job lined up before they applied. In those days it made many employers operate short-staffed while they waited for childcare workers' clearance of a blue card. In one case in my electorate, a childcare worker was employed in January and could not start work until May. That is a devastating blow on people trying to get employment in regional Queensland. This disadvantaged everyone—the employer, the worker and the children.

Allowing paid work to commence before the blue card issued is potentially disastrous too. It is hoped that the new automated system will allow people making the transition from student to worker to be job ready by having the valid blue card when applying for a job. They will not require a link to an employer before they apply. This will be a big improvement for regional and rural Queenslanders.

I strongly support the introduction of a photograph on the blue card. This will provide some protection against fraudulent misuse of blue cards by persons other than the official holder and will close another one of those loopholes. These loopholes all allowed real-world experiences that risked bringing the blue card system into disrepute.

I sincerely welcome the changes that will allow a better application process. This will really help workers and employers in regional Queensland. I also welcome the automated process which promises faster time frames, especially for those applicants with no criminal history or simply non-relevant criminal history.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission recognised that a more efficient processing system is, by definition, a stronger protection for children. That is what it is all about. A supplementary review was conducted by the Queensland Family and Child Commission following the tragedy of Tiahleigh Palmer's case. The legislation addresses one recommendation from that review by creating a central register which will function like an information exchange for multiple agencies dealing with children. These agencies include the Queensland Police Service, the Department of Education, the Office of the Public Guardian and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.

It is hoped that, by being able to see all of the information held by these agencies about a given child's living arrangements and information about others also residing in a home, agencies will be able to make a better informed decision about child safety. I sincerely hope so. This will be a protection for all children in regulated out-of-home care. That includes foster and kinship care, family day care and stand-alone care, for example regular, scheduled babysitting from a sitter's home.

Many families in the Bowen Basin rely on this last type of care because of the shortage of childcare centres and the fact that young families in these towns live without the physical support of a network of relatives. They have moved away from their families of origin in order to earn a good wage. They do not have the ability to rely on grandparents, aunts and uncles, so they may need to employ a regular babysitter or family day care arrangement. This amendment strengthens the protection for the child. However, Labor's blue card reform still fails to meet the community expectations of the reform needed. That is why the LNP will be moving amendments to further strengthen blue card protections for workers.

I was shocked when a recent answer to a question on notice revealed that over the last three years 46 persons convicted of disqualifying offences were given an okay to apply for a blue card. The blue card is needed only so they can work with children and then, of course, they are able to start work

pending the processing. What are the convictions for? Some 31 of the 46 were for unlawful carnal knowledge. That means that people convicted of sexual offences are working with children quite legally, and they hope to have a government issued blue card to show off if they need to keep at bay employer or parental concerns.

A recent question on notice revealed that under Labor 35 people with disqualifying offences were granted a blue card by relying on eligibility provisions. Some 23 of those 35 were unlawful. This is definitely not what the community expects from the blue card system. The LNP amendments will remove the eligibility declaration to ensure that such people remain disqualified. Importantly, they will ensure that they will never work with children. Further, we will ensure that, if a person is charged with a serious offence, their blue card will be suspended. Their blue card application will not be considered or processed while the charge of a serious offence is pending or if the person has been convicted of a serious offence.

In the community the blue card is seen as a licence to work with children, as it should be. The LNP will require Blue Card Services to conduct international criminal history checks to ensure that people are properly assessed for a Queensland blue card. This will include people with work histories in New Zealand and other countries.

In an overdue reform, the bill will expand the range of disqualified offences to include seven more offences including rape, murder, kidnapping of a child, abduction and child stealing. While that is for the good, the LNP will also include manslaughter of a child that was not a result of a motor vehicle accident, torture, cruelty to children under the age of 16, sexual assault of an adult, rape or an attempt to commit rape of an adult, and incest. The need to include such offences is obvious. Most parents would not want their child near such a person and it is probably assumed by most Queenslanders that these offences are covered, because they do not want to see children at risk of those offences.

