



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019


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 The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS

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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 30 October 2019

A Bill for an Act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Referendums Act 1997 and the Right to Information Act 2009 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Acts Interpretation Act 1954, the Electoral Act 1992, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the Referendums Act 1997 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the Police Service Administration Act 1990 and the Acts mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Police Service (Discipline) Regulations 1990

A Bill for an Act to amend the Further Education and Training Act 2014, the TAFE Queensland Act 2013, the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 and the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014 for particular purposes, and to repeal the Commonwealth Games Arrangements Act 2011

A Bill for an Act to amend the Civil Liability Act 2003, the Civil Proceedings Act 2011, the Limitation of Actions Act 1974 and the Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014 and the Summary Offences Act 2005 to address the use of dangerous attachment devices

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

Yours sincerely


Governor

30 October 2019

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 30 October 2019, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to bills on 30 October 2019 [[2023](#)].


### PRIVILEGE

#### Comments by Member for Toohey, Apology

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (9.31 am): I wish to apologise for the use of unparliamentary language during a division on 25 October 2019 during what I thought at the time was a private conversation. This is not the type of language a parliamentarian should be using, whether as part of a private conversation or not. I apologise unreservedly.

## REPORT


### Auditor-General

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from the Auditor-General report No. 7 of 2019-20 titled *Health: 2018-19 results of financial audits*. I table the report for the information of members.

*Tabled paper:* Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 7:2019-20—Health: 2018-19 results of financial audits [[2024](#)].


## SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

### North Queensland First Party, Registration and Appointment

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I inform the House that, in accordance with part 6 of the Electoral Act 1992, the Electoral Commission of Queensland registered the North Queensland First party. This amendment was advised in the *Government Gazette* of 1 November 2019. Further, I have received correspondence from the member for Whitsunday advising of his role as the parliamentary leader of the North Queensland First party. I table the relevant extract of the *Government Gazette* and a copy of the member's correspondence for the information of members.


*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 18 November 2019, from the member for Whitsunday, Mr Jason Costigan MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Curtis Pitt, advising that the Electoral Commission of Queensland registered North Queensland First as a political party in Queensland on 31 October 2019 and attaching an extract of the *Government Gazette* dated 1 November 2019 [[2109](#)].

### Error in Notice Paper

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise that, due to an administrative error by the Table Office, four committee reports tabled on 20 September 2019 were not added to the *Notice Paper* under General Business Notices of Motion, as required by sessional order 3. This error has now been rectified and these reports are now included in the revised *Notice Paper*.

## PRIVILEGE

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

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 22 March 2019 the member for Burdekin wrote to me, via the post, alleging that the Deputy Premier deliberately misled the House in an answer to a question without notice on 26 February 2019. This correspondence was not received by my office. Subsequently, on 23 October 2019 the member for Burdekin made inquiries with my office in relation to the matter and resent the correspondence by email. I have considered the matter and note that a difference of opinion is not a matter of privilege. I consider if there was an element of misleading, at best it would be technical in nature and would not warrant the further attention of the House. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

*Tabled paper:* Correspondence in regard to the allegation by the member for Burdekin, Mr Dale Last MP, that the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Jackie Trad, deliberately misled the House [[2110](#)].

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

Leave granted.

#### SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

Honourable members,

On 22 March 2019, the Member for Burdekin wrote to me, via the post, alleging that the Deputy Premier deliberately misled the House in an answer to a Question Without Notice on 26 February 2019.

This correspondence was not received by my office. Subsequently, on 23 October 2019 the Member for Burdekin made inquiries with my office in relation to the matter and resent the correspondence by e-mail.

Standing Order 269(2) states that when raising a matter of privilege, a member should write to the Speaker at the earliest opportunity.

On 30 October 2019, the Electorate Office for Burdekin provided a statutory declaration to the effect that he did post the Member's correspondence to me on 22 March.

Accordingly, I agreed to consider the allegation based on the advice in the statutory declaration.

The statement made by the Deputy Premier complained of was "The fact is markets are moving away from thermal coal, communities are moving away from thermal coal; nation states are moving away from thermal coal".

The Member for Burdekin in his correspondence disagrees with the statement and points to evidence of an increase in coal demand.

I did not choose to write to the Deputy Premier to seek further information in accordance with SO 269(5) as I am confident that the Deputy Premier would similarly point to evidence that supports her statement.

A difference of opinion is not a matter of privilege.

I consider if there was an element of misleading, at best it would be technical in nature and does not warrant the further attention of the House.

Therefore, I will not be referring the matter.

### Speaker's Ruling, Unparliamentary Language



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, on 25 October 2019 the member for Kawana wrote to me drawing my attention to comments made by the member for Toohey that were captured by the chamber broadcast. I table the letter.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 25 October 2019, from the member for Kawana, Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Curtis Pitt, in relation to the alleged use of unparliamentary language by the member for Toohey, Mr Peter Russo MP [\[2111\]](#).

The comments occurred during a division in consideration in detail of the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 on 24 October 2019. I note that the member for Toohey apologised to the House in relation to this matter earlier this morning. This was in addition to a written apology I received from the member for Toohey on 25 October 2019 and a public apology the member for Toohey placed on his Facebook page on 24 October 2019.

In considering this matter, I note that the member for Toohey's comments were clearly unparliamentary in nature. I also note that the use of unparliamentary language is typically a matter of order of the House rather than a matter of privilege. Accordingly, I consider the member for Toohey has made an adequate apology. On that basis, I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Vogler, Ms S



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, some of you may be aware that this will be the final sitting week we will see Sarah Vogler in the Parliament House media gallery. Many members will have come across Sarah in her role as State Political Editor for the *Courier-Mail*. Sarah has earned a reputation as a wonderfully decent human being and a considered and fair journalist. I take the opportunity to wish Sarah well in her future endeavours.

## PETITIONS

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

### New England Highway, Speed Limits

**Mr Lister**, from 168 petitioners, requesting the House to relocate the 80 km/hour speed limits on the New England Highway, Allora to the Reserve Road and the Bradfield Road junctions with the New England Highway [\[2025\]](#).

### Augathella, Road Safety

**Ms Leahy**, from 257 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently address the safety concerns of the Augathella community regarding the Main Street and Landsborough Highway intersection at Augathella [\[2026\]](#).

### Pimpama-Ormeau, Youth Centre

**Mr Crandon**, from 1,939 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the construction of a Youth Centre in Pimpama-Ormeau [\[2027\]](#).

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

### Palliative Care

From 82 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure equal access to world class palliative care for every Queensland and to not consider legalising euthanasia [\[2028\]](#).

### Plant Based Industry

From 310 petitioners, requesting the House to commit to new investments in plant-based industry [\[2029\]](#).

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

#### Ormeau and Coomera Railway Stations, Bus Services

**Mr Crandon**, from 211 petitioners, requesting the House to upgrade bus services between Ormeau Railway Station and Coomera Railway Station [\[2030, 2031\]](#).

#### Ormeau-Pimpama, Police Resources

**Mr Crandon**, from 3,954 petitioners, requesting the House to construct a Police Hub in the Ormeau/Pimpama region and to provide 35 additional police officers to the region [\[2032, 2033\]](#).

#### Coomera Railway Station, Car Park

**Mr Crandon**, from 215 petitioners, requesting the House to increase the car park size at the Coomera Railway Station [\[2034, 2035\]](#).

#### Northern Gold Coast, Hospital

**Mr Crandon**, from 779 petitioners, requesting the House to construct a hospital in the northern Gold Coast region of Coomera/Ormeau/Pimpama [\[2036, 2037\]](#).

#### Coomera Marine Industry, Specialist Centre of Learning

**Mr Crandon**, from 156 petitioners, requesting the House to construct a specialist centre of learning for the Coomera Marina Industry at the Coomera TAFE Campus [\[2038, 2039\]](#).

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

#### Gladstone Hospital, Upgrade

From 4,876 petitioners, requesting the House to expedite upgrades to the Gladstone Hospital to deliver consistent level 4 services to the growing needs of the community [\[2040, 2041\]](#).

#### Yeppoon, Youth Crime

From 2,674 petitioners, requesting the House to consider additional strategies to combat youth crime in the Yeppoon police district [\[2042, 2043\]](#).

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

#### Wind Farms and Turbines

**Mr Boyce**, from 274 petitioners, requesting the House to stop the approval of industrial wind turbines being built in non-industrial areas and to reject the approval of the Banana Range Windfarm [\[2044\]](#).

#### Olympic Games Bid

**Mr Katter**, from 1,279 petitioners, requesting the House to resolve that no further government monies be spent seeking an Olympic bid [\[2045\]](#).

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

#### Coomera Connector

From 657 petitioners, requesting the House to cancel the Coomera Connector project and shift the money towards improving public transport between Gold Coast and Brisbane [\[2046\]](#).

#### Puppies, Breeding

From 713 petitioners, requesting the House to review and amend the current legislation to curtail irresponsible breeding of puppies and to enforce mandatory standards [\[2047\]](#).

#### Legal Profession Act 2007

From 311 petitioners, requesting the House to take the responsibility for the administration of the Legal Profession Act 2007 off the Legal Services Commission and to establish an Independent Corruption Commission entity to handle complaints against members of the legal profession [\[2048\]](#).

#### Local Government, Length of Service Limits

From 895 petitioners, requesting the House to impose a two-term limit (8 years) for mayors and councillors with the main goal being to reduce corruption in local government [\[2049\]](#).

#### Crime, Damage Costs

From 986 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate for a mandatory requirement that criminals must pay for damages and/or repairs for any destruction caused during their criminal activity on top of any fine and/or imprisonment [\[2050\]](#).



### Traffic Obstruction, Criminal Offence

From 795 petitioners, requesting the House to pass legislation that makes it a criminal offence for any person or group of people to unnecessarily hinder or impede either vehicular or pedestrian traffic [\[2051\]](#).

### Climate Change

From 680 petitioners, requesting the House to acknowledge the current science that clearly finds humans are not responsible for climate change [\[2052\]](#).

Petitions received.

## TABLED PAPERS

### PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

25 October 2019—

[1955](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 22, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Annual Report 2018-19

[1956](#) Overseas travel report: Report on a trade and investment mission to the People's Republic of China by the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Trad), 21-25 September 2019

[1957](#) Overseas travel report: Report on an official visit to the People's Republic of China by the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail (Hon. Jones), 24-27 September 2019

28 October 2019—

[1958](#) Business Committee: Report No. 1, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Annual Report 2018-19

[1959](#) Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 22, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Annual Report 2018-19

[1960](#) Queensland's Category 2 Water Authorities—Consolidated Report—2018-2019 Annual Reports

[1961](#) Queensland's River Improvement Trusts—Consolidated Report—2018-2019 Annual Reports

[1962](#) Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission—Annual Report 2018-19

[1963](#) Participation Agreement—Central SEQ Distributor-Retailer Authority, Amendment dated 29 May 2019

29 October 2019—

[1964](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to a paper petition (3215-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (3171-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 790 and 140 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to maintain the existing skate park in Vernon Street, Atherton

[1965](#) Architects Act 2002, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999: Architects Regulation 2019, No. 131, explanatory notes: Erratum

[1966](#) Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 29, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Annual Report 2018-19

30 October 2019—

[1967](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 192, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Annual Report 2018-19

[1968](#) Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board—Annual Report 2018-19

31 October 2019—

[1969](#) Public Works and Utilities Committee: Report No. 48, 55th Parliament—Housing Legislation (Building Better Futures) Amendment Bill 2017, government response—Recommendation 6

[1970](#) National Heavy Vehicle Regulator—Annual Report 2018-19

[1971](#) Land Tribunal of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

[1972](#) Letter, dated 31 October 2019, from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, regarding the Land Tribunal of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

[1973](#) Land Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

[1974](#) Letter, dated 31 October 2019, from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, regarding the Land Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

1 November 2019—

[1975](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 53, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Weapons and Other Legislation (Firearms Offences) Amendment Bill 2019

[1976](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 54, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Criminal Code (Trespass Offences) Amendment Bill 2019

4 November 2019—

- [1977](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 24, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019
- [1978](#) Wet Tropics Management Authority—Annual Report 2018-2019
- [1979](#) Wet Tropics Management Authority—The state of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area 2018-2019
- [1980](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 35, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2019 and Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2019
- [1981](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 55, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019
- [1982](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 56, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Annual Report 2018-19
- [1983](#) Ethics Committee: Report No. 193, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Matter of privilege arising from Ethics Committee Report No. 189

6 November 2019—

- [1984](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 5: 2019-20—Transport: 2018-19 results of financial audits
- [1985](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (3206-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 433 petitioners, requesting the House to set up a Commission of Inquiry as to why Redland Shire Council/Redland City Council has failed to provide Russell, Karragarra, Lamb and Macleay Islands urban infrastructure to a standard normally provided in other urban areas; and to recommend a means to remedy this failure
- [1986](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (3199-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 573 petitioners, requesting the House to immediately dismiss the Cassowary Coast Regional Council and appoint an administrator with the powers to initiate proceedings to recover ratepayers monies used to date on the civil proceedings

7 November 2019—

- [1987](#) Department of Education—Annual Report 2018-19: Erratum Page 56

8 November 2019—

- [1988](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 41, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August 2019 and 3 September 2019
- [1989](#) Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor—Annual Report 2018-19
- [1990](#) Persons Affected by Work-related Fatalities and Serious Incidents Consultative Committee (the Affected Persons Committee)—Annual Report 2018-19

11 November 2019—

- [1991](#) Overseas travel report: Report on an official visit to Lyon, London and Oslo by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), 6-11 October 2019

13 November 2019—

- [1992](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), to a paper petition (3218-19) presented by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 32 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure that the clear and present danger of fire ants on our coastal plains that are marching south, is dealt with by a campaign working from the south and moving north
- [1993](#) Overseas travel report: Report on the Parliamentary trade mission to Shanghai by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. Pitt), 21-27 September 2019

14 November 2019—

- [1994](#) Response from the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (Hon. Dick), to an ePetition (3142-19) sponsored by the member for Everton, Mr Mander, from 2,214 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the Warner Investigation Area remains rural residential and not change the material change of use to higher density residential
- [1995](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to an ePetition (3170-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 6,665 petitioners, requesting the House to place Voluntary Assisted Dying on the legislative agenda for the parliament in 2020 and dealt with prior to the state election 2020
- [1996](#) Response from the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. Farmer), to an ePetition (3175-19) sponsored by the member for Burnett, Mr Bennett, from 630 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure an enquiry into Child Safety is convened as a matter of urgency
- [1997](#) Response from the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. Farmer), to an ePetition (3154-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 866 petitioners, requesting the House to include sexually inappropriate advertising in their advertising ban in line with existing guidelines for children
- [1998](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), to an ePetition (3205-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 4,855 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the Sunshine Coast Regional Council immediately ceases releasing ponded water contained on the Sunshine Coast Airport Expansion Project Site to the Maroochy River and to stop the release of ponded water to the ocean via the new pipeline

- [1999](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3173-19) sponsored by the member for Everton, Mr Mander, and a paper petition (3223-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) from 644 and 104 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to expand the existing Park n Ride facility or provide an additional space for commuters to park and access the Carseldine Train Station
- 15 November 2019—
- [2000](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3161-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 366 petitioners, requesting the House to support the development of a vehicular cable ferry link between Rocky Point on Russell Island and Little Rocky Point North, Woongoolba on Pimpama Island
- 18 November 2019—
- [2001](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 25, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill 2019
- [2002](#) Department of Environment and Science—Annual Report 2018-19: Erratum
- [2003](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (3219-19) presented by the member for Burnett, Mr Bennett and an ePetition (3210-19) sponsored by the member for Burnett, Mr Bennett, from 48 and 652 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to reinstate Mr Pennington to his role at the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service until a full enquiry is conducted into this termination
- [2004](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to three paper petitions (3220-19, 3222-19 and 3227-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (3176-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 1,710, 67, 18 and 7,473 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to ensure equal access to world class palliative care for every Queensland and to not consider legalising euthanasia
- 20 November 2019—
- [2005](#) Response from the Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors (Hon. O'Rourke), to an ePetition (3140-19) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 640 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure the construction of a Youth Centre in Pimpama-Ormeau
- 21 November 2019—
- [2006](#) Response from the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Hon. Trad), to an ePetition (3186-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 546 petitioners, requesting the House to freeze the Queensland debt level; provide a financial plan that demonstrates how the State budget will be brought back to surplus within two years and how the debt to GDP ratio will be reduced to under 10 within three to five years
- [2007](#) Response from the Acting Minister for Police and Acting Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Dr Lynham), to a paper petition (3226-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) from 287 petitioners, requesting the House to consider the model of a neighbourhood Police Beat and a backup support system for Victoria Point
- [2008](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 6: 2019-20—Energy: 2018-19 results of financial audits
- [2009](#) Response from the Acting Minister for Police and Acting Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Dr Lynham), to an ePetition (3157-19) sponsored by the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Bates, from 639 petitioners, requesting the House to permanently install anti-hooping CCTV cameras and other infrastructure at the intersection of Nerang-Murwillumbah Road and Pine Creek Road in the Numinbah Valley
- [2010](#) Report on the administration of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 (reporting period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019)
- [2011](#) Annual report on the administration of the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (reporting period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019)
- [2012](#) Report on the administration of the Marine Parks Act 2004 (reporting period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019)
- [2013](#) Letter, dated 21 November 2019, from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Leeanne Enoch, to the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie, regarding Schedule 1 of the Commonwealth Gene Technology Amendment (2019 Measures No. 1) Regulations 2019
- [2014](#) Gene Technology Amendment (2019 Measures No. 1) Regulations 2019, Schedule 1
- [2015](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Hon. D'Ath), to a paper petition (3224-19) presented by the member for Maryborough, Mr Saunders, and an ePetition (3187-19) sponsored by the member for Maryborough, Mr Saunders, from 391 and 3,576 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to amend the law to effect consistent maximum sentencing is applied to perpetrators of unlawful assault against any member, officer or employee of a service established for a public purpose under an Act
- [2016](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3174-19) sponsored by the member for Mirani, Mr Andrew, and a paper petition (3228-19) presented by the member for Mirani, Mr Andrew, from 374 and 741 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to save the Rosella Store and adjacent parklands from compulsory acquisition and to consider alternative routes for the proposed Bruce Highway upgrade at Rosella
- 22 November 2019—
- [2017](#) Speaker's ruling-Referral to Ethics Committee-Crime and Corruption Commission referral regarding the Deputy Premier
- 25 November 2019—
- [2018](#) Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 27, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August and 3 September 2019

- [2019](#) Economics and Governance Committee: Report No. 36, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August 2019 and 15 October 2019
- [2020](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 57, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August 2019 and 15 October 2019
- [2021](#) Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 30, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August 2019 and 3 September 2019
- [2022](#) Response from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace), to a paper petition (3229-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) and ePetition (3214-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4), from 163 and 1,109 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to move the proposed development of the Northern GLA building away from the threatened species habitat on the Toowong Creek Wildlife Corridor

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

#### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950:

- [2053](#) Commissions of Inquiry (Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability—Quorum) Regulation 2019, No. 209
- [2054](#) Commissions of Inquiry (Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability—Quorum) Regulation 2019, No. 209, explanatory notes

Public Trustee Act 1978:

- [2055](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2019, No. 210
- [2056](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2019, No. 210, explanatory notes

Building Act 1975, Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990:

- [2057](#) Building Fire Safety (Combustible Cladding Rectification Work) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 211
- [2058](#) Building Fire Safety (Combustible Cladding Rectification Work) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 211, explanatory notes

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018:

- [2059](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 212
- [2060](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 212, explanatory notes

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018, Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991:

- [2061](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission (Mechanical Services Licences) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 213
- [2062](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission (Mechanical Services Licences) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 213, explanatory notes
- [2063](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission (Mechanical Services Licences) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 213, Decision Regulatory Impact Statement

Work Health and Safety Act 2011:

- [2064](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) (Concrete Pumping) Amendment Notice 2019, No. 214
- [2065](#) Work Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) (Concrete Pumping) Amendment Notice 2019, No. 214, explanatory notes

Planning Act 2016:

- [2066](#) Planning (Regulated Requirements and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 215
- [2067](#) Planning (Regulated Requirements and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 215, explanatory notes

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999:

- [2068](#) State Penalties Enforcement (Approved Sponsors) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 216
- [2069](#) State Penalties Enforcement (Approved Sponsors) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 216, explanatory notes

Personalised Transport Ombudsman Act 2019:

- [2070](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 217
- [2071](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 217, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999:

- [2072](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 218
- [2073](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 218, explanatory notes

Public Records Act 2002:

- [2074](#) Public Records (Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 219
- [2075](#) Public Records (Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 219, explanatory notes

## Liquid Fuel Supply Act 1984:

[2076](#) Liquid Fuel Supply (Sustainability Criteria) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 220

[2077](#) Liquid Fuel Supply (Sustainability Criteria) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 220, explanatory notes

## Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, Explosives Act 1999, Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, Petroleum Act 1923, Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004:

[2078](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 221

[2079](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 221, explanatory notes

## Fisheries Act 1994:

[2080](#) Fisheries (General) (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 222

[2081](#) Fisheries (General) (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 222, explanatory notes

## Collections Act 1966:

[2082](#) Collections (Notifications) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 223

[2083](#) Collections (Notifications) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 223, explanatory notes

## Human Rights Act 2019:

[2084](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 224

[2085](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 224, explanatory notes

## Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979:

[2086](#) Health Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2019, No. 225

[2087](#) Health Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2019, No. 225, explanatory notes

## Transport Legislation (Road Safety and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2019:

[2088](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 226

[2089](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 226, explanatory notes

## Forestry Act 1959, Nature Conservation Act 1992:

[2090](#) Forestry and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 227

[2091](#) Forestry and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 227, explanatory notes

## Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 2 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

[2092](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 228

[2093](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 228, explanatory notes

## City of Brisbane Act 2010, Local Government Act 2009, Local Government Electoral Act 2011:

[2094](#) Local Government Legislation (Implementing Stage 2 of Belcarra) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 229

[2095](#) Local Government Legislation (Implementing Stage 2 of Belcarra) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 229, explanatory notes

## Economic Development and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

[2096](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 230

[2097](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 230, explanatory notes

## Gaming Machine Act 1991:

[2098](#) Gaming Machine (Approved Financiers) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 231

[2099](#) Gaming Machine (Approved Financiers) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 231, explanatory notes

## Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999:

[2100](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health (Use of Particular Electrical Equipment in Sealed Underground Mines) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 232

[2101](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health (Use of Particular Electrical Equipment in Sealed Underground Mines) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 232, explanatory notes

## Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

[2102](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 233

[2103](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 233, explanatory notes

## Chemical Usage (Agricultural and Veterinary) Control Act 1988, Environmental Protection Act 1994, Planning Act 2016, Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994, State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011:

[2104](#) Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 234

[2105](#) Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 234, explanatory notes



## REPORT BY THE CLERK

The following report was tabled by the Clerk—

[2106](#) Report pursuant to Standing Order 169 (Acts to be numbered by the Clerk) and Standing Order 165 (Clerical errors or formal changes to any bill) detailing amendments to certain Bills, made by the Clerk, prior to assent by His Excellency the Governor, viz—

**Civil Liability and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018**

Amendments made to Bill

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

*Omit—*

‘Civil Liability and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018’

*Insert—*

‘Civil Liability and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019’

## MEMBERS' PAPERS

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Maiwar (Mr Berkman)—


[2107](#) Nonconforming petition regarding the rights of Queenslanders to peaceful protest

Member for Maryborough (Mr Saunders)—

[2108](#) Nonconforming petition in regards to stopping commercial netting in the Great Sandy Marine Park

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Bushfires and Drought

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.40 am): Queensland is fighting twin natural disasters—bushfires and drought. The two are linked. Six years of drought have sapped all moisture from the bush and the soil. Record temperatures and high winds have done the rest. Since the beginning of September, our crews have battled more than 2,000 of these fires.