The LNP wants the Queensland blue card scheme to operate in the best practice model in screening for working with children. The bill is a step in the right direction, but without the LNP amendments it will still fall short of the gold standard. We must protect our children. The blue card plays an important role in ensuring that we have a system that works right across Queensland. The blue card system has been around for 20 years and has played a significant role in ensuring that we have the right people in employment, playing a role with children in sport—Rugby League, netball and so on—or educating children. We need a blue card system that parents understand and that plays an important role in protecting our children.


Our children are our most valuable resource. We need to make sure we have legislation to protect children right across Queensland. I commend this bill to the House. I thank those in government and those in opposition for making sure we get the right system in place. It is important that we have the right legislation when it comes to blue cards, because they play an important role in ensuring parents have confidence that the people involved with their children, whether it is at sport or in education, are trustworthy.

(Time expired)

Debate, on motion of Mr Millar, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Rural Fire Brigades

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (7.00 pm): I table a nonconforming petition of 832 signatories calling on the Labor government to abandon plans for a Brisbane takeover of our rural fire brigades and SES groups.

Tabled paper. Nonconforming petition regarding rural fire service and SES [\[775\]](#).

The petition was needed and called for following considerable outcry from our local rural fire brigades over the Labor government's plans to restructure how rural fire brigades and local SES groups report, operate and are managed within Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

I am pleased to report that, due to pressure from the Rural Fire Brigades Association and many Queenslanders, the Labor government has made some concessions. By no means does it fix all issues. While Labor's Brisbane takeover and power grab of rural fire and SES continues, the department has made some considerable commitments—I also acknowledge the minister for listening to the rural fire brigades in regard to this—to now consult with the very volunteers who make up 80 per cent of QFES. This is a pleasant change, given the botched consultation process undertaken by the Labor

government, which failed to engage with more than 42,000 volunteers within QFES. The LNP will continue to watch this space and hold the Labor government to account, as we should, on its commitments to formalise a better engagement and consultation process with rural fire brigades and local SES groups.


For the first time ever, rural fire brigade first officers will now have access to a simple, place based decision-making process to ensure that, when it comes to fighting fires, local knowledge and control will be respected and implemented. That is incredibly important. While this is a positive step in the right direction, the Rural Fire Brigades Association of Queensland would like to see further legislative changes to formalise a simple, workable command and control tactical directive that clearly defines responsibility for rural fire brigades, the State Emergency Service and Fire and Emergency Services.

As the party that represents rural and regional Queenslanders, the LNP understands and respects the role that local knowledge and expertise play when it comes to fighting bushfires. My father has been involved in rural fire brigades for a long time and I understand what is needed to be done. That is why we will continue to pressure this Labor government to implement these promises to Queensland rural fire brigades.

We all know that it is in Queensland Labor's DNA to govern from Brisbane for Brisbane. That is why, when it comes to issues affecting rural and regional Queenslanders, the LNP will always fight for our local fire brigades' autonomy. Our local rural fire brigades are important. The member for Scenic Rim, who is sitting beside me, knows more than ever how important they are. I visited his region recently. We need to make sure we protect them and ensure they have a say.

(Time expired)

Aspley Electorate

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (7.03 pm): In the Aspley electorate we had some fantastic Anzac Day services—on the day itself and earlier in the week undertaken by local schools—which I was honoured to attend. I mention the Geebung RSL dawn service, the Kedron-Wavell RSL dawn service, the Aspley Hornets dawn service, the Pinaroo Cemetery service, the Zillmere service at which my office was happy to represent me, the Kedron-Wavell main service and the Anzac Day service at Bald Hills.

The Geebung RSL sub-branch and the Kedron-Wavell RSL did, as they always do, an outstanding job on the day, bouncing from service to service. It was fantastic to see the community turn out in great numbers everywhere. I also thank Sharon from the Aspley Florist, a great small business operator who every year makes a sterling effort to meet demand for wreaths.

Recently in our local community I was very pleased to join Anika Wells, the Labor candidate for Lilley, for her announcement that the Northside Wizards would receive an additional \$2 million from an incoming Shorten Labor government to help make the coming new home for basketball on the north side even better. Northside CEO Allan Woodford said—

These funds will help us complete the Zillmere project and have the equipment and furnishings to undertake full operations early in 2020.

He continues—

It's a credit to all the volunteers, players and staff at Wizards that Labor sees the benefit of the much needed courts and the community benefit the facility will bring. It's a great boost and we're absolutely ecstatic and grateful.

In addition to the benefits to a growing sport on the north side, within the Lilley and Petrie electorates in particular, this funding will be a real boost for the Zillmere area, giving kids more productive after-school activities at a location that could not be better linked to public transport.


It is clear on the north side at this federal election that you get investment back in the community from Labor or you get cuts, chaos and Clive Palmer under the LNP. I was shocked to learn this week that Clive Palmer is now directly funding LNP advertising on the north side. I table an article titled 'Facebook account linked to Clive Palmer pays for Queensland LNP election ad'.

Tabled paper. Article from the *Guardian* online, dated 14 May 2019, titled 'Facebook account linked to Clive Palmer pays for Queensland LNP election ad' [\[776\]](#).

This is a new low for the LNP. They are getting desperate and they will accept any currency in the last week of a campaign. They burned all their Turnbull bucks last year. There are no Turnbull millions to bail them out this time. There are no more developer dollars allowed. As we all know, they

lost their High Court challenge. Now they are chasing the Palmer pesos, wired in direct from Fiji. The Palmer pesos are now directly funding the LNP campaign on the north side. What a disgrace! They are happy to take support and funding from a bloke who cannot even pay his staff what they are owed. We need a federal government that is focused on wages growth and jobs growth, not on doing deals with Clive Palmer. We need a Shorten Labor government, not the cuts and chaos of a Morrison-Palmer-Hanson coalition.

Cleaner Greener Schools

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (7.06 pm): It has been a great pleasure in recent weeks to launch another initiative in the Burnett electorate. We are calling it the Cleaner Greener Schools project. I could not be more delighted to share with the House about a great project and opportunity.

We are extremely lucky to live in such a pristine environment in our part of the world, and we are also lucky that we have the knowledge and resources available to us to help maintain and improve our great environment and region into the future. I have been lucky to meet some incredible and remarkably intelligent young people within my electorate who are always coming up with new and innovative ways to reduce, re-use and recycle.

The main concept encourages schools to participate in the promotion of waste minimisation and recycling within the school, the home and the broader community, and the promotion of the long-term sustainability of the schools' waste minimisation and recycling initiatives.

On planning this project my office and I approached a number of local businesses and organisations to see if they would be interested in partnering with my office—offering more knowledge, ideas, advice, products and support. We were over the moon with the response. For their support I thank the Burnett Mary Regional Group, Sheila and team; Impact Make Your Mark; ABC Recycling, Anne-Marie and Paul; and Multikraft, Conor O'Brien.


The six schools participating this year are Moore Park State School, St Luke's Anglican School, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bargara State School, Goora Gan Steiner School in Agnes Water and Gooburrum State School. As part of the initiative schools are offered a tour of Impact's recycling facility and ABC Recycling's new Containers for Change facility. ABC Recycling also offered to deliver a collection bin to all participating schools.

On completion of the competition, schools are encouraged to submit a short summary covering how waste reduction and recycling promotion were completed by their school and what improvements were made. This can be submitted in formats such as a short video, a pdf, a PowerPoint or posters. We will go through a judging process with involved stakeholders.

We are already seeing many schools take up the charge in activities like Facebook promotions of recycling, the introduction of worm farms for food waste at school, nude food programs, the promotion of recycling in school magazines, the use of school community noticeboards to promote recycling, and participation in our Reef Guardians program around the Great Barrier Reef.

It has been such a pleasure to launch this program again in our region. The uptake from the local businesses and organisations, as well as the schools, has been encouraging and wonderful. Let us use the great knowledge and resources that are available to us to help educate our younger generations. Sometimes they educate us, as we all know. We will get a lot of knowledge and innovation in return. I encourage schools to participate in our Cleaner Greener Schools program. I encourage other members of the House who may want to consider engaging with their schools to make sure our environment is part of the curriculum and part of our school students' priorities as we go forward.