At the beginning of the month I visited the evacuation centre at Noosaville with the mayor, Tony Wellington, and the member for Noosa. That Saturday morning, the local Lions and Lionesses made 300 breakfasts. I met Pamela, Joan, Rosemary and Esme, who were evacuated from the Carramar Nursing Home and spent the night on foam mattresses in their local library. ‘We’re having a slumber party,’ they told me. Their cheerfulness was inspirational. Near Yeppoon, with the members for Rockhampton and Keppel, I met Eddie Cowie. He lost 1,500 lychee trees just as they were bearing fruit. For Eddie, this is the second such impact he has seen. He lost his lychee trees during Tropical Cyclone Marcia. The season was about to be a bumper. He had just put \$100,000 worth of netting over those lychee trees and they were bearing fruit. He lost nearly everything. I instructed our agriculture minister to visit and to coordinate relief.

Later, Mayor Bill Ludwig took me around the fire zone. The burnt paddocks reached to the bottom steps of some of these homes. Clearly, our brave fireys and the rural fireys never gave up the fight. Some 38 homes have been lost since September. That is devastating, but hundreds of homes have been saved and no lives have been lost. That is nothing short of heroic. Of course, we saw the Pechey fire as well. In terms of the countless hours that we know will be given for many days and many weeks—the amount of effort that has been going on throughout Queensland through all the communities battling these fires—these are everyday unsung heroes. Today in this House I pay tribute to them all. I also want to thank the Queensland Disaster Management Group and the local disaster management groups across all of our regions. I want to thank the Acting Fire Commissioner and the State Disaster Coordinator. So much effort goes on behind the scenes. I have seen people and seen the late nights that they have worked. They never give up. I thank all the volunteers and everyone who has been out there helping—and I know many local members across the political divide were also on the ground showing their support—for their support.

More than 1,200 applications have been received from those in personal hardship as a result of this month's fires, with more than \$445,000 paid. Disaster recovery funding arrangements have been activated in 10 local government areas—Livingstone, Bundaberg, Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba, Somerset, City of Gold Coast, Scenic Rim, Southern Downs, Noosa and the Sunshine Coast. To date, more than \$1.68 million has been paid in grants across all activated areas, benefiting more than 9,000 people. The current State of Fire Emergency Declaration was fully revoked last Friday, 22 November

but our fire season is not over. I also pay tribute to those interstate crews who came in support as well as fireys from as far away as New Zealand. We all work best when we work together, and what we saw was a wonderful national coordination. I also thank the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister, who joined me at the State Disaster Coordination Centre. They also passed on their thanks to Queenslanders. We must always stay vigilant, and we will.


### Water Infrastructure, Warwick Pipeline

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.43 am): Drought robs our communities of many things—we lose crops and we lose livestock—but I am determined that we not lose hope. Today I announce that we will begin the process of connecting Warwick to water supplies in the south-east. Seqwater will begin a feasibility study of an 87-kilometre pipeline from Toowoomba to Warwick. A pipeline already connects Wivenhoe to Cressbrook Dam, which is part of Toowoomba's water supply. I have promised the 15,000 people of Warwick and Stanthorpe that I will not allow them to run out of drinking water, and I will keep that promise.

I have given Seqwater until the end of April to advise on the best option to build this pipeline. It is part of a \$1 million feasibility study into contingency water supply options to be completed in consultation with local councils. I have already announced \$2.4 million in improved water infrastructure plus \$800,000 per month in trucking water to Stanthorpe. This pipeline seems to me to be the logical next step, and this morning I will meet with Southern Downs Mayor Tracy Dobie and some of her councillors to discuss it further. On Sunday, natural resources minister Anthony Lynham announced a new campaign encouraging all of us in the south-east to watch every drop. He did it standing in the Tugun desalination plant. It can add 133,000 million litres of water a day and it took a far-sighted Labor government many years ago to build it.

My government is offering real, tangible assistance to communities hit hard by the drought, including a \$195 million assistance package delivering rebates on water, power and fodder management. Since the drought began, we have committed \$740 million in practical drought assistance. Those of us in the south-east currently use an average of 200 litres of water per person per day. In the old language, that is a 44-gallon drum each and every day. We owe it to those with much less to do our bit not to waste it.

### Transport Infrastructure

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.46 am): I have always said that we work best when we work together. Some \$1.9 billion of federal government and state money spending on Queensland road and rail projects suggests the Prime Minister finally agrees with us.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr Powell** interjected.

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

**Ms Jones** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Cooper, you are warned under the standing orders. I have just called the House to order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is no gift. It came because my government drives a very hard bargain.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Because Queenslanders deserve our fair share. I stood next to the Prime Minister at Rochedale South last week. I could see where our money was going—on much needed road improvements. I could see the tradies travelling faster and safer between jobs. Because of our advocacy, Queensland's fairer share now includes—


**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I hear mumbling from those opposite. They have attacked it; they do not like it. There is \$400 million in new funding for major roads including the M1; \$46.3 million for improvements to exits 41 and 49 on the M1; \$50 million in new funding for the Loganlea station relocation; \$157 million for stage 3 of Gold Coast Light Rail, which means the Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3 can begin next year; \$390 million for the Beerburrum to Nambour rail project; accelerated funding for the duplication

of the Linkfield Road overpass; and accelerated funding for projects in Townsville, Bundaberg, Shute Harbour, Cairns, Cooktown, Mackay and Ipswich. This will make rail travel between Brisbane and the Gold Coast faster. It will make travel on our roads safer.

Last but not least, we have reached agreement on the \$9.3 billion inland rail, working cooperatively with everyone along its route. When this project gets going, it will support \$6 billion of investment in Queensland, particularly in Toowoomba and the south-west region. What does all this mean? It means jobs for Queenslanders. The more we spend, the more jobs we provide. Starting next year, there will be thousands of jobs in dozens of places. This government knows the job-creating value of infrastructure spending. We are spending \$49.5 billion on infrastructure over the next four years, and we will continue to do so.


### North West Minerals Province, Summit

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.48 am): The North West Minerals Province is of critical importance to the Mount Isa region, just as it is of critical importance to Queensland's economy. That is why last week I took the cabinet to Mount Isa for a North West Minerals Province summit. Along with the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning and the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, we met the mayors and representatives of companies actively operating in north-west Queensland.

I also want to acknowledge the attendance at the summit of the member for Traeger and a former member for Mount Isa, Hon. Tony McGrady. My government is committed to ensuring the North West Minerals Province is front and centre of meeting the growing demand for the minerals that we need for the future. As the world moves to low-emission and renewable energy products such as solar panels, wind turbines, batteries and electric cars, minerals such as copper, lead, zinc, silver, gold, cobalt and rare earths have never been more important. The north-west has a proud history of mining, and current exploration work is showing that there are many more prospects to come. This is about not just minerals but also many other unique features of the region.

Much of the North West Minerals Province summit was devoted to an open forum, allowing an opportunity to identify issues important to mining companies, local governments and the regions, and it was good to have all of those companies that came in to Mount Isa to have that meeting. The discussion was positive and constructive. The North West Minerals Province strategy implementation plan, which my government released in Mount Isa, is underpinned by new funding, including \$5 million for agricultural production, tourism and community strategies to support local economic development; \$14.5 million for the unmanned aerial systems test trial evaluation facility and flight range at the Cloncurry Airport, something which I am quite sure the Minister for State Development will talk about in the near future; and \$13.8 million for the new economy minerals package to increase our understanding of the geology of the region and to partner with companies in exploration work, and I know that Minister Lynham will be talking about that during the course of this week. This funding is in addition to the \$110 million funded through the 2019-20 state budget to support mining in the North West Minerals Province. We will continue to work with everybody in Mount Isa, and I thank the members of the Mount Isa community for allowing us to come into Mount Isa and for talking to us about the issues that matter to them. As I say, this is a government for all of Queensland.

### Infrastructure, Federal Funding

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.51 am): Our Premier has fought long and hard to get Queensland's fair share of infrastructure funding, and last week it paid off. The Premier's agreement with the Prime Minister brings certainty to vital infrastructure projects in Queensland and, more importantly, it will help create more Queensland jobs. Up and down Queensland people are welcoming this deal. I note the member for Gaven welcomed funding for the Gold Coast Light Rail along with more funding for the M1, as did the member for Aspley who, after a long local campaign, secured the commitment to upgrade the Linkfield Road overpass—a project also championed by the member for Pine Rivers and other north side MPs. I know the members for Mackay, Yeppoon and Rockhampton, Cairns, Cook and Ipswich West welcome more federal funding for roads in their regions after fighting so hard for so long, and it is not just members on this side of the House. The member for Bonney proudly stood with our Minister for Transport and welcomed additional funding for the Gold Coast Light Rail project.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** Any elected official in this state who understands infrastructure supports this deal.




**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** Any elected official who supports their community supports this deal.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members! Minister, please resume your seat. Members, we have ministerial statements. This is not question time.

**Mr DICK:** Any elected official who knows what they are doing welcomes more federal infrastructure funding for Queensland. As the member for Woodridge and the chair of the government's Social Infrastructure Ministerial Committee, I am particularly pleased to welcome Commonwealth support for our plan to relocate the Loganlea train station in the city of Logan. Through the Social Infrastructure Ministerial Committee, we have been working hard with the Logan City Council and across government to bring this plan to fruition. The relocation of the Loganlea station will allow us to activate the Meadowbrook precinct, make hospital and TAFE more accessible, particularly for public transport users, attract private sector investment and make it a centre for innovation and wellbeing for the Logan community. It is a great example of our infrastructure program delivering for Queensland and it is a testament to the Palaszczuk Labor government growing our capital spend and bringing home the deals that deliver more jobs and more infrastructure for Queensland.

### Infrastructure, Federal Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.54 am): Last week I had the pleasure of joining the Premier, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Palaszczuk government ministers and MPs on the side of one of our four major M1 upgrades that we have funded to announce an historic \$1.9 billion deal for roads, rail and thousands of Queensland jobs. Queensland secured half of a \$3.8 billion nationwide week of announcements of funding. Together with the Premier, members on this side of the chamber have been calling for a better deal for Queensland. As mentioned by the Minister for State Development, the members for Aspley and Pine Rivers have called on Canberra for the Linkfield Road overpass. The member for Cook pushed for road funding to be brought forward in Cape York on the Peninsula Developmental Road. The member for Ipswich West called for acceleration of funding on the Warrego at Mount Crosby. The members for Macalister and Gaven have called for fair federal funding for certain M1 exits, to name but a few.

The Prime Minister heard the Palaszczuk government loud and clear. As the Premier always says, we work best when we work together. This \$1.9 billion infrastructure jobs deal will see projects and jobs fast-tracked and new funding for Queensland. It means \$836 million to deliver roads sooner and \$400 million in new road funding on the National Land Transport Network. It means thousands more Queenslanders will get a job, adding to the 223,000 jobs already created by the Palaszczuk government since 2015. The Palaszczuk government has already delivered four record road transport budgets in five years, and this adds to that. We have already secured—

**Mrs Wilson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Pumicestone, cease your interjections.

**Mr BAILEY:** They do not like it, Mr Speaker. I have only good news to announce, and those opposite interject and criticise.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister.

**Mrs Wilson** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Pumicestone, you are warned under the standing orders. I asked you to cease your interjections.

**Mr BAILEY:** We have already secured a record pipeline of works, with \$23 billion worth of road and transport infrastructure across Queensland, with \$14½ billion coming to regional Queensland. By working with the federal government and not taking the first deal on the table, like those opposite meekly would have done, Queenslanders will now see a \$709 million Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3, close to \$200 million to upgrade M1 exit 41 and exit 49, and more than \$90 million to relocate the Loganlea station closer to the hospital and the TAFE college. There is \$282 million in joint funding brought forward on the Bruce Highway, including the Mackay Ring Road stage 2; the \$97½ million acceleration of Cape York roads between Cooktown and Weipa; and thousands of regional jobs with inland rail.

When we get an unfair deal on roads and rail, it means less state funding for our schools and hospitals in Queensland. That is why the Palaszczuk government will always fight for our fair share from Canberra, unlike those opposite who did not and then they criticised it when we delivered. I want to acknowledge everyone involved in negotiating this outcome including the Premier, the Prime

Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Deputy Premier, their officers and officers from Transport and Main Roads and their federal counterparts. I give a special thank you to the Deputy Prime Minister and his office who have worked very closely with this government on this deal. This historic agreement will mean more jobs for Queenslanders, reduced travel times, less congestion, more roads and transport infrastructure, and jobs for our growing state. How could any right-minded person criticise that?

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Jobs

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.58 am): Last week the ABS issued its latest round of labour force data and the results are unequivocal—the Palaszczuk Labor government continues its strong job creation performance right across our state. Since our government was elected in January 2015, more than 200,000 Queensland jobs have been created. We have now overseen 37 consecutive months of jobs growth in trend employment. Over the past 12 months alone—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left!

**Ms TRAD:** Over the past 12 months alone more than 1,000 Queenslanders found work every single week. More than half of these jobs—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am sorry to interrupt you, Deputy Premier. Member for Maryborough and member for Caloundra, you are both warned under the standing orders. Take your conversations outside.


**Ms TRAD:** More than half of these jobs were in regions outside greater Brisbane. The increase in job creation under the Palaszczuk Labor government means that more Queenslanders have been encouraged to join the labour force. Since the Palaszczuk government was elected in 2015, more than 237,000 Queenslanders have joined the labour force—more than four times as many who joined under the Liberal National Party government. Our government is relentlessly committed to providing employment opportunities in regions right across this state. We are delivering on that commitment, growing our economy by \$10.3 billion since we were elected. That is three times more than it grew under those opposite.

Under the Palaszczuk government, more than 22,000 jobs have been created in Cairns, as the unemployment rate has fallen by more than three percentage points since 2015. In the Darling Downs region, the unemployment rate is now 4.4 per cent—the equal lowest rate in the state. In Central Queensland, nearly 4,000 jobs have been added in this year alone. In Wide Bay, our government has created more than 11,000 jobs, making up for the loss of nearly 11,000 local jobs under the LNP.

The gap between the regional and South-East Queensland unemployment rates has continued to narrow—from 2.5 percentage points in mid-2016 to around half a percentage point today. When it comes to youth employment, figures used by Conus Consulting show that 8,400 jobs for young people have been created outside greater Brisbane, nearly offsetting the 9,100 jobs that were lost in the regions under the LNP. It has been especially pleasing to see falls in the youth unemployment rate in places like Cairns, Wide Bay, the Sunshine Coast and the Darling Downs-Maranoa.

We prefer to use data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics which shows that, across Queensland, there are 14,500 more jobs for young people under this government. Under the LNP, in our state 5,600 young people lost their jobs. Our economic plan is working and over 200,000 Queenslanders who have found work since 2015 can attest to that. Despite these results, we also know that in many regions people are still doing it tough, especially amid the ongoing drought and bushfires in recent times. The Palaszczuk government will continue to build a stronger Queensland by investing in critical and productive infrastructure, as we have outlined this morning, by fostering the conditions necessary for industry to invest and grow and by creating jobs for Queenslanders wherever they live.

### State Schools, Air Conditioning

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.02 am): Yesterday I was delighted to attend with the Premier, Centenary State High School, in the electorate of Mount Ommaney, and with the hardworking local member Jess Pugh, who told me a story of how just last week she received a call from a constituent parent of a child at Centenary State High School asking the government to consider installing air conditioning at the school.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms GRACE:** Days later we were at the school making the announcement that we would fast-track \$50 million to put air conditioning—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I am not saying ‘Order’ for my benefit. I could not hear the minister’s contribution. I ask that you cease your interjections.

**Ms GRACE:** Days later we were at the school making the announcement that we would fast-track \$50 million to put air conditioning in classrooms outside the Cooler School zone, including at Centenary State High School.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Burleigh, you are warned under the standing orders. I had just called the House to order and asked you to cease your interjections.

**Ms GRACE:** This school will have every classroom and learning space air-conditioned, along with 300 others in the hottest and humid communities—like Ipswich, Lockyer, Burnett, Inala, Logan, Moggill, the Scenic Rim, Gympie, Woodridge, Oakey, Bardon, Waterford, Ferny Grove, Everton, Bray Park and Nanango to mention a few. The full list is available on the Department of Education website.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** They hate good news.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.


**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders. Members to my left, if the interjections do not cease I will ask for silence during ministerial statements. The minister, as I hear her, is not being provocative. You may have a difference of opinion, but the minister is making a statement to the House.

**Ms GRACE:** This announcement is great news for students, teachers, teacher aides and staff. We are getting on with the job of delivering the Palaszczuk government’s \$100 million commitment to air-condition state school classrooms. Most importantly, this program is also great news for jobseekers, with this announcement supporting more than 300 local jobs across the state and thousands of apprentice hours. For example, it was fantastic to meet Jill and Aidan from Chek, a local Ipswich air-conditioning company, who will benefit from our fast-tracked rollout. This local business had been awarded the contract at Ipswich State High School, which we announced would be air-conditioned in October. Jill and Aidan told me that engaging local businesses is a great benefit not only for them but also for the local community. Aidan has just completed his four-year apprenticeship and is guaranteed of a job with the company. Jill is already looking to engage local workers and apprentices to accommodate the extra work following this announcement.

Our decision to fast-track this \$50 million will bring forward this economic stimulus. I want to see the Department of Education and the 301 schools working together to get these units in as many state school classrooms as possible over the holiday break ready for the first day of school in 2020.

I would like to also acknowledge the fantastic work that has already been done by local P&Cs and school communities working with my department in the past to provide air conditioning in school classrooms. This fast-tracked government funding will now allow us to build on the great work that they have done and continue our fully funded and fiscally responsible approach to air conditioning in state schools outside the Cooler Schools zone.

## TAFE and Training

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (10.06 am): TAFE and training is going from strength to strength right across Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is committed to providing every opportunity for someone to gain the skills they need to get a job. We have 900,000 VET students in Queensland and half of the nation’s school based apprentices and trainees. Whether it is reducing the course cost, or making it easier for a business to put on an apprentice, members on this side of the House know that their government is committed to ensuring we have a local skilled workforce. Already our free TAFE for year 12 graduates and free apprenticeships for under 21s are changing the lives of


almost 15,000 young Queenslanders—Queenslanders like Skylar, who I met at the Mount Isa TAFE campus. She is a third-year welding apprentice and is loving her job at Wrights Welding, which is one of the thousands of businesses that we are assisting by removing the training cost to take on an apprentice or a trainee.

We want all Queenslanders like Skylar to be able to access world-class training and TAFE is helping us do that with its mobile trade training vans. These specialised and kitted out vans bring training to thousands of apprentices employed by hundreds of different employers in many different industries. They provide workplace based training and assessment for apprentices, making things even easier for business. These vehicles are providing the best in training for employers, such as Origin Energy, Volvo, Isuzu and regional councils just to name a few. The skills people learn through an apprenticeship are real life skills. It is important that everyone can have the opportunity to receive on-the-job training.

Today I am pleased to announce that we will have some of these mobile TAFE training vans here at Parliament House. There will be six vehicles to showcase some of the trades on offer for our young Queenslanders such as automotive, plumbing, heavy vehicle as well as a mobile classroom.

This initiative is all part of listening to the needs of industry right across this state and providing more options for business. These training vans will help provide training to more apprentices and trainees. I encourage all members of the House to come out and meet some of our young apprentices and TAFE teachers today at 1 pm. The Palaszczuk government is investing in the future of young Queenslanders. We look forward to seeing these vans in a suburb near you.

### Queensland Health, Training and Education


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.08 am): As one of the state's largest employers, Queensland Health knows the importance of training and education. The health sector will be one of the biggest contributors to jobs growth in Queensland over the next five years. That is why we are passionate about encouraging and inspiring young Queenslanders to consider a future in health care. This year we launched the Choose Your Own Health Career website to highlight the career opportunities that are available in the health sector through vocational training and education pathways.

It provides a snapshot of the different pathways available during and after secondary schooling in Queensland. The online resource is an example of how we are supporting our young people, investing in our future health workforce and the value we place on practical and vocational learning. It includes 14 career pathways, 35 job profiles and 25 case studies so far. Over 6,500 individual visits to the site have occurred since we launched it.

Whether it is the new nurses, doctors or ambos we hire, or the medical innovation jobs of the future, I would urge every young Queenslander to consider health care if they want a skilled, well paid, secure job that also has the added reward of helping people every single day. There are other important jobs in Queensland Health which deserve a mention. When you think of hospital staff your mind might not immediately turn to the trades, but they are an essential component of ensuring our hospitals run smoothly and safely. Across the state, Queensland Health employs apprentices from a variety of trades. We have seen that number increase even when compared to just a year ago. From plumbing to electrical, painters, fitters and welders, each apprentice brings a unique skill to our service. We value each and every one of our apprentices, like all of our incredibly dedicated and skilled staff and the contribution they make.