Algester Electorate, Schools

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (7.09 pm): This evening I want to welcome to Parliament House principals and P&C presidents from schools in the Algester electorate. Every day our teachers, teacher aides, support staff and of course the incredible volunteers in our P&Cs work hard to make sure our children have a great start to life and have the skills they need for a rapidly changing world.


Each year I invite student leaders from each of the schools in my electorate of Algester to Parliament House and so far this year I have had the pleasure of hosting school captains and vice-captains from Watson Road State School, Pallara State School, Acacia Ridge, Algester, Browns Plains State School, Browns Plains State High School and Calamvale Community College along with

the three Catholic primary schools in my electorate, St Bernadine's, St Stephen's and Our Lady of Fatima, and on top of that one of Queensland's vibrant Islamic colleges, Wisdom College, and our state's first school specifically established to support first nations children, the Murri School. I have also had the opportunity to catch up with year 6 classes from Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School and the Murri School when they visited Parliament House this year. Just last week I enjoyed lunch in Parliament House with students from the wonderful Calamvale Special School.

During these visits the students were interested to learn about our structure of government, the history of our state and the importance of political participation and there were many and varied questions about this place, but on many occasion I was asked several questions about the environment and about the importance in taking action on climate change. These students were incredibly knowledgeable and incredibly passionate about this subject and they had some great insight into protecting our planet and thinking critically about our nation's future, which of course is their future. This is why we must invest in them and ensure they receive a world-class education.

I have the great fortune of having some incredible educators who work with our students across my electorate, but on top of that should a Shorten Labor government be elected this Saturday the schools in the Algester electorate will receive an extra \$6.5 million over the next three years as part of the Fairer Funding Now scheme, and I know this will be warmly welcomed in my electorate. In addition to this, there will also be some exciting improvements to some of our local schools, including \$93,000 of upgrades at Acacia Ridge State School which will cover the cost of new laptops for students and upgrades to outdoor areas, \$44,000 towards improvements to the outdoor learning area at Watson Road State School and \$50,000 for an environment centre and STEM lab at Pallara State School which will also be available to schools in surrounding areas. Education is an incredibly important part of our community and for our kids as they prepare for what is a rapidly changing world in which there are great uncertainties, but with great educators they are able to have all the skills they need to be able to adapt to that.

Kinsel, Mr J

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (7.12 pm): This evening I rise to farewell and honour my dear friend Jim, James Harold Kinsel, who sadly passed away on 2 May. James Harold Kinsel was born on 22 February 1959 in Oakland, California. He lived with his family and went to primary school and high school in the San Francisco Bay area until 1978. He attended Menlo College in Menlo Park in California where he met Suzy in 1978. He graduated with a business degree in 1981 and then later he and Suzy married in Makati in Metro Manila in the Philippines. They lived in California until 1984 and then moved to the Gold Coast in September of that same year. A year later, they purchased a printing business known today as Surfers Inkspot Printers. Together they had three boys—William, David and Daniel—and it was an incredible privilege to hear the boys speak so fondly of their father last Friday at the funeral. In fact, Will, the eldest of the three boys, was given special leave to return from Afghanistan for his father's funeral.

I have had the privilege of walking this path with Jim for many years. He is a great father. He has been an incredible example to me and my boys over the years. Indeed, our families have had the privilege of spending many special occasions together like visits to the grand final in Sydney. I want to speak very briefly about Jim and Suzy. They are two of the most generous people you will ever meet. In fact, one of their favourite scriptures comes from the book of Matthew, chapter 6. It says—


But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

That absolutely sums up their generosity. There have been so many people that they have helped, so many events that they have sponsored, so many charities that they have supported on the Gold Coast and in other parts of Australia. They had a real passion for child safety and have been incredible supporters of Bravehearts for the best part of two decades. Together Jim and I were on the inaugural board of the Gold Coast Community Fund back in 1999 which has since raised and given some \$3 million away to individuals and charities on the Gold Coast. Jim and Suzy played a very active role in that particular organisation, having served very faithfully. I will close with another verse of scripture and it is the scripture that came to mind as I stood by his grave on Friday, and I just thought of these words because I am sure the Lord would say this—

Well done, my good and faithful servant.