Apprentices are crucial to boosting jobs in our regions. Many of our electricians, for example, are being skilled and trained in areas like Central Queensland, Townsville, Cairns, Darling Downs and West Moreton. I am passionate about ensuring all Queensland health staff feel supported in their training, learning and working. The skills our apprentices and trainees learn today will go on to benefit all Queenslanders tomorrow and for many years to come.


### Tennis Tournaments, Brisbane

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail) (10.11 am): Game, set, match for Queensland! Today we have hit another ace for Queensland's tourism industry. I can officially announce three more major signings to add to the star-studded line-up of top women's talent for the 2020 Brisbane International. I can confirm that former world No. 1 Venus Williams, as well as local Sam Stosur, are the latest big names to sign, joining our hometown hero Ash Barty in Brisbane in January. This will make the Brisbane International arguably the best line-up of women's tennis talent Queensland has ever seen.

At the same time the men's new ATP Cup tournament also kicks off in Brisbane where we will welcome some of the best men's players in the world including top ranked Novak Djokovic—although I am told he is second at the moment. This is yet another win for the tourism industry which has grown by more than 20 per cent under the Palaszczuk government.

## LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

### Office of the Information Commissioner, Report


 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (10.12 am): As chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee I lay upon the table a report by the Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland titled *Follow-up of report No. 2 of 2017-18: Audit of the Townsville City Council's implementation of recommendations—compliance with right to information and information privacy*.

*Tabled paper:* Information Commissioner of Queensland—Report to Parliament No. 1 for 2019-20: Follow-up of Report No. 2 of 2017-18—Audit of Townsville City Council's implementation of recommendations compliance with Right to Information and Information Privacy [\[2112\]](#).

As chair, I am required to table this report under section 184(5) of the Right to Information Act 2009. I commend the report to the House.


## ETHICS COMMITTEE

### Report

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (10.13 am): I table Ethics Committee report No. 194 titled *Report on a right of reply No. 39*. I commend the report and the committee's recommendation to the House.

*Tabled paper:* Ethics Committee: Report No. 194, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Report on a Right of Reply No. 39 [\[2113\]](#).

## DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I wish to acknowledge in the gallery the presence of a parliamentary delegation from New Zealand organised by the Australian Political Exchange Council founded to facilitate exchange visits of political leaders between Australia and other countries. Viewing question time today we have four members of the New Zealand Parliament: Mr Matt Doocey, Ms Sarah Dowie, Ms Harete Hipango and Mr Brett Hudson. Queensland and New Zealand have a shared history, cultural similarity, people-to-people relations and a healthy sporting rivalry. On behalf of the Queensland parliament, I welcome the New Zealand delegation to Australia and thank them for including our parliament in their itinerary.


I also wish to acknowledge in the gallery the presence of a delegation of parliamentary officers from the Gauteng Provincial Legislature in South Africa. The delegation is here to meet with Queensland Parliamentary Services staff to discuss parliamentary procedures and processes. These inter-parliamentary exchanges provide benefits to all parties and I thank the delegation for choosing to visit our parliament. Welcome to the Queensland parliament.

Finally, I wish to welcome to the public gallery a delegation from the community of Wujal Wujal which includes elders and community members. I particularly acknowledge Mayor Desmond Tayley, Deputy Mayor Robert Bloomfield and CEO Stephen Wilton. The delegation is here today for the Wujal Wujal Community Showcase which is a joint initiative of the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and the Ministerial Champion for Wujal Wujal, the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts. I encourage members to attend the showcase to support the Wujal Wujal community which will be held in the Undumbi Room between 12.30 pm and 2.30 pm.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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

### Child Safety

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.15 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. Tragically, Queenslanders have recently seen more proof that Labor's child safety system is in crisis, with children known to the system being left in harm's way with a devastating outcome. Why has Labor's child safety system once again failed Queensland's most vulnerable children?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** From the outset I say, as I said yesterday, that what happened to the two young girls is an absolute tragedy. I think everyone in this House would feel just as every other Queenslander does. What I said very clearly yesterday is that the Attorney-General has written to Cheryl Vardon, the Family and Child Commissioner, to conduct an urgent inquiry. The child safety department does its own child death review. A woman is currently on criminal charges in relation to the two deaths. As this matter is currently before the court I will not be saying anything further that could prejudice this case. I think everybody in the House would agree with that. It is an absolute tragedy and, as I said, everyone in this House shares those views about those two young children.

In relation to child safety, and I know Minister Farmer talked about this yesterday, I will say that last year alone 121,000 calls were received by the department about child safety matters. That is basically one every four minutes. I know that the department of child safety does take every call seriously. As at 30 June there were 10,248 children in care who cannot live safely with their families. That is 619 more than the previous year. The families that are presenting to Child Safety come from increasingly complex backgrounds and have a lot of complex issues.

There is no one answer to any of this, but we will absolutely do everything we can to make sure that we are attracting more people to become foster-carers as the number of cases is increasing. Also we will continue to make sure that all of our agencies work cooperatively together and that is exactly what my government has been pursuing through additional funding, more child safety officers on the front line, but also, too, implementing the recommendations of the Carmody inquiry which, of course, was started under the LNP government. This is something that crosses the political divide. We have kept honouring those recommendations and we have kept implementing them. As at 30 June this year 107 of the Carmody inquiry recommendations were completed and the remaining 14 are underway. That is my commitment to something that was started under the former government, something that we are continuing to implement.

### **Child Safety, Reform Recommendations**

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My second question is also to the Premier. As a mum it is heartbreaking to see that Labor has not learnt the lessons from the tragic death of Mason Jett Lee. Why has the Palaszczuk government failed to fully implement all the recommendations arising from the Mason Jett Lee case made by the Queensland Family and Child Commission in 2017 to fix the child safety system?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In relation to Mason Jett Lee, my memory is that we said we would implement those recommendations. That is what we will continue to do.

Let me say this: families need to protect their children. To have a child is the greatest gift. It is the greatest gift to have a child and to lose a child is heartbreaking—absolutely heartbreaking. We want to see justice for what has happened. We want to make sure that recommendations are implemented to ensure that these types of cases do not happen. As I said, it is a tragedy, it is before the courts and we will ensure that justice is done.

### **Gold Coast, Infrastructure Funding**

**Ms SCANLON:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier outline for the House the benefits for Queensland and my region on the Gold Coast from the infrastructure funding agreement announced by the Premier and the Prime Minister last week and if she is aware of any alternative policies?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am happy to speak in this House about the great deal that was struck by the Morrison and Palaszczuk governments for something that we have been crying out for and talking about in this House for months, if not years. Finally, after fighting continuously with the Morrison government, we have seen progress.

We know how important the Gold Coast Light Rail is for the city of the Gold Coast. My government did the second stage of the light rail for the Commonwealth Games. Now we see that the funding from the Morrison government, matched with our funding and that of council, totalling around \$700 million, will mean that work on the Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3A can begin next year. This is a big win for the people of the Gold Coast. It is a huge win. The upgrades to the M1 are also very significant.

I thank the member for Gaven because she has been a very strong advocate for the Gold Coast not only as the local member but also as an assistant minister. She runs rings around the LNP members on the Gold Coast. On the Gold Coast, hers is a lone voice as she stands up for the infrastructure that is needed.

We do know that there are some alternative views. Straight after the announcement that was made when I was standing alongside Scott Morrison, which was hard for some on the other side to take, the Leader of the Opposition came out and criticised it. How could the Leader of the Opposition criticise it when months earlier, after the federal government handed down its budget, the member for Nanango said—

The federal budget that has been handed down is good news for Queensland. We have a budget of tax cuts, a budget of increased infrastructure spending and a budget that supports rural and regional Queensland.

Now we see the hypocrisy. The Leader of the Opposition is always attacking. She never says anything positive.

**Mr Dick:** Always whingeing.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I take that interjection. All we hear from the Leader of the Opposition is whinge, whinge, whinge. She is never happy. She is always whingeing.

**Ms Trad:** Even when Queensland gets a win she whinges.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right; I take that interjection. Finally we get a win for Queensland, but she is not happy. She says it is not good for Queensland. We will always back Queensland on this side of the House—

*(Time expired)*

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will put her comments through the chair.

### Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

**Mr MANDER:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. With more tragic deaths of children known to Child Safety and reported rapid increases in the number of children in care, will the Treasurer confirm that the child safety minister has sought more funding for the department of child safety and that all necessary resources will be provided to protect Queensland's most vulnerable?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the member for Everton for the question. I wish to reiterate the Premier's comments in relation to the tragedy of the circumstances and the loss of life of the two little girls in question. I can confirm that, under the Palaszczuk Labor government, the child safety department has grown. It has grown and the budget now is more than \$1.3 billion.

Let us be clear about what happened under those opposite. Two hundred and twenty-five child safety workers were sacked. They were sacked by the Newman LNP government. Two hundred and twenty-five child safety workers were sacked by those opposite. That is a record of which the member for Nanango is very proud. She is very proud of having sacked 225 child safety workers. In 2015 we added 450 new officers, including 93 this year. We dedicate ourselves to ensuring that, as a parent, the state acquits its responsibilities.

However, to say that this is very simple is not true. These are very complex circumstances. There has been an unprecedented increase in the number of children coming to the department whose parents are addicted to ice. These are very complex issues. They are issues of poverty, substance abuse and domestic and family violence.

What we see from those opposite is their playbook coming to fruition. They blame the public servants. They blame government. At the end of the day, we are investing what is needed to assist those families. If those opposite had done a quarter of what we have done, there would be many more gains than we are seeing today. They sacked workers, they defunded organisations and they gagged them. That is their track record.

### Regional Queensland, Youth Employment

**Mr HEALY:** My question is to the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on what the Palaszczuk government is doing to get young people into jobs in regional centres such as Cairns and across the great state of Queensland?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Cairns for the question. Just last week I had the great honour of joining the member for Cairns at Trinity Bay State High School. It was absolutely wonderful to see the new STEAM hub at Trinity Bay State High School. Next year that \$10.5 million learning centre will be utilised by the year 12s and other students who will learn things such as robotics and 3D printing, as we look to the sorts of jobs that young people will have into the future. We want to make sure that we are looking at more jobs in more industries. I know that the young people of Cairns face a

very bright future because of our commitment to key things such as that infrastructure. At that time in Cairns I also had the opportunity to meet fourth year carpentry apprentice Jake Anderson. Jake told us that he has worked on the Cairns State Special School and now he is working on another great investment that our government is providing within the STEAM program.

My government is absolutely committed to making sure that we have more apprentices and to giving more opportunity to young people, especially young people who are leaving high school. That is why my government is offering free TAFE. It is also why we want to get 60,000 more young people aged under 25 into apprenticeships across 139 priority areas over the next few years.

We also have programs that are delivering for young people. Let me talk about one key project which I know many members in this House are very grateful for. My government brought back Skilling Queenslanders for Work. We know that the LNP cut this program and it was going to cut it again. This is a great local employment program. Our Back to Work program is also encouraging small businesses to employ a young person. That was also purely about making sure that young people are given that opportunity. Finally, we also had the opportunity to open the new Bailey hotel in Cairns—it is a great investment in tourism in Cairns—which will mean more long-term, secure hospitality jobs for people in Cairns. We are making sure that our young people get the skills they need for the future. That is a priority of this Labor government.

### **Child Safety Services Staff, Allegations of Corruption**

**Mr BENNETT:** My question is to the Minister for Child Safety. The minister has advised that in the last year 11 Child Safety Services staff had substantiated corrupt conduct findings made against them. Can the minister guarantee that none of those matters has resulted in vulnerable kids being left unprotected in unsafe environments?

**Ms FARMER:** I thank the member for his question. I believe that the member's question relates to a response to a question on notice I provided in the last week. I cannot detail which of those is specifically related to the question he has asked, but I will come back to the House on that.

All over Queensland, every single day, we have staff dealing with the 121,000 calls that Child Safety receives every year. That means that every four minutes a call is received about a child who may be in danger. Those staff work day in and day out. They are confronted with the depths of depravity and evil, and they do their very best. The member opposite is referring to a very small number of staff. All of our staff must work to the highest standards. That is what we would all expect them to do. I certainly hope that the member is not impugning the reputations of the many thousands of staff who are working to keep our children safe.

This is a very serious issue. We need to ensure that we support our staff in the best way possible. By the end of next year the Palaszczuk Labor government will have employed an additional almost 600 Child Safety staff, because we need those staff at the front line. We know that the members opposite sacked 225 staff in Child Safety. We know that they ripped \$200 million out of the child safety system. We know they ripped money out of Health, Housing, Communities and Disabilities—all of the things that are levers for those children to be able to live the best lives they possibly can. We are making up for that.

**Mr BENNETT:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Under the standing orders, I want to confirm that the member is taking the question on notice.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member. We usually would ask those questions after the minister has finished giving her response. She has given a commitment to the House. Minister, can you confirm that you will be taking that question on notice under standing order 113(3)?

**Ms FARMER:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I said that at the beginning of my answer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member is seeking confirmation. Thank you for confirming that, Minister. Minister, you have 13 seconds left if you have any further contribution.

**Ms FARMER:** No, thank you, Mr Speaker.

### **North West Minerals Province**

**Mr STEWART:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plan for expanding the North West Minerals Province to create jobs in North Queensland and whether she is aware of any alternatives?



**Ms TRAD:** I thank the member for Townsville for his question. I acknowledge his very strong advocacy for the North Queensland region. He knows that a very strong and vibrant North West Minerals Province means a very strong and vibrant Townsville.

As was outlined in this year's state budget and earlier today by the Premier, we are investing in the North West Minerals Province and in the Mount Isa to Townsville rail line. We know how important it is as the economic lifeblood of the north and north-west regions. We are investing more than \$190 million in the Port of Townsville—the biggest investment in its history. We have built a new berth, it will soon have a new crane, we are putting in place a multi-user facility and we are doing so much more. We are investing in that rail line to make sure it is efficient and competitive with road haulage.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Under standing order 247, members must address the Speaker. Could you ask the Deputy Premier to do so as she is constantly turning her back to you?

**Mr SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. Please resume your seat.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Broadwater, that is bordering on being a frivolous point of order.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my right, I do not need any assistance. As I hear it, the Deputy Premier is making her statements. She is addressing the chair. It is preferred that all members look to the front of the House, but I am not seeing any concerns in relation to this today.

**Ms TRAD:** I really love talking about the Mount Isa railway line. I thank the transport minister for working with me to make this significant investment to ensure that rail line is as efficient and as competitive with road as it possibly can be. Last week we announced almost \$14 million to unearth more minerals in the North West Minerals Province because we know that they are the key for the new global economy.

We on this side of the House invest in our public economic infrastructure. Members on the other side of the House divest our public infrastructure. I wanted to see the alternative plans for Mount Isa and the Port of Townsville, so I had a look at the Strong Choices plan. What we have—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members to my left, I have asked the House to come to order. I cannot hear the Deputy Premier's contribution.

**Ms TRAD:** This is, of course, the strongest and smartest choice for Queensland. This is the plan that the member for Nanango was so proud of. What do we see slated for the Port of Townsville and the Mount Isa rail line? We see a long-term lease—essentially a sale—of the Port of Townsville and the Mount Isa rail line.

As I said, we on this side of the House invest in our public assets, whether they are rail lines, ports, dams, schools or hospitals. We invest. What do those opposite do? They divest.

*(Time expired)*

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

### **Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Declaration of Interest**

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General repay the gift in kind of over \$4,000 in hospitality she received from Star Entertainment in April 2017 given the conflict of interest the Attorney-General has—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr JANETZKI:**—being the regulator of casinos and also receiving a personal financial benefit from a casino operator?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the Attorney-General, I remind members to my right that questions will be heard in silence.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. I am sure the member is aware based on reports that, when he talks about repaying this donation—and as he said in his own question—it is an in-kind donation. It was not a financial donation which can be physically repaid. Let us be clear on this: when it comes to the way I conduct myself in my job, I can assure those opposite that everything is properly disclosed. I did not receive a personal benefit. Unlike those on the other side in the way that they

conduct themselves and my predecessor, all decisions I make are properly reported and recorded. I take advice and make sure that proper consultation occurs in relation to those decisions. All matters have been properly disclosed, as they should be. I find it absolutely hypocritical that those on the other side talk about donations—of all parties to talk about donations! Maybe the shadow Attorney-General would like to talk to his own party about the \$3.2 million in donations that they did not disclose until they were forced to by the courts.

**Mr Mander:** The Attorney-General is the regulator.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Yes, I am a regulator. On that basis the member for Everton seems to think that I should not go to my local cricket club, the RSL club, the leagues club or any other licensed venue in this state which has gaming or licensing. For that matter, if I held a function in a CWA hall where we are selling a pot of beer for \$2 as part of a fundraiser—

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Everton will cease his interjections.

**Mrs D'ATH:**—which would require a liquor licence from my department, I could not do that either. The important thing is to make sure that these matters are properly recorded with the Electoral Commission and everything is transparent in the way that is done.

**Ms Trad:** Under their laws, it wouldn't have been disclosed.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection. Under the LNP—I am absolutely convinced that it would happen again if the LNP were re-elected—none of this would have been disclosed. The only reason we can have this conversation is the Palaszczuk government's laws which require disclosure of \$1,000 or more—proper disclosure.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Those on the other side would be hiding donations of up to \$14,000 if they were still in government, as their federal colleagues do.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Everton is warned under the standing orders for continual interjections despite being warned.

### **North-West Queensland, Infrastructure and Jobs**

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister advise how the Palaszczuk government is working with other levels of government to invest in infrastructure and jobs in regional Queensland, particularly in the north-west? Is the minister aware of any other approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Cook for her question. Last week I was proud to announce that the Palaszczuk government will build as part of our North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy a \$14.5 million commercial drone-testing facility at Cloncurry airport. This is a first for our nation. It will bring high-technology industry and more jobs to the north-west and to the north of Queensland.

We worked hard with the Mayor of Cloncurry, Councillor Greg Campbell, who I want to recognise today and I put my thanks on the parliamentary record for his hard work for his community. We worked hard with Councillor Campbell to bring this project forward. It is not just the mayor. I am pleased to say that Queensland LNP senator Susan McDonald is also on board, advising my office that this announcement is just what the region needs.

Let me make it clear: we will work with anyone to get jobs and infrastructure to Queensland—not so the Leader of the Opposition, who now opposes the infrastructure deal her own LNP Prime Minister has offered. I have to hand it to the Leader of the Opposition. When we asked the Leader of the Opposition to back Queensland when the Commonwealth cut \$80 billion from health and education, she said nothing. When we asked the Leader of the Opposition to back Queensland when the Commonwealth was attempting to cut our share of GST, she said nothing. When we asked the Leader of the Opposition to back a fair share for infrastructure, there was complete silence.

When the Prime Minister finally opens the chequebook, the Leader of the Opposition launches into a full throated attack on him. The Prime Minister's office are scratching their heads. They do not know what she is doing. There she is, the Leader of the Opposition, like her mentor the federal coalition energy minister, Angus Taylor, logging on to Facebook. There she is posting messages, praising her

own genius: fantastic attack on ScoMo. Great move. Well done, Leader of the Opposition—double thumbs up emoji! That is what she is doing—abandoning Queensland and abandoning her own Prime Minister.

Even the member for Bonney had the good sense to turn up and back in the Premier. He turned up to back in the Premier but not the Leader of the Opposition. We know that the member for Pumicestone has got the message: there is no future under this leader, so she is leaving the parliament altogether. The backbench are all scratching their heads.

**Mrs Wilson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Pumicestone will cease her interjections.

**Mr DICK:** They all know that this leader has no plan, she has no strategy and, most of all, she has no judgement and she is not fit to lead Queensland.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Access

**Mr POWELL:** My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the Attorney-General's comment last week that a \$125-a-head fundraiser at a five-star hotel is a good way to communicate with everyday Queenslanders. Is paying to attend a Labor function in keeping with the Premier's direction to her ministers regarding community engagement?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. The Attorney-General has made a fulsome explanation to this House. The amount of \$125 a head is a far cry from the \$10,000-a-head plated lunches that those opposite had when they were in government many years ago.

**Ms Trad:** How many in the 'diamond club'?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We would still like to see how much the 'diamond club' is. I also heard there was a recent function to mark one year to go until the state election, attended by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. How much was that a head? Was it \$100 a head? Was it \$1,000 a head? How much?

That is why this week we are going to be introducing the strongest electoral reform in the nation. There will be no more big business donations. Coming up on 2 December it will be 30 years since the election of the Goss government. We will follow in the Wayne Goss tradition, and under my government we will clean up the electoral system in this state and make sure that it is the most transparent and the most honest in the country.

Mr Speaker, you do not have to take my advice. The Centre for Public Integrity said that Queensland is leading the way. This is going to be a test. The test for the LNP will be: will they support our strong electoral reform laws?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is the test for the Leader of the Opposition. It was Wayne Goss who cleaned up the National Party mess when they had a gerrymander in this state. It took Wayne Goss and Labor to clean it up. Under my government, we will clean up the big business donations in this state. We have already banned property developers. Now we will take the next step.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** They do not like it. Here we go—more whingeing. Let me say very clearly that the real test for the LNP when we introduce the laws this week is: will they support the laws? Will they support cleaning up the electoral system in this state or will they go backwards?

*(Time expired)*

### Infrastructure Projects, Apprenticeships and Traineeships

**Ms PEASE:** My question is to the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail. Cross River Rail and Queen's Wharf are changing the face of Brisbane. Will the minister please update the House on how these projects are driving apprenticeship and training opportunities for workers?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for her question. One thing the Premier repeatedly says on this side of the House is that we wake up every morning to create jobs right across our state. We know it is so critical to get behind apprenticeships and traineeships in this state because we know that will create full-time, well-paid jobs for young Queenslanders. That is why I am very pleased to announce today that, as part of our commitment to apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland, during the Queen's Wharf development we expect to have over 200 apprentices on that site. In fact, there are already 20 apprentices and trainees working on that construction site. In addition to that, the

Cross River Rail project is expected to deliver 450 apprenticeships on that site. New apprenticeships and trainee jobs are being created for young Queenslanders because of our government's investment in infrastructure.

Has it not been a great week for investment in infrastructure here in Queensland! I too want to join all of the members on our side of the House and those opposite to acknowledge the great role that the member for Gaven has played in lobbying for infrastructure for the Gold Coast. The announcement of \$1.8 billion in infrastructure investment will also see more trainees and apprenticeships, creating jobs in Queensland as we get on with the job of building the infrastructure that gets Queensland moving.

This week you can characterise it this way: the LNP went to bed listening to *All Out of Love*. They are completely all out of love with the Morrison government. Maybe the Leader of the Opposition was listening to Bon Jovi's *You Give Love a Bad Name*. Maybe she was angry and listening to Acca Dacca's *Highway to Hell*. Well, we will build the highway! Meanwhile, the Premier is going to bed listening to *Life is a Highway* and *Can't Buy Me Love* or maybe *Hurt so Good*.

We know that the Leader of the Opposition is skating on thin ice. The fact is that we have worked so hard to secure the funding that Queensland has been short-changed of for so long, and the best that the Leader of the Opposition can do is criticise investment and infrastructure for Queensland. There is money for the M1 and to finally deliver light rail projects as well as significant infrastructure in our regions. Our side of government will get on with the job of creating the infrastructure that ordinary Queenslanders need. That is why it is so critical that we continue to invest in infrastructure that creates opportunities for young apprentices and trainees to get the jobs that we need for the future.

### **Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Declaration of Interest**

**Dr ROBINSON:** My question without notice is to the Premier and I ask: did the Attorney-General declare to cabinet her interest arising from receiving a hospitality gift in kind of \$4,000 from Star Entertainment before participating in any cabinet discussions or decisions relating to Star Entertainment, specifically since receiving an April 2017 donation?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It was not a cabinet decision.

### **Infrastructure Funding, Projects**

**Mr RUSSO:** My question is of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister provide details to the House on the Queensland projects that were included in last week's federal infrastructure funding announcement?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the member for Toohey, who is a great supporter of infrastructure and jobs in Queensland. What a great week last week was for infrastructure and jobs for Queensland, with a \$1.9 billion boost to Queensland. We took the lion's share across other states. We saw other states receive amounts of between \$400 million and \$500 million, but there was \$1.9 billion for Queensland.

Let me outline some of the projects. There was \$282 million in joint funding brought forward for the Bruce Highway, which is fantastic news for regional Queensland, including \$51 million accelerated funding for the Mackay Ring Road stage 2 to the port—well done to the member for Mackay. Mr Speaker, you will be very pleased to hear there is accelerated funding for the Cairns Southern Access Corridor, Edmonton to Gordonvale, and fast-tracked funding of \$97 million for sealing the Peninsula Developmental Road from Weipa to Cape York. The member for Cook should be very proud of her work. There is also fast-tracked funding for a freight corridor from Townsville to Roma; Warrego and Cunningham highway upgrades; and extra funding for two M1 interchanges at exits 41 and 49—thanks to the Palaszczuk government's hard work—and inland rail is go.

We had an incredible deluge of great news for Queensland, and what do we get from the Leader of the Opposition? The usual negativity, knocking, whingeing and whining that we get from her. There is nearly \$2 billion for Queensland and we saw the Leader of the Opposition—

**Mrs Wilson** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Pumicestone, you were already under a warning. I asked all members to cease interjections. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Pumicestone withdrew from the chamber at 10.55 am.*

**Mr BAILEY:** The Leader of the Opposition was so negative and threw such a tantrum about it, but there was one person who did not throw a tantrum about it: the member for Bonney. The uninvited member for Bonney turned up at the press conference to back in the Palaszczuk government's deal. It is quite amazing, because at 11.45 am the Leader of the Opposition stood up for her press conference.

The press conference on the Gold Coast was at 1.30, nearly two hours later, and there was the member for Bonney coming along to support the Palaszczuk government landing the light rail. Here he is smiling, Mr Speaker. Look at him—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, put the prop down.

**Mr BAILEY:**—with a big smile on his face. You have to wonder whether he is joining the member for Broadwater's shark pack circling the leadership over there because of the inept and amateur performance last week of the Leader of the Opposition, who should have backed in this project, who should have backed in this funding, who should have backed jobs and infrastructure for Queensland, yet she went out there with her usual tantrum. She has no credibility calling on Canberra for funding. She never stands up to them. This government will always stand up to them—always.

*(Time expired)*

### Mining Industry, Safety

**Mr COSTIGAN:** My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Will the minister concede that Queensland's reputation as a safe jurisdiction for mining is now in tatters after another fatality overnight and that his reset approach has failed to address workplace safety issues?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for Whitsunday for his question. My sincere condolences go to family, friends and colleagues of the worker who was so tragically taken. The inspectorate has closed this mine. The inspectorate is on site and a full investigation is underway. This is a tragedy and a time when a family is grieving. I do not intend to further answer this question because of the implications it will have for the family and friends of this worker. I am happy to address this issue later in the week when it is more appropriate.

### Central Queensland, Health Services

**Mrs LAUGA:** My question is of the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister outline how the Palaszczuk government is improving health services in Central Queensland and whether he is aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Keppel for her question. I know that she, the member for Rockhampton and the member for Gladstone are very passionate about our goal to deliver more and better health services in the Central Queensland region. I know they are all as excited as I am to see our new Central Queensland medical school coming together.

The Palaszczuk government is investing more than \$5 million into delivering medical training places in the Central Queensland and Wide Bay regions. We are doing that because we know that when you train doctors locally they are more likely to work locally, and we need them to stay in regional Queensland delivering health services to regional Queenslanders. It means that young people who grow up in Rockhampton do not need to move to Brisbane to train to be doctors. I know that a lot of the existing doctors there are excited. They wish they could have trained locally. They are excited about the opportunity they will have to train the doctors of the future. I thank the two HHSs, the Central Queensland University, the University of Queensland and our Chief Health Officer for all of their work in putting together this new medical school. It is just one of the initiatives that we are delivering in Central Queensland.

Another initiative is that on the second of next month we will have another community forum to talk about our preferred site—the Music Bowl site—for the new residential drug rehabilitation facility. This is a \$14.5 million investment into the health care of people in the Central Queensland region and beyond. There are so many great investments backing our health staff in the Central Queensland region.

While our fantastic Central Queensland based members are out there supporting our hospitals and supporting our health staff, those opposite are determined to talk them down. Just last week, the member for Mudgeeraba went to Rockhampton and she tried to criticise our hospitals and she tried to criticise our health staff, but it did not exactly go to plan. The *Morning Bulletin* called it a “Grubby” use of statistics to “confuse”. I like this line that states—

The LNP was approached for comment on their misuse of statistics but they failed to address the question ...

I table that article for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin*, dated 20 November 2019, titled “Grubby” use of statistics to “confuse” [\[2114\]](#).

While those opposite are focused on grubby attacks on our health workers and our hospitals, our Central Queensland members will keep fighting for our health services, like all the other members on this side of the House.

### Burdekin Falls Dam

**Mr LAST:** My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to media reports that safety assessments of the Burdekin Falls Dam have found it could potentially fail in a big storm event. Can the Premier guarantee that the Burdekin Falls Dam is safe and there are no risks to the people downstream?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** First of all, I am advised by the minister that he has been assured by SunWater that the Burdekin Falls Dam complies with all current state and federal requirements for dam safety. The relevant standards are set by the state in conjunction with the Australian National Committee on Large Dams. I am advised further by the minister that the risk assessment was updated this year and was overseen by an independent expert panel. I am further advised that this assessment found that the Burdekin Falls Dam currently complies with all current state and federal requirements for dam safety.

A business case is currently underway for improvement works at the Burdekin Falls Dam. The business case is investigating options for improvement works to ensure the dam continues to meet best practice standards, including protection from severe weather events. In relation to the proposed improvement works, including raising the saddle dam and spillway, the government has committed \$14.53 million for the planning works already underway for these improvement works. The business case by Building Queensland is expected to be completed in early 2021. As I have also said in this House, we have committed \$215 million for the pipeline for Townsville and another \$16.5 million for the Burdekin Falls Dam raising feasibility study.

### State Schools, Apprentices

**Ms HOWARD:** My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations. Will the minister update the House on how the government is supporting apprentices through the rollout of air conditioning and clean energy programs in Queensland state schools?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for Ipswich for the question. Yesterday a local apprentice who had just completed his apprenticeship in a local business was guaranteed a full-time job because of these two wonderful programs. Our air-conditioning program and our clean energy program in Queensland state schools are delivering not only jobs but apprenticeship numbers.

Our air-conditioning program will deliver thousands of hours of apprenticeships. Those apprentices are working for these small businesses—like Chek Air Conditioning—and those businesses are paying no WorkCover premiums in this state. We have forgiven WorkCover premiums for those small businesses, and the apprentices are reaping the benefits as well. This is making it more economical for them to be employed.

In our Advancing Clean Energy Schools program, we are putting solar panels on 800 schools right throughout Queensland over three years. Every fortnight, we are rolling out these panels. We are up to 40 schools already. In just four months, we have had 362 hours of apprentice work on those sites. These are young people getting real jobs that will see them in trades after this is over. It is wonderful to see. It warms my heart when I speak to people like Aidan, to whom I spoke yesterday, to see he is reaping the benefits.

We also have a \$1.5 billion infrastructure plan. The Fortitude Valley State Secondary College is going up in absolute record time, but that school was put up for sale by those opposite. That school had a 'for sale' sign on it before we got elected in 2015. They wanted to sell it. Do members know how many apprentice hours have been delivered through the building of that school? There have been 43,636 hours of apprentice work on that school that was put up for sale by those opposite.

Construction on the Inner City South State Secondary College at Dutton Park begins this week. It is estimated there will be 78,000 apprentice hours of work on that site, turning out the tradies of the future. We see this replicated right throughout Queensland. It is wonderful to see that this is producing real outcomes for tradies in this state and that local and small businesses are reaping the benefits.

It often perplexes me when those opposite hear that air conditioning in classrooms is coming to their electorates, like Nanango and Everton. I cannot believe that someone could whinge about that, but that is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition did yesterday—whinge, whinge, whinge. 'Oh, dear! We're getting all my classrooms air-conditioned. Isn't that horrible!' Their program is over eight years; they are getting it now.

*(Time expired)*

### Comments by Member for Toohey

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Premier. Last sitting the member for Toohey used disrespectful and foul language to describe a woman in this House. In line with the government's policy on bullying and sexual harassment in the workplace—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my right will cease interjections. The question will be heard in silence. Please continue your question.

**Ms BATES:** In line with the government's policy on bullying and sexual harassment in the workplace, has the Premier investigated who was the subject of the member for Toohey's vile attack and directed him to apologise to the woman personally?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Toohey has apologised to this House and he did that this morning—unlike the former deputy premier who, in the middle of the night, came over to me when I was sitting there as the leader of the opposition, leaned over and abused me.

**Mr Mander:** So that makes it right?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, I am just giving you an example of where I never had an apology and the House never had an apology. We had the member for Clayfield and the member for Surfers Paradise make comments when I asked questions as leader of the opposition as well. They made derogatory comments and I think they had to apologise. Let me make it very clear. As members of this House, everybody should set a high standard on all sides of the House. That is the expectation.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Toohey stood up and apologised.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Coomera will use members' correct titles in this place.

### Energy Industry, Apprenticeships

**Ms BOYD:** My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. Will the minister update the House on the contribution to training future energy sector apprenticeships from our publicly owned energy business?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for Pine Rivers for her question. There has never been a better time to learn a trade with Queensland's publicly owned energy businesses, and the Palaszczuk government is doing their part to open up exciting careers to hundreds of Queenslanders. There are now more than 530 apprentices working across Energex, Ergon, Powerlink, Stanwell, CS Energy, and at depots and power stations right across this state. These bright men and women are being trained on some of the largest electricity assets in the world with cutting-edge technology. In Queensland apprentices have the opportunity to be trained in new technologies including alternative energy solutions and also in smart grids.

Six of these apprentices have played a part in helping out in the bushfire affected areas of Yeppoon and Toowoomba. They have been out there as part of the crews repairing damaged powerlines and electrical infrastructure. While I am on my feet I would like to take the opportunity to pass on the thanks of all Queenslanders to all the crews of Ergon and Energex helping with the bushfire recovery; they have done tremendous work.

I am delighted to announce that next year another 116 Queenslanders are set to start rewarding careers in a dynamic and expanding industry. Our publicly owned electricity businesses are investing in developing the skilled frontline staff needed now and into the future to deliver a safe, reliable and affordable electricity supply to all Queensland families.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering on its plan to protect and deliver more Queensland jobs. No job is more important than the job of an apprentice who is starting his or her life in one of the energy assets that we still publicly own.

**Ms Grace:** Trades of the future.

**Dr LYNHAM:** I take that interjection from the Minister for Education, and what an appropriate person to take that interjection from; these are the tradespeople of the future. The Queensland government through our assets—through Ergon, Energex, Powerlink and more—are giving them the start they need so they can contribute to our Queensland economy as Queenslanders of the future.

### Gold Coast, Global Tourism Hub

**Mr MOLHOEK:** My question without notice is to the Premier. The Gold Coast council has been briefed on the 11 secret sites for a global tourism hub and last week the Witheriff report alluded to 15 sites that could be potential locations without confirmation. Why is the Palaszczuk Labor government continuing to keep Gold Coast residents in the dark by failing to run an open and transparent process?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for the question. First of all, I would like to thank John Witheriff and his panel of Gold Coast locals for the process that they have run. There was an overwhelming response from locals that they do not want a global tourism hub on public land. My government respects their wishes and we have ruled this out.

As the honourable member is aware, we are currently in negotiations on the Gold Coast. Because that process is underway, I and other members of the CBRC are bound by probity and cannot comment on that process, and I would ask the House to respect that.

### Vocational Education and Training

**Mr PEGG:** My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister update the House about the Palaszczuk government's commitment to VET students in Queensland?

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

**Ms FENTIMAN:** I thank the member for Stretton for his question and his commitment to TAFE and training and providing skills for young Queenslanders in his electorate. Removing barriers for Queenslanders to get a vocational education and training is something that I am very passionate about. It is something that Queensland has been leading the charge on nationally in terms of trying to fix the federal government's broken VET student loan system. Currently in this country it is easier and more affordable to get a university degree than it is to go to TAFE, and that absolutely needs to change.

At the moment, university students have access to low-interest loans and no up-front fees, which are available for all university degrees. TAFE students have loans in an extremely limited number of courses, normally diplomas, and pay an additional 20 per cent up-front fee. For many families and many young Queenslanders, that up-front fee is simply unaffordable. Young people wanting to do nursing—and we have heard from the health minister this morning about how many more health workers we need—will often face a \$5,000 up-front fee, and for many families that is simply unaffordable.

Clearly the system is broken. The federal government have budgeted \$2 billion for VET student loans. Do honourable members know how much of that has gotten out the door? Only \$128 million! That is an underspend on VET student loans of \$1.7 billion. Imagine what we could be doing with that money to get young people into TAFE and training. We would not be facing a skills shortage; we would have more people in TAFE and training. That is why I am so pleased that at the COAG meeting for skills ministers in Brisbane we finally got the federal government to agree to an urgent review of the VET student loan system. This will mean more access for Queenslanders to TAFE and to training. We are incredibly proud of our work on this.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

## MOTION

### Business Program



**Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.15 am):** I move—

1. That the following government business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum periods of time as specified:
  - (a) the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of 45 minutes to complete all stages,
  - (b) the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a maximum of four hours to complete all stages,
  - (c) the Health Transparency Bill, a maximum of three hours to complete all stages, and
  - (d) the motion standing in the name of the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts proposing the revocation and dedication of areas under the Nature Conservation Act 1992, a maximum of 30 minutes for debate.
2. The following time limits for the bills listed in paragraph 1 apply:
  - (a) consideration in detail to be completed by three minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours,
  - (b) question on third reading to be put by two minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours, and
  - (c) question on long title to be put by one minute before the expiry of the maximum hours.




3. If the nominated stage of each bill or motion has not been completed by the allocated time specified in paragraph 2, or by 4.55 pm on Thursday, 28 November 2019, Mr Speaker:
- (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments,
  - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill or motion without further debate,
  - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion, and
  - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

In moving this motion I firstly acknowledge the Australian Political Exchange Council's delegation from the New Zealand parliament. It was a pleasure to host them on Sunday evening. They wanted an exciting question time, so I do hope that we lived up to that expectation. I also acknowledge other international delegates who are here, our First Nations people who are here today and everyone else in the gallery.

It is a pleasure to speak to this business motion today, being the last sitting week and the last business motion for the year. I could talk about the statistics of how many more members are getting to speak on bills under this business model compared to in previous parliaments. However, firstly, I want to say that this is an important week which will end with valedictories from the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, and other members will spread Christmas cheer and wish everyone all the best for the year ahead. Of course, we have important work to do before then. We will be dealing with the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which had commenced in the last sitting week and we will finish the debate this week. Importantly, we will also be debating the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, a very important bill to ensure that we are looking after workers' rights in this state, as well as the Health Transparency Bill, to ensure we are looking after our most vulnerable in the community. We will also be debating the motion standing in the name of the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts proposing the revocation and dedication of areas under the Nature Conservation Act 1992.

In speaking to this motion, I also give my thanks as Leader of the House to all of the staff here in parliament, particularly those who are here well before the bells ring in the morning and well after the bells ring for us to adjourn in the evening, who ensure that the people's house runs smoothly and effectively. I want to acknowledge the Parliamentary Service staff, in particular the attendants, who work tirelessly for the people. We still have 2½ days of sitting to go, but I take this opportunity to wish all members and staff a happy and safe Christmas. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Kawana, the following members have been given a warning by the Speaker. They are the members for Cooper, Glass House, Maryborough, Caloundra, Toowoomba North, Burleigh, Kawana, Theodore and Everton.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.18 am): The Leader of the House is correct; we will end the year with valedictories later this week. We will also end the year with the highest unemployment rate in the country. We will end the year with the Deputy Premier still engulfed in an integrity crisis. We will end the year with other health crises. We will end the year, but not on the positive notes that the Leader of the House outlines. We will end the year on the negative notes that the Labor government is overseeing in the state of Queensland.

Just before the Leader of the House sat down, the opposition was provided with the motion we are debating. I have not even had a chance to look at the motion we are debating because we got it literally five seconds before the Leader of the House sat down. I assume that the motion is relevant to the discussions held yesterday at the Business Committee meeting. In the Business Committee meeting the Leader of the House again tried to convince me that, to save an hour, we ought not debate committee reports this week. I rejected that at the Business Committee meeting because I think committee reports are important to debate. It is only because of our strong opposition to the proposal that committee reports will still be debated this week. With the Labor government thinking the parliament is its political plaything, committee reports would not have been debated this week.

**Mr Hinchliffe:** So the process worked.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The process is not working. All it does—

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I will explain to the former leader of the House why it does not work. Yesterday I received a text message from the Leader of the House telling me what bills would be debated this week. I thank the Leader of the House for sending the message. The text message I received said, 'These are the bills to be debated this week.' Then at the Business Committee meeting the Leader of the House

said, 'These are the bills we will debate this week. What time lines?' There is no discussion about what we ought to debate this week; it is simply a case of what the government wants the government gets. The Business Committee meeting is a complete waste of time. There is only one thing—

**Mr Hinchliffe** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Sandgate, you have had a couple of goes. You are now warned.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection. Just because the New Zealand parliament has a silly Business Committee meeting does not mean that we need a silly Business Committee meeting as well. Just because it is done in another jurisdiction does not mean it should be done here in Queensland.

The worst thing about wasting my time at the Business Committee meeting every Monday afternoon is sitting there with the Minister for Health, who is a representative on the Business Committee. As I have said for two years, this Business Committee meeting is a waste of time and achieves nothing. It is a waste of time for everybody who participates in the meeting. I know that the Leader of the House looks forward to the meeting with me every Monday at 5.45, but I do not because I think it is a waste of time. We could be doing far better for our constituents than wasting our time with the health minister.

The reality is that what the government wants the government gets. The parliament is the political plaything of the Labor Party. That is what we expect from the arrogance of a Premier, who always has her head in the sand in relation to integrity issues. She is the weakest premier in Queensland's history. We are expected just to go along with it and allow parliament to be Labor's political plaything. We will not do it.


I table a copy of the speaking list for the summary offences bill debated last sitting week.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, speaking list titled 'Summary Offences Bill' [\[2115\]](#).


Seven members missed the opportunity to speak in that debate. The member for Sandgate says, 'It's all working well.' If you are the government it is all working well, because what they want is what they get. They do not care what the members of the opposition or the crossbenchers say.

We want to debate matters this week. Where is the integrity bill? Where is the bill concerning the Deputy Premier that the LNP introduced? Why are we not debating that this week? The front page of the *Courier-Mail* says that ministers could be in jail. Yes, they could. The Deputy Premier could be in jail for what she did. Why are we not debating this week the bill the opposition introduced? We will not debate those bills until next year. What an absolute waste of time this is. It shows the arrogance of the Labor Party. The only way we will get change is to vote in an LNP government next year. I look forward to that day.

*(Time expired)*

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.24 am): If the member for Kawana were so concerned about wasting time, perhaps he could reflect on his regular contribution to this debate as an opportunity for him to waste a bit less time of a few more people. It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas, isn't it? I understand that the lights on the Christmas tree were turned on last night. Afterwards, I understand that at the Alliance Hotel a number of members opposite celebrated another great year in opposition. It was wall-to-wall checked shirts at the Alliance last night! On Thursday there will be valedictory speeches and the Speaker's drinks. Before then there is much important work for us to do. This business program motion allows us to do that.

I will address the issues raised by the member for Kawana. The motion moved by the Leader of the House does indeed reflect the discussion that we had at the meeting. As the member for Sandgate accurately interjected, the motion reflects the fact that the opposition's views were taken into account. In fact, all of the views raised in that meeting were taken into account. I can confirm for the benefit of the House that at no stage did the member for Kawana ask for any other bills to be considered. The substance of his complaint is not borne out by the discussion we had at the meeting. Merry Christmas, Mr Deputy Speaker. We will get through the work of the House and then we will all have a chance to celebrate with the staff on Thursday afternoon.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.26 am): I stand to speak against this business program motion. We just had some international visitors from other parliaments around the world. Most, if not all, practise the Westminster style of government. I am sure they have come here to observe how we do things and maybe learn some things from us. One thing they should not take away from this House is how democracy has been absolutely trounced in this state with regard to this motion that we debate week after week. They may not understand that it is all about prohibiting

or limiting debate in this House on many important issues. It concerns limiting not just debate but also the hours we spend in parliament. In the past week next year's sitting calendar was given to us. I am told that parliament will sit for the fewest number of days in the past 10 years.