Well done.

South-East Queensland, Infrastructure

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (7.15 pm): With such strong population growth in South-East Queensland, it is absolutely critical that infrastructure be delivered. In three out of four budgets the Palaszczuk government has delivered record QTRIP programs on transport infrastructure. In last year's budget we committed an additional 10 per cent funding by the state at a time when the Commonwealth Morrison government was withdrawing six per cent. Over the last four years this state has fought tooth and nail—and had to fight tooth and nail—with an unsympathetic and insensitive federal government under three different prime ministers to get our fair share of infrastructure funding, and we just have not received that. Cross River Rail is the most important project in the country, with not a single dollar out of the current federal government. That project would benefit every commuter on every rail line, particularly the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast lines, with faster and more frequent services.

In terms of the M1, we have had to fight tooth and nail, yet we have not got our fair share out of Canberra. Canberra funds the M1 at 80 per cent at Coffs Harbour and funds it at 80 per cent north of Newcastle in New South Wales, but when it comes to Queensland it rips us off and offers us 50 per cent and it is the Palaszczuk government that has to do the heavy lifting. Likewise with the Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3A, that is the lowest ever offer from a federal government for a stage of light rail on the Gold Coast after the heavy lifting done again by the Palaszczuk government on stage 2, built in record time for the games, and what a success that was. The federal government is again underfunding the Sunshine Coast rail duplication when it itself has listed it under the National Land Transport Network, yet with 80 per cent funding it still offers us a cheap deal. It gives \$27 billion to Victoria, but it comes to Queensland and it rips us off.

This is a very important election for anyone who lives in South-East Queensland who is serious about dealing with population growth and with infrastructure. A federal Labor government is absolutely necessary. M1 motorists would be particularly interested because what we see from federal Labor is a commitment to upgrade three key interchanges—exit 41, exit 45 and exit 49. That is a \$100 million package which is double the current government's commitment, but the current federal government does not understand the M1 and has ripped us off on the upgrades that are underway. There are also commitments to park-and-rides at Coomera, Beenleigh and Ormeau. A federal Labor government will commit to the Linkfield Road upgrade—something ignored by Peter Dutton for 18 years, yet he is promising that he will do it now that he is under threat. If we want infrastructure for a growing population in South-East Queensland, at this federal election there is only one choice, and that is a federal Labor government that has worked closely with us and that has invested in a lot more infrastructure in South-East Queensland than the current government that continues to rip-off Queensland.


Mr Millar interjected.

Mr BAILEY: Do we want more of the same in cuts or chaos, or do we want a united Shorten government? I think the choice is clear.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Gregory, two things. Firstly, please resume your seat if you wish to make any contribution. Secondly, please withdraw the statement you just made where you have not used a member's correct title.

Mr MILLAR: I withdraw.

Noosa Electorate, Flight Paths; Parliamentary Committees

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.19 pm): Whether it is consultation with external entities or within processes through our own parliamentary committees, there are concerning commonalities—a lack of time allocated or flaws in the consultation process. In my own electorate of Noosa, a consultation process regarding proposed new flight paths was undertaken by Airservices Australia. I hear members say, 'That is not the state's domain; it is the federal domain.' Regardless of the level of government, consultation processes that are inadequate, poorly undertaken or positioned to ensure that there is no ability to extend consultation periods for an unsuspecting community are not acceptable. When we are dealing with highly technical or scientific issues that are impacting residents and the environment, it is appropriate and essential that residents have adequate time to digest, investigate, communicate their concerns and obtain answers to their questions. This is not possible when the process is inadequate, or flawed.