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Member for Mermaid Beach, I do not believe that is your correct seat. Your interjections are not being taken.

**Mr MANDER:** Every parliamentary sitting day we protest against this limitation on democracy in terms of the number of hours that we sit and the number of hours to debate an issue. We are constantly gagged and now the number of days are limited as well.

What is also disturbing, particularly this week, is the government's priorities for parliament. This week the government's priority is to rush through the public holiday bill in time for Christmas Eve. On the *Notice Paper* is an incredibly important bill relevant to what is happening in our state at this moment—the child death review legislation.

I would have thought that any government would respond to the tragedies that we have seen not just last week but since this review was initiated two years ago, but, no, it is not the priority of this government to bring that bill forward so that we can bring about changes that will protect children. Instead, it is this government's priority to kowtow to the unions and to make sure that it gets their bill up in time which will have a negative impact on businesses and employees over the Christmas period. This says a lot about the priorities of this government—that is, it wants us to speak about a public holiday bill rather than the protection of children.

**Ms Leahy:** Vulnerable children.

**Mr MANDER:** Yes, vulnerable children; I take that interjection from the member for Warrego. That is why we have and will continue to get up each week and compare the priorities that we have with the government's priorities. The Manager of Opposition Business has already mentioned that another significant issue is integrity and ensuring that government ministers act appropriately. Again, would one not think that it would be a priority of this government to introduce the bill that it has already publicised to the *Courier-Mail* because these ministers need something hanging over their heads to ensure they behave correctly? They have already been put on a booze ban because they cannot behave themselves, so their Christmas parties are going to be very boring.

**An opposition member:** What about Montville?

**Mr MANDER:** That is right: they had their little get-together in Montville between the big three—the big three who are not speaking to each other, apparently, and I am not sure whether the booze ban was lifted over that little party that they had together.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Member for Everton, I draw you back to the motion please.

**Mr MANDER:** As I said, the agenda of this government reflects its priorities. It has no idea, it has lost touch with the Queensland public and it is drifting, and we are seeing the results of that in the economic performance of this government. We will be voting against this motion.

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

*In division—*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, before moving to the question at hand, I want to acknowledge that the former member for Woodridge, Desley Scott, is in the public gallery today—or as she is known to some, St Desley.

**AYES, 47:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

**NOES, 43:**

**LNP, 37—**Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir.

**Grn, 1—**Berkman.

**KAP, 3—**Dametto, Katter, Knuth.


**NQF, 1—**Costigan.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## MOTION

### Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.36 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders, the Deputy Premier be permitted to immediately make a statement regarding the Speaker's referral on 22 November 2019.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Comments by Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Apology

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (11.37 am): I rise to make a statement concerning the purchase of an investment property in Woolloongabba by my husband. I wish to again restate the unreserved apology that I have made in relation to this matter here in the House today. I apologise—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, in your ruling that you tabled in the parliament a few days ago you advised members that the standing orders applied and that this matter is before the Ethics Committee. I am just seeking guidance, Mr Speaker, as to how the Deputy Premier can speak directly to the matter when it is before the Ethics Committee.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the House has just resolved to suspend standing and sessional orders for the purposes of this statement, so I believe that because the House has agreed to that the Deputy Premier can make this statement.


**Government members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, members to my right. There is no point of order.

**Ms TRAD:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will start again. I rise to make a statement concerning the purchase of an investment property in Woolloongabba by my husband. Here in the House today I wish to again restate the unreserved apology that I have made in relation to this matter. I apologise for not meeting the time frame for the declaration of an interest and I apologise for not declaring an interest in the course of my duties as a minister and member of parliament. I take my responsibilities to the House seriously. While this matter was before the CCC, I refrained from commentary on this issue because it was not appropriate. The CCC has thoroughly assessed this matter and determined that there was no evidence of any dishonesty or corruption.

## NOTICE OF MOTION

### Federal Government, Infrastructure Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.37 am): I give notice that I will move—

That this House—

1. notes
  - (a) the historic \$1.9 billion infrastructure deal struck between the Palaszczuk government and the federal Morrison government on Wednesday, 20 November, including key projects:
    - i. \$400 million in new federal road funding;
    - ii. \$836 million in joint funding delivering already promised projects sooner;
    - iii. \$508 million in new federal and state funding towards construction of Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3;
    - iv. \$46.3 million additional federal funding for two M1 exit upgrades;
    - v. \$282 million in joint funding brought forward for Bruce Highway upgrades, including accelerated funding for Linkfield Road overpass and \$12.5 million brought forward for Rockhampton Ring Road;
    - vi. \$121.9 million in joint accelerated funding to seal more roads between Cooktown and Weipa;
    - vii. \$27.5 million in joint accelerated funding for Warrego Highway including Mount Crosby Road interchange upgrade;
    - viii. \$10.4 million in joint accelerated funding for road upgrades in the Toowoomba to Seymour corridor;
    - ix. \$9.8 million in joint accelerated funding for the inland freight route between Townsville and Roma; and
    - x. agreement on inland rail linking freight from Melbourne to Brisbane, with \$6 billion invested in Queensland;

- (b) the thousands of jobs these projects will create right across Queensland;
- 2. congratulates the Palaszczuk and Morrison governments for working together in the interests of Queenslanders and Queensland jobs; and
- 3. calls on the Prime Minister to continue putting politics aside to deliver Queensland its fair share from Canberra on jobs and infrastructure.

## MOTIONS

### Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (11.41 am), by leave, without notice, I move:

That, notwithstanding anything contained in the standing or sessional orders, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads be permitted to immediately move the motion of which the minister has given notice earlier today with the following time limits to apply: three minutes for all members; total debate time before question put, 30 minutes.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

### Federal Government, Infrastructure Funding



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.41 am): I move—

That this House—

- 1. notes
  - (a) the historic \$1.9 billion infrastructure deal struck between the Palaszczuk government and the federal Morrison government on Wednesday, 20 November, including key projects:
    - i. \$400 million in new federal road funding;
    - ii. \$836 million in joint funding delivering already promised projects sooner;
    - iii. \$508 million in new federal and state funding towards construction of Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3;
    - iv. \$46.3 million additional federal funding for two M1 exit upgrades;
    - v. \$282 million in joint funding brought forward for Bruce Highway upgrades, including accelerated funding for Linkfield Road overpass and \$12.5 million brought forward for Rockhampton Ring Road;
    - vi. \$121.9 million in joint accelerated funding to seal more roads between Cooktown and Weipa;
    - vii. \$27.5 million in joint accelerated funding for Warrego Highway including Mount Crosby Road interchange upgrade;
    - viii. \$10.4 million in joint accelerated funding for road upgrades in the Toowoomba to Seymour corridor;
    - ix. \$9.8 million in joint accelerated funding for the inland freight route between Townsville and Roma; and
    - x. agreement on inland rail linking freight from Melbourne to Brisbane, with \$6 billion invested in Queensland;
  - (b) the thousands of jobs these projects will create right across Queensland;
- 2. congratulates the Palaszczuk and Morrison governments for working together in the interests of Queenslanders and Queensland jobs; and
- 3. calls on the Prime Minister to continue putting politics aside to deliver Queensland its fair share from Canberra on jobs and infrastructure.

This is an historic agreement for Queensland. After we stood up for Queensland, we are seeing the Gold Coast Light Rail stage 3 fully funded from both the federal and state governments. We received the deal that we wanted so that our funding can go into schools, hospitals and roads. We received a fair deal.

There is funding for two upgrades to the M1 at Yatala south and Pimpama in that growth corridor. That is very significant. There is also \$50 million in new funding for the relocation of the Loganlea station; \$400 million in new funding for the National Land Transport Network; three accelerations on the M1; five accelerations on the Bruce Highway, including \$51 million in acceleration for the Mackay Ring Road stage 2, or the port access road as it is also known; and \$39 million for Linkfield Road.


Importantly, the funding for regional projects is worth noting. There is an acceleration of the Toowoomba to Seymour project in terms of the forward estimates. There is also an acceleration of the Bargara Road upgrade; a massive acceleration within the forward estimates of the Cooktown to Weipa corridor upgrade of \$97.8 million; an upgrade of Shute Harbour Road; an upgrade of Torbanlea Pialba

Road; an upgrade of the Townsville to Roma corridor; and a \$90 million acceleration of the Beerburrum to Nambour rail upgrade. There is also an acknowledgement of the very good work that we have done in terms of infrastructure on the Mount Lindesay Highway, on the Centenary Motorway and elsewhere.

When we look at the detail of this motion, we have to ask why the Leader of the Opposition's only point in criticising, knocking and being negative about this funding was that there was not much in it for regional Queensland. There are only two explanations for that. She was either not across the detail of the funding—and that is possible—or she was just simply making it up as she goes along. It was probably the tantrum of the term by the leader of negativity, knocking, whingeing and whining. This funding is good for Queensland. Any leader should acknowledge that.

I acknowledge the presence of the member for Bonney at the press conference on the Gold Coast. It was very unusual for a member of the opposition to turn up at a government press conference, but here is a picture of him smiling with a sign that says 'Go'. The member for Bonney is backing in the Palaszczuk government. I was advised that the Deputy Prime Minister asked who he was. Someone told him.

This is a fantastic funding package. It is historic. It means jobs for Queenslanders. The opposition should support this motion and make up for the negativity of last week.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.44 am): What an absolute joke of a road transport minister we have over on that side of the House.

**Opposition members:** Foolish.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection from those on the left. He has been referred to as a foolish minister. We can call this package from the Prime Minister and the federal government the 'Bailing out Bailey' program for a hopeless Palaszczuk government that has been unable to do its job in the past five years. It has had to have the federal government come in and bail it out of its troubles. What is the unemployment rate in this state? Because of the incompetent government opposite, it is 6.5 per cent.

I will always stand up for all of Queensland, not just the south-east, not just for a few sprinkles of fairy dust. Water security is the No. 1 issue in Queensland. What deal did the Palaszczuk government do to try to support the town of Stanthorpe, which is drying up? The Premier's only solution to that problem is a \$1 million feasibility study. At a time when the Palaszczuk government could have done a deal with the federal government in relation to water security, what did we see? Absolutely nothing. Now, we have the Premier of this state announcing a \$1 million study that will not even be finished until April. Yet the town of Stanthorpe is going to run dry well before the April deadline.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I have waited for two minutes for the member to address the motion. She has not. Can I suggest that she address the motion?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Nanango, I have given you a bit of latitude. I need you to come back to the motion.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It was interesting to note that the minister wanted me to go back to the 'Bailing out Bailey' conversation. Where was this minister—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Ms TRAD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Protection racket.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you need to address members by their correct title, please.

**Mr BAILEY:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I believe the Leader of the Opposition just said the words 'protection racket' in relation to your chairing. Can I ask if that is appropriate under the rules? I heard that very distinctly.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, I did not take it as a reflection upon the chair. I have given the ruling. Member for Nanango, you have 38 seconds remaining.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** When I talk about water security, it does not stop at water security for rural and regional Queensland. I am talking about water security for all of Queensland, whether it is for the Gold Coast or Stanthorpe. I acknowledge the hard work and dedication that the member for Southern Downs is putting into his community, in standing up for his community, in making sure that his community has water security, not just a \$1 million feasibility study.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Nanango, I have given you a very clear direction. You need to come back to the motion. It is not about water security. I need you to come back to the motion being debated.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Hence my point. In relation to the motion that is before the House, it is this side of the House that will always stand up for all of Queensland.

*(Time expired)*


 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (11.49 am): It will be nice to bring the debate back to relevance as opposed to making personal attacks. Maturity is a rare commodity. This motion recognises a great deal for Queensland. This is not a deal that just delivers better roads and transport sooner; it is a deal that backs Queensland and jobs. For anybody to not recognise the importance of this funding, the impressive stupidity is consistent.

Since 2015 our government has fought hard for fair federal funding for Queensland. Our fight has finally paid off. The federal government has brought forward much needed infrastructure funding for Queensland, including Far North Queensland. There is \$12.5 million brought forward for the Cairns southern access stage 5 project, which will support 110 local jobs. That is outstanding news. Cairns is a vibrant, growing regional and tropical city. It is fantastic to see the Morrison government start investing in the Far North.

This is not only about cutting travel times but also about boosting employment. In the past 12 months alone we have seen 12,000 jobs created in the Far North. This forward funding will boost the jobs pipeline even more. Stage 5 of the Southern Access Project is on top of the \$481 million Edmonton to Gordonvale road upgrade, which last month saw the construction contract awarded to the HSA Group. It is also on top of the \$103 million Kate Street to Aumuller Street upgrade being delivered under the Palaszczuk Labor government which is making significant improvements to access into the southern parts of Cairns city. The deal also means that \$97 million of federal government funding—a joint commitment of \$121 million—will be accelerated on the Peninsula Developmental Road, supporting jobs and training on the cape.


This deal does not just deliver to the Far North; it also accelerates \$8 million on the Townsville to Roma key freight corridor. The Palaszczuk government's \$14.5 billion investment in regional roads and transport infrastructure over the next four years will sustain over 13,500 jobs. This can already be seen on projects like the Mackay Ring Road, where over 1,600 workers have been inducted on site with over 80 per cent of them being local to the region.

I speak to the motion because I back Queensland jobs. Unlike those opposite, I am positive about the future of our state. Cutting, sacking and selling might be the LNP way, but it is not the Labor way. I am particularly positive when I see a Premier and a Prime Minister sitting down negotiating a deal in which all benefit. Labor fights for the best deal it can get for Queensland. We do not peddle negativity, doom and gloom like the LNP does. Let us keep the pressure on Queensland jobs. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.52 am): In its motion the government talks about playing politics. What an absolute joke! For the last three years this state government has had to play politics because of its record underspend in infrastructure. The Deputy Premier said herself we have an infrastructure crisis. For the last three years those opposite have done nothing but sit on their hands. Not only have they played politics with the Commonwealth government when they should have made a contribution; they also played politics when the state made no contribution whatsoever. Two classic examples of that are the inland rail, where the federal government is putting up \$11 billion and the state government has no contribution—despite that it has delayed it, costing thousands and thousands of jobs—and the Brisbane Metro, again totally funded by the federal government and the Brisbane City Council with no funding from the state government. Those opposite have played silly politics.

Last week the federal government rescued the state government. We have the highest unemployment rate in the country, at 6.5 per cent. Our cousins in New South Wales and Victoria have unemployment rates of 4.5 per cent and 4.7 per cent. The question is: why is there a nearly two per cent difference? The answer is that this government has not invested in infrastructure. This government is totally infatuated with Cross River Rail, to the detriment of our regions. As the regions spoke in the last federal election, they will speak again on 31 October—particularly in Townsville, where the three inept members are constantly at war with the local newspaper, with their heads in the sand saying there is nothing to see with regard to crime. They will have their day of reckoning on 31 October next year.

This is again another example of the political games this government plays. It had to be rescued by the federal government because of its chronic underspend in infrastructure. The Queensland public has woken up to the tactics of this government, as the government will find out on 31 October next year.

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (11.55 am): The Palaszczuk government continues to deliver for the Gold Coast. We have been doing the heavy lifting over the last four years. We have delivered nearly a billion dollars in local infrastructure upgrades with the light rail stage 2, the heavy rail duplication between Helensvale and Coomera stations and the six large road upgrades. Anyone driving south on the M1 can see works between Mudgeeraba and Varsity Lakes making great progress.

In comparison to those opposite, who did not spend a single new dollar on the M1 when last in power, we know that the Gold Coast is growing, which means we need to keep up with the infrastructure to focus on the demand on the Gold Coast. Last Wednesday was a good day for the Gold Coast. The federal government finally listened to our calls for a fairer funding deal for infrastructure. We showed that despite our political differences we can work together for the best interests of Queenslanders. For the Gold Coast this meant the Morrison government agreed to match the Palaszczuk government's \$96.3 billion for M1 exit 49 and the shovel-ready exit 41. During the last sitting week in this parliament I called on the federal government to increase its contribution from a measly 25 per cent to 50 per cent and I am pleased that that persistence has paid off.

The difference between what we were originally offered for these two exits and what we have now secured is just over \$46 million. The amount of \$46 million is how much the member for Coomera wanted to rip off Queenslanders because he was too weak to stand up to his federal mates. I was also pleased to see the federal government pull forward funding for the M1 upgrades between Varsity Lakes and Tugun. I joined the Premier and Deputy Premier in 2018—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, your interjections are not being taken.


**Ms SCANLON:**—when we announced that we would bring forward state government funding so that upgrades could kick off immediately after the current works between Mudgeeraba and Varsity Lakes were complete. At the time more than 80 per cent of the funding committed by the federal coalition would not flow until after 2022-23, so I welcome the federal announcement to bring forward \$45 million.

Last but not least, I want to talk about the Gold Coast Light Rail to Burleigh. As I have said in this House before, the original offer of 16 per cent from the Morrison government was pathetic. After persistence from this side of the House and stakeholders in our community, the federal government has agreed to increase its contribution by \$157 million. While the Palaszczuk government is still the majority contributor to this project, with \$351 million on the table, this additional money from the federal government is welcomed and allows us to get the project under construction as soon as possible, creating over 700 jobs for Gold Coasters. The Palaszczuk government is investing in the future and will continue to work with the community to deliver important transport infrastructure for the Gold Coast because that is what good Labor governments do—unlike those opposite, who did not contribute a single dollar to the M1 when they were last in power.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Mudgeeraba, you have had several goes. You are now warned under the standing orders.

**Ms SCANLON:** I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.58 am): As highlighted by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Queensland has the highest unemployment rate of any jurisdiction in Australia. Despite that we have a government, a Labor government, completely and utterly frozen with indecision. We have a government, a Labor government, that has so destroyed the state's finances it cannot and will not invest in infrastructure throughout the state. We have a government, a Labor government, bereft of plans and bereft of projects that would build the infrastructure that this state needs, let alone address the unemployment rate mentioned by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Thank God for Scott Morrison and the federal coalition government, because without them none of those projects would be occurring. It is very clear that the Prime Minister cares more about the Queensland unemployment rate than those opposite do. He cares more about the Queensland




unemployment rate than the Premier of Queensland herself does and definitely more than the Deputy Premier and Treasurer does. The Prime Minister has stepped up and filled the void left by this incompetent Labor government.

I will put some facts on the table. Let us take the north coast rail duplication project that until 2009 a state Labor government had committed to fully fund. That project was going to be fully funded. There was going to be 100 per cent state funding for the north coast rail duplication. Within months of the election of an LNP member to the seat of Glass House, the project was pulled completely and the money was diverted to Springfield and Redcliffe, never to be seen again. I point out that it was to be 100 per cent funded by the state.

When the federal government comes along and offers 50 per cent, surely those opposite would grab it with glee? That is 50 per cent more than any federal government of any political persuasion has ever promised or committed to a state project. Instead, what do we get? A measly 20 per cent and then bickering, whingeing and throwing the toys out of the cot as they beg for another 30 per cent to fund a project that the state should have completed in the first place, requiring zero federal infrastructure dollars.

Even now, the only reason Sunshine Coasters will see any action on the north coast rail duplication is that the federal government has done more than its fair share. What will happen north of Landsborough? Nothing, because yet again the minister cannot find the 30 per cent needed to make the full project happen. Thank God for Scott Morrison and the federal coalition government, because they care more about Queenslanders than the Premier and this incompetent Labor government do.


 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.01 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion. Central Queensland is a big winner from the \$1.9 billion deal struck last week between our Premier and the Prime Minister which is as a result of and thanks to the pressure that the Palaszczuk Labor government brought to bear. Now that the federal government has finally listened, we have a better funding deal for Queensland and, in particular, for Central Queensland.

On the Rocky Ring Road, \$10 million in federal funding will be brought forward to make sure that we can keep the progress moving so that construction can start sooner. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$200 million to the Rocky Ring Road project and we have fast-tracked planning for the upgrade. We want to ensure that the federal government's funding is ready to go. Planning for the Rockhampton Ring Road is on track for completion next year, soon after the completion of the \$157 million Rockhampton northern access upgrade. The fact that we have been able to secure this deal with the federal government to bring forward the funds for the Rocky Ring Road means that local contractors, local tradespeople and local apprentices will work on the northern access upgrade and then move straight on to the Rocky Ring Road. As a result, we will have a consistent and ongoing works improvement program with respect to those road upgrades.

That follows the start of works on the \$75 million Capricorn Highway duplication and major progress on the \$157 million Rockhampton northern access upgrade. Both projects are major job creators in Central Queensland, with 400 jobs being sustained by the northern access project alone. The Palaszczuk government has done all of the heavy lifting, creating a strong pipeline of works to create jobs and the infrastructure that our growing state needs. In the past five years we have delivered four record Transport and Main Roads infrastructure budgets and this year's QTRIP will support over 13,500 regional jobs over four years. You have only to visit the northern access upgrade that is underway at the moment to see contractors, apprentices, trainees and tradespeople crawling all over that site, working really hard to deliver the project. Ultimately, this investment means jobs for our region.

The deal recognises that our economy needs a boost from Canberra. We said it, the Reserve Bank said it and the Business Council of Australia said it. The federal government needed to spend more on infrastructure to create jobs and get the national economy going. Time and time again in this place I have spoken about the importance of the federal government taking up some of the load, because the state government has been doing all of the heavy lifting with respect to the delivery of infrastructure in Queensland.

Rather than back our deal to keep creating jobs for Queenslanders, those opposite do little other than complaint bitterly. During this debate, all we have heard from those opposite are complaints and whingeing, instead of getting on board and supporting this great deal that Queensland has been able to secure.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.04 pm): We have three absolute geniuses opposite and it is very timely that those three members are present in the chamber. I refer to the member for South Brisbane, the member for Sandgate and, of course, the member for Miller. They are three absolute


geniuses. To be frank, over the past five years if one area of public policy has been an abject failure it is in the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It is almost like a conga line as who was there first and a couple have even had two attempts. However, that does not matter as they have all failed on two issues. In the past week they have been bailed out by the Morrison government because, through their lack of experience and also their abject waste, money was not pumped into the right areas. At the end of the day, why would we not welcome that \$1.9 billion? However, the reality is that they have been bailed out comprehensively. They waste money like drunken sailors and then, all of a sudden, the federal government has to come in at the eleventh hour and bail them out. It is an absolute joke.

The fact is that over the past five years Labor have played politics when it comes to infrastructure. In their first term they cut infrastructure in this state by about \$3 billion. Then there was a light-bulb moment as they played the same playbook going into their second term, which was their small-scale strategy of doing nothing; just relax. Do members know what? That has come back to bite them on the you know what, because if it was not for the announcement last week by Scott Morrison this government would be doing absolutely nothing.

There are still a few dumpings and a few zeroes. What about the second M1? There is nothing for the M2, as we call it. There is nothing there at all. What about the Cleveland line, the misery line? There is nothing there at all. When it comes to public transport in this state, we have become a laughing-stock. Why is that? It is because we do not have the infrastructure we require. In the coming days and early next year, more will be said in relation to Cross River Rail.

The fact of the matter is that we do not have enough money for some essential projects. We have a minister who is giving free public transport on four consecutive Mondays to make up for the rail fail fiasco. It does not matter where you look: this minister's track record in TMR has been an absolute joke. If it was not for the nice big \$1.9 billion cheque, I do not know what he would be praying for under the Christmas tree on Christmas Day, because he has failed, along with the other two.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (12.07 pm): Not for one moment is anyone disputing the list of projects put forward or the fact that they are worthy projects. No-one is disputing that for a moment. We back them all. The Leader of the Opposition has a track record of backing them all. Members on this side of the House have a track record of backing them all. The comment that was made referred to the need to do more for drought and in this House we all should agree on that.

It is a sad day when a federal government has to come in and rescue a state government. Just this month the leader of the state government described the Prime Minister as the greatest risk to the Queensland economy. In the space of a couple of weeks, they have gone from calling him a liar to calling him a messiah. They have gone from criticising him publicly to wanting to somehow use this announcement as a political wedge. However, the wedge is not working because the comment made by Leader of the Opposition did not refer to these projects. These projects are backed by this side of the House. The comment made by the Leader of the Opposition referred to drought. Today we have an announcement that might very well be just a cruel hoax, that is, \$1 million for a feasibility study. Either the government wants to build the pipeline or it needs another solution. To somehow have another study is a cruel hoax—waiting for rain—at the worst possible time.

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. It is the same point of order that was raised for the Leader of the Opposition. The member is speaking on matters totally outside the scope of the motion. I ask that he be brought back to the substance of the motion.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): I ask you to come back to the motion being debated.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** In the motion the minister talks about playing politics. No project highlights that more than inland rail. For so many months Queensland is the only state that has played politics with a project that would deliver so much value for our state.

This announcement of infrastructure spending had to occur because this government has refused to bring forward funding for critical projects because so much of the infrastructure budget that has already been cut will be swallowed up by one project. This announcement does not change the fact that many of these projects still need acquisitions to make them work. The light rail is a classic example of that. If people want these projects, which have been announced by Canberra to save this state government, delivered then they have to elect an LNP government. If people want action on drought, they have to elect Deb Frecklington and an LNP government.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Broadwater, the time for this debate has now expired.

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

In division—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Broadwater, there is no need for interjections while the bells are ringing.

*An incident having occurred in the chamber—*

**Mr Stevens:** Pay your power bill!

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, as I am sure you can see there is an issue with the lighting in the chamber. Now is not the time to talk about the National Electricity Market; nor is it a time to accuse the parliament of not paying our bill. We will investigate and report back to the House as to the cause of the outage.

**AYES, 49:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

**KAP, 1—**Dametto.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

**NOES, 38:**

**LNP, 38—**Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.


Resolved in the affirmative.

## MOTOR ACCIDENT INSURANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 24 October (see p. 3694), on motion of Ms Trad—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.17 pm): I rise to make a very short contribution to the debate of the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. At the outset and as per my entry on the Register of Members' Interests, I declare that I was recently involved in settling a CTP claim to do with a motor vehicle accident that occurred whilst I have been in this job—indeed in April 2018. I want to make that clear to the House and in the ongoing debate.

I want to address a number of the matters that members on this side of the House have raised with regard to this bill. Most Queenslanders would be relatively relaxed about legislation pertaining to motor accidents and the insurance thereof, but, as the LNP deputy chair of the Economics and Governance Committee, the member for Mermaid Beach, pointed out, there are a number of significant concerns with this bill. The largest of those pertains to new sections 74 and 75, at clause 15, and what they do to consolidate the business of motor accident insurance into businesses that have clear links to industrial organisations—another term for unions. A number of colleagues, and indeed the report itself, reference a comment made by Mr Tom O'Donnell, Principal of O'Donnell Legal, in his evidence given on 22 July this year. He said—

... it seems to me that if referral arrangements are impacted then inevitably it will push consumers to those firms that either have links with industrial organisations and/or advertise a great deal or possibly those who have good links with community associations.

...

The reality is that small firms cannot afford those types of relationships. As such, if referral arrangements were squeezed out, in my view it would squeeze small firms out of the market.

That basically means that, unless there is a connection with a union, the opportunity to participate in this kind of work will not exist. This is yet another example of when a union or unions make donations to the Labor Party—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stevens): Member for Logan, the member is not taking your interjections. Cease, please.


**Mr POWELL:** When a union or unions make a donation to the Labor Party, it is not long before we see legislation in this chamber making a change to benefit the unions. It beggars belief that we have had statements made by very significant bodies around this state and elsewhere that there seem to be very visible links, so let us name it, between so-called property developers and state members of parliament. We all know that, yes, there is clear linkage between property developers and local government employees, but to link them with the state government when the same comments have not been made—indeed, the opposite comments have been made—about union influence particularly on Labor governments beggars belief. Here we have yet another example where finances have been provided to the Labor Party only for us to be debating, soon after, legislation that clearly favours said unions.

It is of real concern. We have just debated a motion. We have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. We have an infrastructure shortfall because of woeful indecision and an inability to invest in infrastructure—indeed, to pull funds from infrastructure over several years now under this Palaszczuk Labor government. Yet what are we in here debating? We are debating ways that unions, not Queenslanders more broadly, can benefit more. We are debating ways that unions can benefit.

That raises a significant concern for us in the LNP, as indeed it would for people more broadly. We believe that people should be able to access a broad market of firms that can participate in this kind of field. Yet what we are seeing is action being taken to potentially limit that to union dominated businesses and links. On that basis, I understand that the LNP will be opposing these particular clauses.

In conclusion, most Queenslanders welcome a level of interest, a level of legislative modernisation, around motor accident insurance. Much of what is in this bill is supported by the LNP. We cannot, however, support any increase in the power of the unions in this state.

*(Time expired)*


 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (12.21 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution in support of this bill. I come to this debate as someone who spent the majority of my full-time working career before I entered parliament in private practice as a solicitor, particularly practising in areas such as this.

I have heard a lot of contributions so far today and also in the previous sitting week. I think it is very important when we consider the Motor Accident Insurance Act, and indeed any workers compensation or public liability scheme, that we have strong and viable schemes in this state that provide compensation for people who in the vast majority of circumstances have suffered injury—in some cases catastrophic injury—and in the vast majority of circumstances through no fault of their own. It is incumbent on all of us to make sure that those people, whether they suffer a motor vehicle accident, a workplace accident or an injury in a public place, have access to an appropriate compensation scheme. That could be any one of us, quite frankly, or any one of our loved ones.

I want to commend the Deputy Premier for introducing this bill in relation to claim farming. In my time in private practice, the vast majority of solicitors and practitioners in this area take their responsibilities seriously. They are aware of their duty to their clients and to the court and they act responsibly. However, it is the case, as was shown in the committee report—I commend the committee and in particular the member for Logan for his work in relation to this bill—that unfortunately this issue of claim farming does come up from time to time. I think it is important that it is addressed. As I said earlier, it has the potential to undermine confidence in what I think is a very good system of compensation in this state.

According to the explanatory notes, claim farming has led to many people, including those who could be considered vulnerable in some way, receiving unsolicited telephone calls. When presenting the bill to the Legislative Assembly, as the Deputy Premier pointed out, she cited research that estimated that 'over 1.5 million Queenslanders have already been targeted by claim farmers'. That is an extraordinary number. I think it is quite right that we are addressing this particular issue.

When I was in private practice quite a long time ago now—almost a decade in fact—I had clients who would tell me that when they were in hospital they received a call from someone saying, 'Your aunt has given me your number to call and make a claim.' This has been an issue that has been continuing for some time. I think it is really important that this issue is addressed and that this legislation is passed today. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (12.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The Palaszczuk government made a firm commitment to stamping out the insidious practice of claim farming, and that is exactly what the Deputy Premier is delivering on here today.

Claim farmers use high-pressure tactics to create an impression of credibility, pretending to be calling from the Motor Accident Insurance Commission, other government agencies or insurers, with the goal of inducing the person to reveal their personal information. They often target the vulnerable—including children, the elderly and those from linguistically diverse backgrounds.

With the promise of quick and easy compensation, they deceive the person they have called and sell that personal information on to a legal practitioner or other claims management service provider. Claim farming practices are always evolving and action is needed now. Many people call into my office in Gladstone to talk to me about ways that they get continuously harassed by these people. I am not talking about just once or twice; I am talking about five or 10 times a week.

A MAIC commissioned survey found that over 1.5 million Queenslanders have been targeted by claim farmers. Respondents of the survey found that claim farming was a growing issue in the community, with many comments made about breach of privacy, the frequency of calls being received and also aggression from callers. One respondent said, 'I receive between five and 10 of these calls every week,' while another respondent said, 'I'm very worried that this person stated my full name, has my mobile phone number and knows where my location is on a GPS.' Respondents also told us that claim farmers have verbally abused them over the phone after questioning where the caller is from. This conduct is not only appalling but disgraceful. The people of my electorate in Gladstone do not need that at this time.

In her second reading speech, the Deputy Premier also highlighted some truly distressing examples of claim farming provided through the committee process. This is happening in the privacy of our own homes. When we leave work each afternoon and go home to spend time with our families, we want to know that our families' private information is protected. We will not be subject to the harassing and fraudulent behaviour of claim farmers here in Queensland.

With reports of claim farming increasing, it is clear that if left unchecked incidents of claim farming will continue to grow. It is clear that Queenslanders want decisive action on this issue, and that is exactly what this government and the Deputy Premier here in Queensland is doing. It is not just people's privacy at risk; it is the risk it has to the Queensland compulsory third-party scheme and the impact claim farming can have on CTP premiums. Here in Queensland, thanks to the Palaszczuk government, Queenslanders pay nearly \$200 less for their CTP premiums than those in New South Wales and Victoria.


We have seen what happens when claim farming is left unchecked. New South Wales experienced heightened fraudulent activity, a significant spike in minor injury claims and rapidly rising CTP premiums. We on this side of the House are proud that Queensland has the second lowest CTP premium in the country and the lowest on mainland Australia, and we want to keep it that way. We want to make sure that genuinely injured claimants are not impacted by the actions of a few bad apples and that Queensland's CTP scheme remains affordable and supportive of Queenslanders who are injured in car accidents.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has consulted extensively with stakeholders to make sure we respond with balanced and fair reforms which we are seeing here today. This bill establishes new offences which prohibit cold-calling or personally approaching a person to induce them to make a CTP claim. It also makes paying for claim referrals an offence. To stop people from engaging with claim farmers, lawyers will also be required to certify that they have not obtained the claim through a claim farmer.

Regulatory enforcement and investigation powers have also been strengthened, requiring claimants and insurers to provide additional information so the regulator can identify claim-farming behaviour sooner. The bill establishes a monetary cap of \$200 per gift or token of hospitality. The cap strikes a balance between stopping payments of claim referrals while allowing lawyers to exchange small gifts in recognition of existing relationships and practices in the legal industry.

Those opposite have said this bill will have the effect of funnelling legal work from smaller regional firms to city based firms, but nothing could be further from the truth. To be clear, this government is unashamedly about backing small business in our regional areas. These reforms will create a more level playing field for small and medium sized firms in the regions. These firms will not have to compete with other firms that can afford to pay large amounts to claim farmers for their claims. The Queensland Law Society described claim-farming practices as predatory, unethical and unscrupulous. The QLS supports the reform, saying that the bill creates a level playing field with interstate practitioners as it caps the amount a Queensland solicitor can charge under a no-win no-fee agreement.

Stopping claim farming is in the interest of all Queenslanders. It is unfortunate that those opposite used this opportunity to engage in union bashing once again. This bill should have complete bipartisan support. It should be uncontroversial that protecting the privacy of Queenslanders, stopping harassment and ensuring the continued viability of our CTP scheme are important to all Queenslanders, particularly our most vulnerable. The Palaszczuk government is focused on this issue and committed to this reform. Only Labor can be trusted to take decisive action on this issue. This bill delivers on our commitment to Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.31 pm), in reply: I would like to begin by thanking all members for their contribution to the debate on these vital reforms in the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. I reiterate that these reforms are vital because they go to a number of fundamental things that we on this side of the House believe are important to all Queenslanders: the protection of privacy; stopping harassment, intimidation and coercion; ensuring access to justice; and protecting the integrity of our well-performing compulsory third-party insurance scheme.

In my opening remarks I emphasised the importance of protecting the Queensland community from car crash scammers. These so-called claim farmers have absolutely no regard for the rights of Queenslanders. In my second reading speech I highlighted some examples of this appalling conduct, and other members in the House have also contributed their own stories. These examples include the persistent harassment of a woman who already had a lawyer acting for her in relation to a catastrophic car accident in which her son was killed and she was horrifically injured. Another Queenslanders was startled to find a complete stranger at her door who stated that he was a lawyer who purchased her personal details and was going to act for her in a personal injuries claim. Claim farmers really have no shame. During the debate we heard contributions from the member for Redlands, who had a call from a claim farmer herself; the member for Ninderry, who noted that he had a silent number and still received harassing calls; and the member for Gregory, who had been contacted in relation to health insurance by a person who had all of his personal details. All of these examples reveal the pervasive nature of the breaches of privacy experienced by Queenslanders. We have to do what we can to stamp out this harassing and invasive conduct, and stopping the scourge of claim farming is a good place to start.

The member for Mermaid Beach—you, Mr Deputy Speaker—while unable to step away from a self-confessed obligatory cheap shot during the debate, nevertheless conceded that this legislation was necessary and a great step forward. Most members echoed this sentiment. Throughout this process I have also emphasised the importance of eliminating this type of behaviour to protect the long-term affordability and integrity of our statutory insurance scheme—a scheme that has been protecting Queenslanders for over 80 years and preserves an injured person's common law rights while ensuring Queensland motor vehicle owners pay the second-lowest CTP premiums in the country. Queensland is unique in this regard. The bill, together with the minor amendments we are putting forward, is about taking decisive action now to stop the escalation of the practice. We have seen what has happened in other jurisdictions, and we want to be proactive and arrest the issue now because we value our CTP scheme.

Claims by the member for Everton that CTP insurance costs have increased under the Palaszczuk government are plainly incorrect. We know the LNP lives in a post-truth world, so for the benefit of the House I will lay some facts on the table. Queensland has the second-lowest CTP premium in the nation and the lowest on the mainland. This is an important and impressive fact. We have managed this at the same time as maintaining our well-regarded common law scheme. This means we have not restricted the rights of injured people to access lump sum compensation payments through the courts from the party at fault. Queenslanders pay nearly \$200 less for their premiums than those in New South Wales and Victoria. For standard cars Queenslanders pay a premium of \$359.20; in New South Wales drivers pay \$533.38; and in Victoria drivers pay \$532.40. Both of these jurisdictions have schemes that have limited access to common law compensation.

The only added component relates to the introduction of the National Injury Insurance Scheme, which the Newman government at the time committed to support in 2013. That was delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government in 2016. This scheme complements our CTP scheme by providing eligible Queenslanders who sustain serious personal injuries in a car accident with reasonable and necessary lifetime treatment, care and support regardless of fault. We have the balance right for Queensland motorists. When it comes to protecting Queenslanders, it is only Labor that will deliver. Labor delivered the National Injury Insurance Scheme so that those catastrophically injured in car crashes would be covered even where no-one was deemed at fault.

We have listened to Queenslanders. This bill establishes new offences which prohibit cold-calling or personally approaching a person to induce them to make a CTP claim. It makes paying for claim referrals an offence. As an added deterrent, lawyers will be required to certify that they have complied with the legislation. The regulator's enforcement and investigation powers have been strengthened, and claimants and insurers will have to provide additional information so the regulator can identify claim farming behaviour and other problematic trends sooner.

I note the committee's only recommendation was that the bill be passed. I also acknowledge the Queensland Law Society's suggested amendments, which are intended to address stakeholder concerns that the bill could inadvertently capture relationships between lawyers and not-for-profit entities that rely on their services and support. We have listened to this feedback, and we want to reassure those groups that the bill does not target those arrangements. That is why amendments were proposed to further clarify that the bill does not affect a law practice's benevolent endeavours, whether that be donating funds to registered charities, schools, school associations, industrial organisations or sporting associations. Combined, these reforms are a comprehensive yet fair and balanced response to this issue.

I now turn to the contribution of the member for Everton—a person who, can I say, demonstrates through his comments that he has not taken the time to read this bill or understand it. This was best exemplified by his botched amendments which, after shortcomings were pointed out by the member for Logan, he was forced to amend again. I want to thank the member for Logan for his valuable contribution in this regard. Based on his basic inability to understand the bill, the member for Everton proposed an amendment that sought to outlaw registered industrial organisations from promoting the services of particular persons; for example, lawyers. A registered industrial organisation can mean many things in Queensland, but what the union-bashing member for Everton did not realise at the time was that he was also capturing employer organisations, including: LGAQ, Australian Dental Association, Master Electricians Australia, National Retail Association, Queensland Canegrowers Association, Queensland Hotels Association, Queensland Master Builders' Association, Banking Industry Association of Queensland and AgForce Queensland.

Take AgForce for example. It lists a number of partners on its website, including Toyota, Telstra, IOR Petroleum, Sunsuper, McCullough Robertson Lawyers, NAB and St John Ambulance. The effect of the member for Everton's amendment would have been to entirely prohibit AgForce from promoting the services of its partners so immediately AgForce would need to remove reference to all of its partners from its website.

**Dr Miles:** They don't like AgForce.

**Ms TRAD:** I take that interjection. The LNP do not like AgForce; that is pretty clear. Not only did the member for Everton not bother to read and understand the bill—and I will get to the specifics of that shortly—but, desperate to just say something negative, he completely and utterly botched his own amendment. Further to that, it appears as though he did not bother to consult his parliamentary colleagues. During your contribution, Mr Deputy Speaker Stevens, you stated—

I do not think that the amendments that the member for Logan quoted referred to the CCIQ or doctors. I am pretty certain that he was referring to the large union memberships—

Unfortunately, the member for Logan was correct, and the member for Everton admitted this when the newly amended amendment was circulated—a very stunning mea culpa indeed.

I now turn to the specifics of the amended amendment, and the change is this. 'Registered industrial organisations' has been changed to 'registered employee industrial organisations' to make it abundantly clear to the workers of Queensland that those opposite do not support any organisation that advocates their right to safe working conditions and fair wages. I am sure Queensland workers are very grateful for this reminder yet again from the member for Everton. The rationale behind the amended amendment is the belief by the member for Everton that the sponsorship agreement exemption for registered industrial organisations should be removed. This is a very interesting amendment because the bill does not actually contain any such exemptions. There are no exemptions in the bill for any type of organisation. I just say that it is a misreading of an example provided in section 74 of the bill, but we will get to that during consideration in detail. I am looking forward to the member for Everton talking to his amendment soon.

Registered industrial organisations, including both employee and employer organisations, are simply mentioned in the examples in section 74 as possible recipients of advertising material to promote a service claimants may use. Both kinds of organisations are allowed to promote the services of groups that support them. One could easily substitute another entity in the examples—such as a school or

community group. The intent is the same. The LNP's proposed prohibition is entirely arbitrary and wholly unrelated to claim farming. All it displays is the member for Everton's inability to comprehend this legislation—but, seriously, that is not surprising. We know that the LNP do not care about access to justice and they certainly do not care about workers.

The amended amendment is based on a false premise and a fundamental misunderstanding of the bill. The fact that the member for Everton had to have a second go at drafting this one amendment after being educated by the member for Logan shows he is absolutely not up to the job.

**Ms Fentiman:** He is such a good teacher—a good educator.

**Ms TRAD:** He is. I take that interjection. The member for Logan is a good educator. The member for Everton also falsely claimed that we had been slow to act in stamping out claim farming. Let us look at the facts. During budget estimates last year, I highlighted my own experience with claim farming and committed to introducing legislation within 12 months. During budget week this year, I introduced this bill. Our government stuck with the time frame we set ourselves and we kept our commitment to the people of Queensland. We consulted widely and listened to all stakeholders. We have delivered on our commitment to Queenslanders. We are proud of our record in protecting vulnerable Queenslanders and the integrity of our CTP scheme. The LNP's record on this issue is no action, no solution, nothing.

The member for Everton also claimed that the bill is anti regions, but I am happy again to correct another one of his mistakes. The proposed reforms will assist smaller regional firms by creating a more level playing field. This government is unashamed about backing our regions. It is our priority. This bill is consistent with our priorities and helps protect regional firms from claim farmers who would seek to poach potential local clients.

Those opposite also claimed that small firms will miss out on referral fees while simultaneously claiming that the \$200 cap on the value of a gift or hospitality is too high. It is clear that these statements are plainly contradictory. Both cannot be true, but this is the post-truth world that the LNP exist in. The cap strikes a balance between stopping payments for claim referrals while allowing lawyers to exchange small gifts in recognition of existing relationships and practices in the legal industry. The \$200 limit was arrived at through extensive consultation and is consistent with the rest of the bill. No organisation is exempt from the cap imposed by the bill.