Similarly, bills introduced and sent to committees with a tight time frame—often only a 14-day submission period—is leaving Queenslanders frustrated and correctly questioning why such short time frames are given. As seen with recent inquiries, through statements of reservation and in debate,

concerns are raised that stakeholders, regardless of their position, are often without the resources to understand complex legislation, access legal interpretation, or afford consultants to work out what the impacts will be or how to correspond accordingly.

Understandably, the government, projects and any entity that is compelled to undertake consultation look for effective and efficient processes to ensure that costs do not escalate and that outcomes are delivered in a timely manner. However, with every undertaking the process time line needs to accommodate for extensions if requested, or reviews if necessary. It is no mystery why Queenslanders may not trust us as politicians, government or government processes when they are confronted with consultations that fall far short of their expectations.

At the moment, the residents of the Noosa electorate are asking many questions, including how flight paths that need to meet plating dates can be amended in time if there is not even time to extend consultation. Additionally, why utilise a letterbox drop amongst junk mail? Transparency and accuracy in communication is key to good community consultation, as well as access to all information and reports, preferably translated for ease of understanding, and precise answers to relevant questions, requests and options put forward during consultation, not after. The facts, even if they are not palatable, will be appreciated, unlike obscure reasons this essential information cannot be provided when needed. It is time to review these processes and genuinely consult with our communities on how they can be improved.

Jordan Electorate, Domestic and Family Violence Prevention



Mrs MULLEN (Jordan—ALP) (7.22 pm): As we know, each May, Queensland marks Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month to raise community awareness of domestic and family violence and send a clear message that all forms of violence, particularly against women and children, will not be tolerated—not now, not ever.

The community of greater Springfield is fortunate to have so many organisations, charities and community groups working closely to ensure that women and children escaping violence in their region are being offered practical support and assistance. In this month, I would like to highlight the work of three of those organisations and services.


The Domestic Violence Action Centre is a very important organisation in my community for the work it undertakes towards the abolition of all forms of violence against women and children. DVAC provides an extensive range of services on both an individual and community level—crisis support, counselling, advice on safety upgrades, court support, and community education initiatives. DVAC's work is invaluable and much respected within my community. It was wonderful to see the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce once again organise a very successful International Women's Day lunch to raise much needed funds for DVAC's ongoing and important work in my community.

For the past two years I have also worked closely with Cityhope Church and its charity arm, Cityhope Care, which has developed the A New Thing initiative. It is a credit to Pastor Mark Edwards and the church that this initiative provides a considered and dedicated response in supporting vulnerable individuals leaving domestic and family violence. All too often people escaping domestic and family violence leave with nothing. Cityhope Care has responded by providing front-line agencies with practical and immediate care packs to support those who are taking their first brave steps to leave domestic and family violence situations. The packs are specially created for women, teens, children, babies and men. The care packs not only provide essential items but also include important information and resources to support a holistic response. The care packs also include a message of hope and additional resources that are individualised according to need, such as SIM recharge cards.

With the generosity of my community, Cityhope Care has packed in excess of \$230,000 worth of these care packs. The care packs are generously stored with front-line agencies, such as the Queensland Police Service and Ipswich Hospital, and are collaboratively shared across agencies for distribution as needed. My office serves as a collection point and it has been so pleasing to see the generosity of the members of my local community, who have been purchasing and dropping off supplies for the care packs.

Finally, I would like to thank the Queensland Police Service Vulnerable Persons Unit and the High Risk Team, which works in the domestic and family violence space in both the Ipswich and Logan regions. The work they do is complex, difficult and sometimes heartbreaking, but it is vitally important in ensuring that women and children in my electorate know that there is a network of services working together to support them and to keep them safe.

Buderim Electorate, Schools

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (7.24 pm): Tomorrow, like every school day, more than 13,000 young Queensland school students will attend a primary or a secondary school in Buderim. On top of that, every year more than 13,000 students study at the University of the Sunshine Coast at Sippy Downs, which is also in the Buderim electorate. Hopefully, these numbers provide some context as to why good schools are so important to my community.