I want to again emphasise that this bill is about protecting privacy, stopping harassment, intimidation and bullying, and protecting our well-performing CTP scheme. The interests of Queenslanders, rather than the farcical amendments moved by the member for Everton, should be the focus of this House. This bill is a wake-up call for all Queenslanders, including us in this House. Highly sophisticated fraudulent scams continue to evolve and we must ensure that we keep our fingers on the pulse so that we can respond to emerging issues in order to protect the interests of Queenslanders and protect quite specifically those vulnerable Queenslanders. I want to again thank all members for their contribution to this very important 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 and 2, as read, agreed to.

Clause 3—



**Ms TRAD (12.47 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 3 (Amendment of s 3 (Objects))**

Page 9, after line 7—

*insert—*

(5) Section 3—

*insert—*

(k) to establish measures directed at eliminating or reducing the practice of giving or receiving consideration for a claim referral or potential claim referral, or soliciting or inducing a claimant to make a claim, in contravention of this Act.

I table the explanatory notes to the amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes to Hon. Jackie Trad's amendments [2116].



**Mr MANDER:** Some stakeholders only received the government's amendments just hours before the bill's debate. I was wondering if the Deputy Premier could detail what type of consultation was undertaken with insurers and lawyers in developing these amendments.

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the member for the question. As I said in my second reading speech and in my reply speech, significant consultation has been undertaken in relation to the proposed amendments with all stakeholders. Many of these amendments came out of the extensive consultation that occurred during the parliamentary committee inquiry. This amendment inserts a new object into clause 3, namely—

to establish measures directed at eliminating or reducing the practice of giving or receiving consideration for a claim referral or potential claim referral, or soliciting or inducing a claimant to make a claim, in contravention of this Act

This amendment is about a new object in clause 3. As I said, these are the results of extensive consultation.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—



**Ms TRAD (12.49 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**2 After clause 5**

Page 12, after line 7—

*insert—*

**5A Amendment of s 34 (Duty to notify accidents to police)**

(1) Section 34(2)(a)—

*omit, insert—*

(a) the giving of required particulars under the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*, section 93(4); or

(2) Section 34(2)(b), 'reported'—

*omit, insert—*

given

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6—



**Ms TRAD (12.50 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**3 Clause 6 (Insertion of new pt 4, div 2A)**

Page 14, line 17—

*omit, insert—*

**consideration**, for a claim referral or potential claim referral, see section 74A.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 14, as read, agreed to.

Clause 15—



**Mr MANDER (12.51 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**1 Clause 15 (Insertion of new pt 5AA)**

Page 23, lines 12 to 25—

*omit, insert—*

claimant; and

(b) includes the advertisement or promotion by a registered employee industrial organisation of a service or person that results in a claimant using the service or person; but

*Example—*

the distribution by a registered employee industrial organisation to members of the organisation of promotional stationery or clothing that displays a law practice's logo

(c) does not otherwise include the advertisement or promotion of a service or person that results in a claimant using *the* service or person if the advertisement or promotion is made to the public or a group of persons.

*Example—*

an advertisement of services provided by a law practice on the website or in the newsletter of a sporting association or charity

I table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes to Mr Tim Mander's amendments [2117].

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

In division—

**Ms TRAD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Those opposite did not record a vote on the—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stevens):** I heard—

**Mr Bleijie:** Yes, we did.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Treasurer, thank you for your advice. I heard an 'aye', so I am going forward with the division. A division is called for. Ring the bells for four minutes.

**AYES, 39:**

**LNP, 37—**Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Mickelberg, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stuckey, Watts, Weir, Wilson.

**KAP, 1—**Dametto.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

**NOES, 48:**

**ALP, 47—**Bailey, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Crawford, D'Ath, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Kelly, King, Lauga, Linard, Lui, Lynham, Madden, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Miles, Miller, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

**Grn, 1—**Berkman.

Resolved in the negative.

Non-government amendment (Mr Mander) negatived.



**Ms TRAD (12.57 pm):** I move the following amendment—

**4 Clause 15 (Insertion of new pt 5AA)**

Page 23, lines 26 to 29—

*omit, insert—*

*consideration*, for a claim referral or potential claim referral, see section 74A.

Amendment agreed to.

**Mr MANDER:** I have a question of the Deputy Premier clarifying whether the offences under clause 15 that prohibit a person personally approaching or contacting another person to solicit claims capture robocalls that use computerised auto diallers to deliver prerecorded messages?

**Ms TRAD:** Yes, they do.

**Mr MANDER:** I note concerns have been put to the committee by the President of the Queensland Law Society, Mr Bill Potts. He said that claim farmers—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, resume your seat for one moment. Because this has gone to committee, you only get the one opportunity.

Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having expired in accordance with sessional order 2B, I will now put all remaining questions.

Question put—That the Treasurer's amendments Nos 5 to 9, as circulated, be agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

**5 Clause 15 (Insertion of new pt 5AA)**

Page 24, after line 2—

*insert—*

**74A Meaning of *consideration* for s 74**

- (1) ***Consideration***, for a claim referral or potential claim referral, means a fee or other benefit given for the claim referral or potential claim referral but does not include a gift, other than money, or hospitality if the gift or hospitality has a value of \$200 or less.

- (2) To remove any doubt, it is declared that **consideration** does not include—
- (a) a payment or other benefit, not for a claim referral or potential claim referral, to—
- (i) a community legal service; or
- (ii) an industrial organisation; or
- (iii) a registered entity within the meaning of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (Cwlth); or
- (iv) a school association; or
- (v) a sporting association; or

*Example—*

legal services provided pro bono by an associate of a law practice to a community legal service

- (b) an amount given by a claimant for a service provided to the claimant as part of making a claim including, for example, an amount for legal costs.
- (3) In this section—

**community legal service** see the *Legal Profession Act 2007*, schedule 2.

**industrial organisation** means a federal organisation, or an organisation, as defined under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*, schedule 5.

**school association** means—

- (a) an association within the meaning of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*; or
- (b) a parents and friends association formed for a non-State school within the meaning of the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017*.

**sporting association** means an association formed and operated on a not-for-profit basis for the purpose of conducting a sporting activity.

**6 Clause 22 (Replacement of pt 5A, div 6 (Information from Commissioner of Police Service))**

Page 70, line 28, after 'report'—

*insert—*

or written information

**7 Clause 28 (Amendment of s 17 (Statement of information for notice of claim—Act, s 37(1)(a)))**

Page 90, lines 28 to 31—

*omit.*

**8 Clause 29 (Amendment of s 18 (Certificates to accompany notice of claim—Act, s 37(1)(d)))**

Page 94, line 2—

*omit, insert—*

**consideration** means a fee or other benefit but does not include a gift, other than money, or hospitality if the gift or hospitality has a value of \$200 or less.

**9 Clause 31 (Amendment of s 26 (Information to be provided by return—Act, s 88))**

Page 96, lines 13 to 15—

*omit.*

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 15 to 32 and 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 long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.00 pm.

## MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

### Liberal National Party, Election Commitments

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): The LNP has a plan to build the largest drought-proofing infrastructure project Queensland has ever seen. It is big, it is bold and it is ambitious. The LNP is committed to making it happen. The New Bradfield Scheme will create tens of thousands of jobs, generate 2,000 megawatts of hydro-electricity and irrigate an area larger than Tasmania. This project is a game changer. For too long the Palaszczuk Labor government has not done enough to help our struggling farmers, but the LNP will not turn its back on regional Queensland. I know the horrors of drought. I have seen a lot of it. Earlier this month I spent four days travelling the north-west of Queensland. Two-thirds of Queensland is suffering from the drought. The shadow agriculture minister and I have walked through the dusty crops and the dry farms. We have heard the stories from farmers. These men and women are at breaking point. They need hope, they need help and they need a hand but, most importantly, they need water.

The New Bradfield Scheme has been developed by two of Queensland's most respected people in industry: Sir Leo Hielscher and Sir Frank Moore. It was inspired by the drought relief scheme proposed by Queensland engineer John Bradfield in 1938, but Sir Leo's and Sir Frank's scheme is brand-new. It takes John Bradfield's concept and makes it work. The LNP's plan includes almost doubling the height of Hells Gates Dam, drawing water from the South Johnstone, Tully, Herbert and Burdekin rivers into a lake potentially twice the size of the current Burdekin Falls Dam. The New Bradfield Scheme would use gravity to feed water from Hells Gates Dam through tunnels beneath the range.

If elected next year, the LNP will commission the CSIRO to begin advanced planning. We will work closely with the federal government to make this project a reality. The New Bradfield Scheme complements our existing plan for water security. At the start of this year I announced the LNP's plan to establish the Queensland Dam Co. in Townsville. Its sole purpose will be to build dams and update existing ones. This state is desperate for water and it is desperate for jobs. We cannot waste another four years on Labor's anti-dams and anti-jobs agenda. Water is the lifeblood of regional Queensland, and it is only the LNP that has a plan and a vision to deliver the New Bradfield Scheme. We know that water means jobs. Queensland's bushfire season has intensified in recent weeks, but the threat—

**A government member:** Say it: 'global warming'.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Queensland's bushfire season has intensified in recent weeks. Those opposite may think it is a joke, but for my local communities this is not a laughing matter. The communities of Yeppoon, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast, Beenleigh, Scenic Rim and Gold Coast—and in my electorate of Nanango particularly around the Somerset region and the Mondure region—are among the affected areas. For many of those people who have lost homes, that does affect their livelihood. Those opposite may wish to laugh, but on their behalf I take offence.

Firefighters put themselves in dangerous situations. Without them, more homes, sheds and wildlife could have been lost. Communities have been saved because of these local heroes. Most of the men and the women are volunteers. On behalf of the LNP, I thank the hardworking fire crews and the volunteers for their professionalism and courage. Whether people were on the front line, donating clothes or behind the barbie at an evacuation centre, we say thank you. Thank you for putting your community first. Thank you for being there in a time of need. I encourage everyone to be bushfire ready, because Queensland is in for a long, hot summer.

It saddens me to know that there are people in our community who deliberately light fires. Even some juveniles have been caught red-handed. The Palaszczuk Labor government's soft-on-crime approach simply is not working. Of the 136 children charged with endangering property in Queensland by lighting fires in the past two years, only 18 were convicted. Queenslanders expect consequences for those people who deliberately light fires and in turn endanger lives. The Palaszczuk Labor government needs to toughen up.

Queensland still has the worst unemployment rate in the country. Less than a month out from Christmas, 177,400 Queenslanders are looking for a job. Never before in the history of this great state have more Queenslanders been looking for work. Some 14,000 jobs were lost under the Palaszczuk government in October alone—in one month! This Labor government's anti-jobs agenda is hurting Queensland. Queensland's shocking unemployment rate is no fluke. This is what happens when you

slug Queenslanders with nine new or increased taxes. This is what happens when you do not have a job-creating infrastructure plan. The Premier and the Treasurer should hang their heads in shame given their record of an anti-jobs agenda. It is only the LNP that will get Queensland working again, thanks to our job-creating infrastructure program and our no-new-tax guarantee.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is holding Queensland back. My vision is for Queensland to reach its full potential. The LNP will build dams, roads and infrastructure that will create jobs and boost the economy. We want to get things done, and we cannot waste another four years. It is not just the jobless rate that is heading in the wrong direction. The latest CCIQ business survey is a damning indictment of this current government. The CCIQ business index slumped 6.4 points in September—the lowest score recorded since the index began in 2007. Almost half of businesses saw profits fall over the last quarter. These numbers, just like those opposite, are uninspiring and flat. Labor is stopping Queensland from reaching its full potential.

We are approaching 11 months until the next state election. My team is ready for the fight. We have the plan for jobs, water security, health, education and infrastructure. We have a vision for a better Queensland. We will get Queensland working again, because Queensland does not deserve another four years of Labor. It is not worth the risk. Under Labor, the economy is in tatters, unemployment is up, crime is up, tourism has suffered, business confidence has collapsed, waitlists have blown out, congestion is worse and NAPLAN results have nosedived.


My team is determined to clean up Labor's mess. We have the plan, the people and the passion. I have had the pleasure of announcing even more candidates recently, with Mackay Deputy Mayor Amanda Camm contesting Whitsunday. Amanda has dedicated the last decade to public service. Kirsten Jackson will contest the seat of Gaven. The people of Gaven deserve a hardworking local member who will fight for them, and Kirsten is passionate about her local region. Henry Pike has been endorsed as the candidate for Redlands. He would be an outstanding representative for Redlands and deliver action to reduce hospital wait times, improve education services and create the jobs that that region so desperately needs, because we know that the bayside has stalled under Annastacia Palaszczuk.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): The member will use correct titles, please.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** The LNP has never been more motivated to topple this weak Labor government.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for Mount Ommaney, I remind the member for Nanango to use the correct titles of members.

### Mount Ommaney Electorate

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.10 pm): I have been privileged to be the member for Mount Ommaney for just on two years now. In fact, yesterday was the two-year anniversary of my election and indeed the anniversary of many members of this House, so I say happy anniversary. In that time I have had lots of meetings and catch-ups with locals on myriad issues—locals like Chris Cox, Wayne Williams, Dave Fawcett and many more on the much awaited Sumners Road interchange overpass. I have met with some of the fantastic Centenary State High students about climate change; and I met with the Buck family just this Friday gone about air-conditioning the classrooms at Centenary State High School.

Some issues take a little longer than others to really hit home or find a way forward or a resolution, but over the last few years the issue of litter on the sides of the motorways has been raised gently but consistently. At first Peter Cook of the canoeing club raised it as a blight on our community and I spoke to the minister's office about ensuring that TMR was doing regular clean-ups. Just as important in that space, the Sumner Park Rotary Club, of which I am an honorary member, conduct monthly clean-ups on the Jindalee stretch of the Centenary Motorway every month. We would collect more than one cubic metre of waste every month, much of which came from nearby fast-food restaurants. I thank the local Jindalee McDonald's and its manager who, when I raised this with them a few weeks ago at McHappy Day, immediately committed to putting up signs in the drive-through to ask customers not to litter. This is a great start.

Despite having an absolute loathing for litter, at the time I was picking it up I thought, 'It's from people passing through our community. They don't live here.' Indeed, according to a pilot study done by TMR over a number of years, it is a common assumption that the cause of litter on the roadside is from transient populations. However, after the initial data was analysed it found that in fact most of it is


coming from locals. Many people witness littering throughout our state, so why is it not widely reported? The TMR study lists a number of reasons including a belief that litter is not a problem, a lack of shock or public outrage, not wanting to do harm to mates or others or there is no outcome received or they feel that their efforts could have been wasted.

The Centenary suburbs are bordered by the river. Our roadside garbage often ends up in the river then out to the ocean and ultimately in the mouths of marine life. It was a concern for our wildlife that prompted Jill Cassidy, a Westlake local, to contact me some months ago and I resolved to do some research. That is how I came across the aforementioned study. It is a great 50 pages, so get around it, everyone! A few weeks later at the Sherwood street festival Virginia told me that she had been driving along the Centenary Motorway when a person in a car in front threw a fast-food wrapper out a window and it landed on her windshield, where it stayed while she was driving at 100 kilometres an hour and trying to get rid of it. She nearly crashed her car. This should never have happened. Littering is not a victimless crime. It can and does cause traffic accidents and they are completely preventable.

Finally, we know that most of the state of Queensland is tinder dry where the slightest flame can cause a massive fire. A few months ago a motorist threw a cigarette butt out the window on the Centenary Motorway in Darra, setting the median barrier grass alight. The flames spread, the smoke was horrific and Darra locals were rightly concerned that they might lose their homes because somebody could not be bothered to dispose of their cigarette butt correctly. If this does not outrage people, I do not know what will. If none of these things concern us—people losing their homes, sea life choking on discarded waste and traffic accidents being caused—then consider this: every piece of rubbish that goes out the window needs to be collected by someone who is paid for by taxpayer funds. It is not a victimless crime. It is taking away money from critical projects—projects like the future upgrade of the Centenary Motorway, #centenary2020, or stage 2 of the Ipswich Motorway.

Indeed, every dollar we spend collecting trash could be going towards air-conditioning more classrooms. Yesterday it was my absolute pleasure to stand with the Premier and Minister Grace to announce that every single classroom that is not air-conditioned in my community of Mount Ommaney will now receive air conditioning by the start of the school year in 2020. I thank the hardworking P&Cs in my electorate that have worked so hard to proactively air-condition their classrooms. Their hard work inspired me to fight hard for the remaining classrooms to be air-conditioned and we will now see 68 spaces in schools including Corinda State High, Corinda, Darra, Oxley, Jindalee, Middle Park and of course Centenary State High air-conditioned by the time school resumes. The western suburbs can get as hot as Hades from early spring, with temperatures routinely creeping close to 40. As a proud Middle Park mum, I know how hard these schools have worked and I am proud to be finishing the job.

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

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): As we come to the end of the year, it is very relevant as the shadow Treasurer to reflect on the economic performance of Queensland in 2019. When I was growing up in the seventies and eighties Queensland was the economic powerhouse of this country. Under Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk's government, we now have an economy which is a basket case, not an economic powerhouse. We only need look at a few statistics to prove that point. The opposition leader has already mentioned that our unemployment rate at the moment is 6.5 per cent. That is the worst in the country. Those numbers mean nothing if we do not compare them with other jurisdictions in this country. The national unemployment rate is 5.3 per cent. The unemployment rate in New South Wales and Victoria is 4.8 per cent. In this state at the moment we have the highest number of people on the long-term unemployment list—not per capita but the highest number in the country. Our figure is greater than that of Victoria and New South Wales which have vastly larger populations.

We have the largest number of bankruptcies in the country—not per capita but the largest number. In fact, a third of all bankruptcies in this country occur in Queensland. The CommSec State of the States report—the economic indicator report that comes out every quarter—has us at fifth and over the last two years we have been fifth, sixth and even seventh on occasions. The CCIQ Pulse survey of small and medium sized business says that the confidence level of small and medium sized businesses in this state is at its lowest level since the GFC. One of the reasons it states for this—it states a number of reasons—is that they see this government as being anti small business by bringing in public holidays that are going to curtail their opportunity to stay open and curtail employment as well. Not only that, the union influence time and time again is anti business and anti development. Of course, they were absolutely insulted by the \$250 million bonus that went to public servants after a very generous pay increase in the first place.

The question we have to ask is this: why are all of these statistics so bad in our state? The reason is quite obvious. It is Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's Labor government. It has done nothing but caused havoc economically here in the last five years. The opposition leader has already mentioned one of the reasons—that is, the nine new or increased taxes, taxes that whack businesses that employ people. Over \$3 billion over the forward estimates will be taken away from companies that employ people, punishing those people who make such a great contribution to our economy. The other reason we have a massive problem is the amount of waste we have in this state. Without even trying we have already identified a billion dollars worth of waste, whether it is over \$400 million in IT blowouts or \$300,000 to change the sign and change the name of the Lady Cilento hospital.

Of course, one of the major reasons Queensland is performing so badly economically is that the Premier of this state and the Treasurer of this state are distracted by the integrity issues that are occurring time and time again, so much so that we have legislation coming before this House that has been brought in for one reason and one reason only. Actually, it is being brought in for two reasons. The first reason is the behaviour of the Deputy Premier and the second reason is we have a Premier who has no authority and was too weak to be able to take the action that was necessary at the time.

In contrast, we have a leader and a party that have a vision for the future—a vision that will secure the water supply in this state not for 10 years, not for 20 years, but for 50 years and 60 years into the future. It is a bold plan and it is a plan that we will deliver. What has this government announced today in that space? A feasibility study and a pipeline to Warwick. That is another announcement that will amount to absolutely nothing. Only an LNP government will get Queensland working again.

### **Mining Industry, Death; Central Queensland, Bushfires**



**Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.20 pm): I rise to reflect on the tragic and horrific bushfires that we experienced recently in Central Queensland at Cobraball, west of Yeppoon. I would also like to pass on my sincere condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of the miner who sadly passed away at the underground coalmine at Carborough Downs at Coppabella. It is a real tragedy. Given that we have had seven lives lost in the past 18 months, I think we need to have more of a conversation about that in this place. I offer my condolences to the family and friends of that miner.

In recent weeks in Central Queensland we have experienced a really tragic and difficult time because of horrific bushfires. Over 12,000 hectares of land west of Yeppoon were burnt and 15 homes were destroyed.

**Mr Boyce:** You didn't want an inquiry last year.

**Mrs LAUGA:** Those opposite want to turn this into a political point-scoring exercise, which they have been doing over the past couple of weeks—whether that be about rural firefighters—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs LAUGA:** I take those interjections from those opposite. This is a very serious matter. Fifteen homes have been lost. People's lives were at risk. I do not think this issue is a laughing matter. Those opposite need to take the issue very seriously, because the people of Central Queensland and the people of Queensland more broadly are very concerned about the bushfire risk. They are having conversations on a daily basis now about how we need to protect and mitigate against these kinds of disasters in the future. Thousands of livestock were destroyed. I invite the member for Callide to come to Yeppoon, to Cobraball, to Lake Mary and to Bungundarra to talk to the people there who have been affected—those farmers and graziers whom those opposite purport to represent yet want to make political pointscoring exercises out of the tragic circumstances that those people experienced.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mrs LAUGA:** It is a shame. How low will the LNP go with its political pointscoring and scaremongering while Queensland is in a state fire emergency, putting lives at risk with misinformation and lies? I was absolutely shocked when National Party backbencher Barnaby Joyce said, in the height of a disaster—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs LAUGA:** It is not a laughing matter. In the height of that disaster, National Party backbencher Barnaby Joyce said of the two people who died in the bushfires in New South Wales that they had most likely voted for the Greens. The Greens were equally responsible for stupid comments made during the height of those disasters.

Politicians from Canberra making stupid comments in the media in the midst of a disaster made me and the people in my community very cranky. Those comments were insensitive to the communities that were affected—the people who lost their lives, who lost their homes, who lost crops or livestock. Those comments were insensitive to the firefighters—the officers and volunteers—who put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. Those comments were insensitive to every single person who played a role in fighting these fires and to my entire community. Australians expect that our No. 1 priority at the moment is to save lives and properties and help people who have been affected get back on their feet.


There has been a significant number of outright lies told by the LNP and One Nation about our government's bushfire hazard mitigation policies. We know that, since January this year, the Department of Environment and Science has conducted 296 planned burns in our national parks and state forests, covering more than one million hectares. This is the largest area of planned burns undertaken in six years and well above the 600,000 hectares that were burnt under the LNP in three years. In April this year, we launched Operation Cool Burn and encouraged landowners to work with their local fire wardens to undertake hazard reduction burns. Over that time, more than 15,000 hectares were burnt. Since 2015 our government has approved on average 27,463 hazard reduction permits each year, which is 1,300 more permits than the highest number of permits issued when those opposite were in government. Let us not forget that it was the Newman government that slashed \$10 million from the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service salaries budget which meant that 60 fewer rangers were out there to look after protected areas across Queensland.

Preparing for and responding to natural disasters has always been a part of Queensland's life. Queensland is the most natural disaster-prone state in Australia. We now face challenges that climate change presents in understanding and preparing for current and future disasters. It is true that the fire at Cobraball west of Yeppoon was a human caused disaster, but the ferocity of the fire and the speed at which it went was directly as a result of the conditions and the weather.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Before I call the member for Burdekin, member for Keppel, you used unparliamentary language in your speech. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mrs LAUGA:** I withdraw.

### **Mining Industry, Death; Mining Industry, Safety**

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (2.25 pm): I would like to begin by conveying my deepest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the miner who lost his life overnight at Fitzroy Australia Resources' Carborough Downs mine site. It is a tragic event and something that has been felt across the Central Queensland coalfields.

Last week I went underground at the Middlemount coalmine. Let me say that until you have done that, you have no idea the conditions these men and women work in. Until you have seen it with your own eyes, you have no idea of the sacrifices they make. I can proudly say that my appreciation for each and every worker in our resources industry was bolstered even further owing to that experience. The value of the sacrifices they make for their families, our communities and our state has been even further inflated owing to that experience.

That appreciation and value is in stark contrast to that shown by those opposite. With seven deaths in 16 months in our mines and quarries, we would have to say that there are serious question marks around mining safety in this state. On 21 August this year, I stood in this place and moved a motion for a parliamentary inquiry into mine safety—a motion that those opposite opposed. Why did they oppose it? They opposed it in the name of petty politics and self-interest.

This government has been caught out and, more importantly, the minister responsible for mines in this state has been caught out. Let me explain. The total number of coalmine audits scheduled for 2018-19 was lower than the number scheduled for 2017-18. Even with that reduction, the scheduled numbers were not met. In October the minister said that inspections were reduced while the number of audits increased. The total number of audits did not increase. There were 65 in 2017-18, down to 60 in 2018-19. The bottom line is that both the number of total audits in Queensland's resources sector and the number of inspections are down. That should be ringing alarm bells across the resources sector in this state.

When it comes to mine safety, instead of focusing on the safety of Queensland workers, the minister has dropped the ball. The member for Keppel in her response to my motion claimed that she represents miners and then had the hide to say that a parliamentary inquiry into the safety of those miners would be a waste of money. The member for Bancroft told us how hard his government was



working on mine safety. My response to the member for Bancroft is that it is simply not working. For the chair of that committee to downplay the need for a safety inquiry into Queensland's natural resources and mining industry is almost beyond belief.

This is a government that said that an inquiry would stop the mine safety resets. The truth is that an inquiry would supplement those mine safety resets by further investigating the causes of and the possible solutions to these tragedies. While the minister and the member for Keppel waxed lyrical about the opportunity for workers to share their stories, they completely ignored the protections that a parliamentary inquiry offers—the same protections those members and others on that side of the House use to downplay the importance of getting to the bottom of issues in Queensland's mines.

As the member for Burdekin, I represent a region of our state that is blessed with many resources. As the shadow minister for natural resources and mines, I am proud to represent all of the resources industries across this state. At the heart of those resources is our people. Those people, their families, their friends and their colleagues deserve answers. Those people deserve a minister who is focused on safety in our mines. Those people deserve a government that values them and the contribution they make.

In August I said that six deaths in 12 months is simply not good enough. Today we face the reality that seven lives have been lost in Queensland mines in 16 months. The response from this government is not good enough. To those opposite I say that people are more important than politics; people are more important than your throwaway lines. To Queensland's resource workers, their families, their friends and colleagues I say that you deserve better. You deserve the truth. You have my commitment that I and the LNP will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with you through the good times and the bad and we will continue to fight for the truth that you deserve.

### Maryborough Electorate, Community Cabinet



**Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.30 pm): Let me tell members what is happening in the great city of Maryborough, which is one of the greatest cities in the state and one of the oldest electorates in the state. It was my privilege to have the Premier, the Deputy Premier and members of cabinet in Maryborough on 4 and 5 November. What a great time it was. About 320 people turned up to an afternoon tea to meet the Premier, Deputy Premier and members of cabinet. It was a great afternoon tea.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I take that interjection. There is nothing free about this side of the House. We work. We are not like the members of the LNP who put their noses in the trough for free drinks, lamingtons and cakes. We are workers and we defend workers.

A great time was had in Maryborough. We announced our policy to extend the timber agreement for a further two years. This is fantastic for the Maryborough community. This means 500 jobs will be saved in and around the Maryborough electorate. Curly Tatnell from DTM Timber is a good mate of mine and a very good resident and employer who employs many people in the community. On 7 November the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* reported—

Mr Tatnell said he had never encountered such support for timber from a Labor government as he was now experiencing with the Queensland government.

I will repeat that in case those opposite missed it—

Mr Tatnell said he had never encountered such support for timber from a Labor government as he was now experiencing with the Queensland government.

I hope those opposite heard that. When the community tried to get a policy out of the LNP, which was going on about this, the shadow minister said they did not have a policy yet—they will make it up as they go along—but told them not to worry about the 550 jobs. The LNP will bag the Labor government. Those opposite are baggers; they are white ants. None of them come to the table with solutions to help their communities.

Thanks to the transport minister we were able to preserve something very rare in our community. I would like to personally thank the minister. There are only four bomb shelters left in Queensland and we have two in Maryborough. One of the bomb shelters was in decay and was falling apart. Because of the great work of a champion of the community, Donna Hosken, along with Greg Bolderrow and myself, this bomb shelter has been fully restored. It is part of our heritage trail. It is a monument in Maryborough that we could not afford to lose. I made representations to the minister about its restoration. The difference between our side of the House and the other side of the House is that the


minister listened, took action and gave us the money to restore this bomb shelter. I hear the other side laughing about a bomb shelter. It might not mean anything to them, but in my community this is something very special.

The bomb shelter is on railway land in Maryborough. It was for first-class passengers only. Maryborough was a significant site during World War II. If planes were coming over, the bomb shelter was only for the use of first-class passengers. Other passengers could not use it.

There is more good news—it is just good news week in Maryborough—in that the unemployment rate in Wide Bay is 7.4 per cent. We have heard those opposite carp on about the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate in Wide Bay was 10.5 per cent when those opposite were in government. They cut, sacked and sold. We knew what they were doing. They were walking around with a big machete chopping centres like Maryborough and regional Queensland.

The unemployment rate of 7.4 per cent is due to this government's policy of creating jobs in regional Queensland. The Palaszczuk government is creating regional jobs. At the moment in my great city, the greatest city in Queensland, unemployment is falling due to this government making sure that we are backing industry and the Fraser Coast Regional Council with programs such as Works for Queensland, Back to Work and Skilling Queenslanders for Work. This is a traditional Labor government looking after regional Queensland. We deliver, we do not cut, sack and sell, and we do not sit there and whine, which is all those opposite do. Queenslanders are awake to this LNP.

### **Rural Fire Service, Blue Cards; Queensland Rail Interface Agreements**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (2.35 pm): I bring to the attention of the House stark examples of unnecessary regulation being imposed on regional Queenslanders. There are many examples where regulation has made life a misery. The issues I would like to bring to the attention of the House are ones that directly impact the day-to-day lives of regional Queenslanders.

I first would like to speak about rural fire brigade volunteers. Some highly-paid bright spark decided to classify our rural firefighters as health workers. The government is now forcing all volunteer rural firefighters to register for a blue card. These are the same 22,000 rural fireys who have been battling severe fires for years, saving lives and properties while risking their own lives. They do this without pay, fighting fires to the point of dehydration and exhaustion. In return what does the government do? It delivers a backhand and forces our fireys, many of whom have been with the service for decades, to apply for a blue card or be expelled.

I have been informed by many rural fireys that they have been threatened with the withdrawal of insurance coverage if they do not complete their blue card application. Representatives of RFS have lobbied the minister and the Premier about changing this unnecessary legislation, pointing out that a blue card will not pick up anything that the mandatory criminal check already does. This has been poorly thought out, with only 5,300 rural fireys out of 22,000 completing paperwork since July this year. My office has been bombarded with members who are angry at being threatened like a criminal.

Rural fireys are not healthcare workers; they fight fires. What will the government do when only a quarter of the rural fireys have applied? Will they get rid of 15,000 rural fire brigade members? Will they arrest and not provide insurance coverage for those who turn up to battle fires without a blue card? We would like to know who will be left to do hazard reduction burns and fight fires in regional Queensland as a last line of defence. What will the government do when interstate fireys are brought in to help, as no other state in Australia has a requirement for their fireys to hold a blue card. This shows how poorly thought out this policy is. This policy must be thrown out so rural fireys can get on with the job of saving lives and properties.


The next example of poor policy is the Queensland Rail interface agreements, which again have been forced on rural and regional Queenslanders. The National Rail Safety Regulator has legislated that Queensland Rail must have crossing agreements with all landowners otherwise there are large penalties to QR for noncompliance. The interface agreements that QR have proposed go way above and beyond the National Rail Safety Regulator guidelines and affect landowners' current access and future land valuations. Everyone agrees we need to comply with safety conditions of usage in relation to rail lines; however, this has been done for decades by landowners using the long-lost art of common sense. Queensland Rail is taking advantage of the agreements and adding extra conditions that step outside the purpose and scope of the guidelines.

I could understand it if there were a spate of accidents involving residents crossing the rail line to get to their private property, but I challenge Queensland Rail to provide any evidence of that to the House. In Brisbane, trains run every 15 to 30 minutes. In regional Queensland, in electorates such as mine and on the Atherton Tablelands we are lucky to see one train a day. None of those property

owners have been consulted or had any opportunity to address Queensland Rail on how the interface agreements will affect them or why they have been introduced. When they ask questions, they are told to seek legal advice.

I support regulations where there is obvious need. However, implementing regulations just for the sake of it is a waste of time, resources and money. These are examples of bureaucracy gone mad, just for the sake of somebody in an overpopulated government department trying to justify his position.

### Upper Ross Police Facility

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.40 pm): On 19 November, I had the pleasure of joining many Thuringowa community representatives, including school principals, members of our Defence Force, many members of the Queensland Police Service and the deputy mayor, at the official opening of the new Upper Ross Police Facility. I am very proud to have represented the police minister at the opening of that new police facility. I thank the minister, who knows that, with the full backing of the community, I have put my heart and soul into getting this done. Unlike the LNP opposite, which abolished 330 police positions, I will back our police every day of the week.

The new police facility was completed in a relatively short time frame and it was done with the endorsement of the local community. In 2016-17, there was a need to increase the police presence in the Upper Ross corridor, which covers 25,000 residents in Condon, Rasmussen and Kelso, where my family lives. In 2015 after I was elected I established the Upper Ross community consultation group, which is now called the Upper Ross Community Voice. Issues of increased crime related activity were raised and I responded by starting an MP petition that was supported by the group to call for more police and a new facility to be established in Rasmussen. I tabled that petition in this House some time ago.


I also advocated for and delivered 20 additional officers to the Rapid Action Patrol hub in Condon. Prior to the new facility, the arrangement that the QPS had in the Upper Ross was for two single-officer beats that provided coverage on Monday to Friday from eight to four. Through ongoing discussion with police, one of whom is the secretary to the Upper Ross Community Voice, we gathered support to establish a trial involving an increased number of police officers to work out of one of the former beats, which sadly was a near-25-year-old demountable or donga that was hardly fitting for eight officers. The trial was a success and the decision was made, again supported by the community, to amalgamate the two existing single-officer beats into a new modern facility in Rasmussen, which is situated in the middle of the two old beats, just off Riverway Drive in Bluewattle Estate.

The Upper Ross Police Facility is far more than just a new police facility in our ongoing fight to make our community safer and reduce rates of crime. The new police facility has 10 police officers, which is five times the former number of police. Already it is paying dividends. This is what a hardworking local member does: he listens and delivers. The newly appointed officer in charge of the Upper Ross Police Facility, Sergeant Matt Dickson, and Sergeant Les Groves have both reported that calls for service in relation to crime related activity have already decreased in the Upper Ross corridor since they began operating some months ago. There is a deterrent effect in having police patrolling the area. I know the community of the Upper Ross is very happy with the increased police presence, as am I.

Timing is everything. I was very interested to hear that the Leader of the Opposition was in Townsville on the very same day that we opened the new police facility. In fact, the member would have driven past the new police facility on Riverway Drive on her way to the Ross River Dam where, along with the LNP lightweight federal member, she was pretending to stand up for North Queenslanders. The media asked me to respond to her accusation that local Labor members of parliament were not delivering for Townsville. Not delivering? We have \$1 billion in infrastructure, including the North Queensland stadium, the water pipeline, the port expansion and the new Riverway Drive, along which she would have had to have driven. If I had known the Leader of the Opposition was in town, I would have asked her to come along and join community representatives as we officially opened the new police facility. That is the sort of thing that we are delivering in Townsville, on top of the 103 additional police that we are delivering. That is on top of boosting the Rapid Action Patrol hub from 20 to 40 officers. In 2017, what did the LNP promise Townsville in regard to police? They promised zero police in 2017, although they promised 20 officers for Cairns. I am sorry, but we needed them in Townsville. They wanted to sell the police academy. They had failed boot camps. The LNP is hopeless. They have no plans for supporting Townsville on any issue.

At a recent crime rally that we attended, we committed to listening to the community and we said that nothing will be off the table. All three Townsville members have received ideas for initiatives that we will take to the relevant ministers this week. In the coming months I look forward to further discussing other ideas with the police minister, such as the continuation of Operation Romeo Seville. We will stand up for Townsville, we will keep fighting for Townsville and we will make sure that the people of Townsville have a loud voice that is heard in Brisbane.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Leadership

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (2.45 pm): The rumours and whispers are turning into a dull roar that the Premier is perceived, through Labor pollster Mr John Utting, respected for his work in UMR Research over the past 30 years, as a weak, ineffective and do-nothing Premier who will shortly be replaced by everyone's sweetheart—although 'everyone' does not include me and perhaps others—Kate Jones, the member for Cooper. The Premier, who seems to be a political puppet of Left Wing hardliner Deputy Premier Trad, has had enough of early morning interviews, strategy meetings and late-night dinner functions. She is set to further enjoy her overseas trade portfolio by jetting off to a trade commissioner's job, a la Peter Beattie and Bob Gibbs.

I still remember then premier Peter Beattie walking across the aisle, strutting on the floor of this House and mumbling to his own ego, 'If it was up to you blokes', meaning the LNP, 'I'd be here for 100 years.' But, no! Like all good Labor political puppets, he handed over the premier's mantle to Anna Bligh and the rest is history. History is about to repeat itself with the scandal-ridden, impropriety-driven Premier Palaszczuk about to check out on her way to LA, London or any other exotic worldwide point of call as a trade commissioner.

Robbie Schwarten-backed Kate Jones, the member for Cooper, has had her CV splashed across the *Courier-Mail* in full colour to test the waters of public reaction to a takeover of the Premier's mantle, and Kate herself will drink to that. The favourite minister of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* and Gold Coast city councillors, Jones will be the Labor Party's last-ditch throw at the stumps to hang on to power after myriad failed public pub tests, starting with the black-throated finch holding up the Adani coalmine and costing hundreds of jobs in Queensland. Following that debacle, which ensured that we had the Morrison LNP federal government elected by Queensland, hundreds of members of the Labor-Greens alliance, led by Bob Brown, raided farms across Queensland. The Labor-Greens alliance members then ensconced the perception of the loony left running rampant in Queensland with protesters gluing themselves to streets in Brisbane's CBD, holding up traffic and preventing people from getting to work and schools.


On top of all of that, the stench of corruption is back in the Queensland government around real estate deals; David Barbagallo, the Premier's chief of staff, getting a quarter-of-a-million-dollar gift from the government to fund an app business venture; overseas jaunts in USA ski fields; and Labor members' law firms getting hundreds of thousands of dollars from legal support channels of which they have parliamentary oversight. Top that off with the ongoing rail-fail saga that Labor has overseen under various ministers, from Trad to Hinchliffe and now Bailey, and it is no wonder that when trains are late or shut down the catchcry of Brisbane rail commuters is an automatic shout of, 'Rail fail, Bail-ey!'

Law and order has to be the biggest failing of the Anastacia Palaszczuk Labor government, with repeat crime offenders in Townsville out of control. The revolving door of juvenile offenders going through the courts and back out again is so frustrating for Townsville residents worried about break-ins and car thefts that the three Labor members in Townsville are already racking up hours on the website Seek, looking for other job opportunities for next November. On the Gold Coast crime is in the news every day, with bikie members and their associates featuring heavily in murders, drug busts and gang-war payback after the Palaszczuk Labor government watered down the LNP's tough-on-crime bikie laws.

What do the faceless men of the Labor Party do when faced with a leader who is leading the party into the political abyss where there will be no spin-off jobs for their Labor mates? They swap horses and run the member for Cooper as a sweet-smiling, cleanskin candidate, as the Labor Party did in New South Wales with Kristina Keneally. That failed, and the member for Cooper will fail, too, particularly if she cannot shake the left-wing warrior of a Treasurer as her running mate glaring over her shoulder.

Bring on October 2020 for the sake of all Queenslanders. This is the first left-wing Labor government we have ever had in Queensland. It has been a disaster for Queensland. Queenslanders have woken up to the fact and they are waiting with baseball bats on the verandah, a la Paul Keating, for 31 October 2020.

### Stretton Electorate; Cancer

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (2.50 pm): It is a privilege and honour to represent my local community in this House. I will outline some of the highlights of 2019 in my local area as best I can in the time available.

The year got underway and it was not long before Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations were in full swing, celebrating the Year of the Pig with many fantastic events and community activities. In March we had a sensational turnout of volunteers in challenging weather conditions for Clean Up Australia Day in Calamvale. We also celebrated Queensland Women's Week with a fantastic morning tea and heard from the minister, the Hon. Di Farmer. In the face of terror, my community came together in their thousands at the Islamic College of Brisbane to honour the victims of the Christchurch mosque shootings. The hall was completely packed, with many having to watch a live feed from downstairs. It was a moving and powerful show of unity, and I thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all those who attended.

In April my community celebrated the release and return of local Kuraby father Hazem Hamouda after he was locked up without charge in a Cairo prison for over 12 months. I spoke in the House about the effect the ordeal had on his family. We also celebrated the Runcorn Pool's 10th birthday—home of the mighty Runcorn Rackley Swimming. The Sunnybank district RSL put on a moving Anzac Day service, and I was very pleased to see school captains from all local schools in attendance. Drewvale locals celebrated the opening of the 'left turn at any time' from Macquarie Way onto Wembley Road, a much needed upgrade.

In May, Stretton State College held another successful under-8s day and the Runcorn Tavern was awarded the best parmigiana in Brisbane—a truly great achievement. In June, Acacia Ridge TAFE students and staff celebrated \$16 million in new funding. We also celebrated my annual Stretton Queensland Day Awards, recognising the hard work of local community champions. EID Down Under was again held in my electorate and was a fantastic success, with over 20,000 people attending the fun. Stretton State College students put on some outstanding performances in *Seussical the Musical*. Former police commissioner Ian Stewart and the police minister visited my electorate to welcome new PLO Jeong Bae and to talk about community safety. I was very pleased to see local schools such as Runcorn High run collections of books and materials for the students of Upper Mount Gravatt State School after the fire that occurred there.

In July, police launched Operation Romeo Airtight and locals were overjoyed when both lanes of Illaweenah Street were finally opened in both directions. August was a great time of celebration. We celebrated Warrigala, Calamvale Central Family Fun Day and my annual Stretton Multicultural Awards, with special guests Minister Hinchcliffe and Queensland Firebird Romelda Aiken in attendance. We also celebrated the completion of upgrades to the Logan and Gateway motorways and welcomed the announcement of new and upgraded bus stops for Stretton and Calamvale.

In September we celebrated a very special birthday in Stretton. Mabel Crosby turned 110 and was joined by the Premier and the Governor of Queensland, along with many friends and family members. The Kyabra Community Fun Day was a great success. In October, many turned out for the Taiwan Night Markets at Sunnybank Hills Shoppingtown. Stretton State College held their annual Night of Stars and Sunnybank Hills State School held their Multifest for 2019, both very successful events. In November, we have already enjoyed the Kuraby Christmas Markets, the first Chinese Scout Group Youth Fun Day and annual community Futsal Challenge. It has been a fantastic year in Stretton and it has been an honour to represent the community of Stretton.


Before I finish, Mr Speaker, I ask you indulge me on one final personal matter. Every year 150,000 Australians are diagnosed with cancer. Recently I learned that I am one of them. My treatment has begun, and with the support of the Premier, my colleagues and my magnificent electorate office staff, I intend to continue representing my electorate of Stretton. Of course there will be times when my treatment comes first, but if there is one thing I have learned about cancer already it is that I am not in it alone. I have the support of my family, my friends and, of course, fantastic Queensland doctors, nurses and hospital staff. There are many arms around my shoulders and for that I am grateful. I ask for understanding and prayers during this time. For many years I have supported cancer charities, never dreaming I would one day be one of the people who would benefit from their great work. Finally, I encourage everyone, men especially, to get to know their family doctor. I look forward to continuing my work representing my local community.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Stretton, the difficult and challenging battle that you have ahead is shared by too many Queenslanders. I am sure that I speak for all members of this House when I say that I wish you well in the journey you have ahead.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPIT MASTER PLAN BILL

### Message from Governor

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.55 pm): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The message from His Excellency recommends the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPIT MASTER PLAN BILL 2019

*Constitution of Queensland 2001*, section 68

I, PAUL de JERSEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—


A Bill for an Act to facilitate the implementation of a master plan for the Southport Spit, and to amend this Act, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012, the Land Act 1994 and the