Today, I hope to give voice to the concerns of teachers, parents and students who fear that our schools are heaving under the weight of massive population growth. I call on the government to hear their voice and commit to building the new schools they so desperately need. Every week, I speak to members of my community who are concerned about the growth in student numbers across the Sunshine Coast and the impact that it is having on teachers, students and parents. I met with one local parent, Mrs Heather Preston, who told me of her concerns that the growth in student numbers in Palmview has the potential to 'compromise individual students' wellbeing, playground space and education quality, not to mention the pressures that it places on the already congested local road network'. I share Heather's concerns.

I have previously spoken in parliament about my concerns that the current high performance of schools in my electorate will be under threat if the current growth in student numbers is not supported with additional investment. Some of the largest and best performing state schools in Queensland sit in my electorate of Buderim—schools such as Chancellor State College and Mountain Creek State High School. Chancellor State College alone has 3,100 students and Mountain Creek State High School has more than 2,000 students.


Although the government is building some more classrooms in my local schools, the solution is not bigger schools; it is new schools. With another 17,000 people expected to move into the Palmview area in coming years, now is the time for the government to commit to funding a new primary and secondary school. We need proactive investment to ensure that the influx of new residents does not cause further overcrowding. We need action now.

A new school to cater for the thousands of new residents in Palmview is critical. There has been enough talk about planning for this school. It is time to get on with building the school. This is an important issue that is impacting on families in my electorate now. Parents, students and teachers deserve better than this.

I encourage all the residents of my electorate who share my concerns to add their name to a community petition, which voices the community's concerns and calls on the state government to fund construction of a new primary and secondary school in Palmview. Residents can sign the petition at www.newschool4palmview.com.au.

This issue is not about politics; it is about ensuring that all Sunshine Coast students can get a great education. I implore the government to hear my community's voice and make building new schools in Palmview a priority.

Cairns Electorate, Youth Justice

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (7.27 pm): Like many people in Cairns, and in Queensland, I am very aware of the challenges that we face in relation to youth justice. I believe, as does this government, that one of the best ways to tackle the problem is steering at-risk young people away from crime through diversionary tactics, such as the Cairns Safer Streets Task Force, of which I have spoken about in this chamber previously.

In addition, last week I was delighted to accompany the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, the Hon. Di Farmer, to the Wuchopperen Health Service in my electorate where the minister announced \$1 million in funding to extend Wuchopperen's family and wellbeing service by employing four new Indigenous youth and family workers in Cairns. With this extra funding, Wuchopperen would be better able to respond to families with children who are at risk, or are already in contact with the youth justice system. These Indigenous youth and family workers will create connections with youth justice and youth support services to make sure that families coming to the attention of these systems can more easily access the support they need. The new program will strengthen family units, which ultimately strengthens the community as a whole.

The Cairns community has a right to feel safe and expects young people to be accountable for their action, hence the fact that we have increased the number of magistrates working in this area in addition to building and expanding existing and new facilities to assist with containment. We also know that one of the best ways to keep the community safe is by preventing young people from offending in the first place, which is what this new investment is to help deliver.

In conjunction with this investment in Wuchopperen is Project Booyah, which, because of its success, has now been adopted in Tasmania, the ACT, New South Wales, and the Transition 2 Success program, which is a service delivered by Youth Justice, whose mission is to, 'Change the story for young people, the community and our organisation'. Additional funding will be provided over two to four years to establish a new Transition 2 Success program, in addition to establishing a community youth response, which may include services such as an after-hours diversion service, monitoring program and an alternative education bridging program. This program is in addition to current initiatives in Cairns, such as the integrated case management program, which is to work intensively with high-risk young offenders and their families in addition to bail support, legal advocacy services and our Strong Together program.

The issues that we face in the youth justice area are complex, many and varied. That is why I am pleased to inform the House that the Palaszczuk government's response is across all government departments and includes working with a number of local NGOs that are very aware of the challenges that are faced in my community. I am happy to report that these programs and initiatives are underway and well supported.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, 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, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, 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, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson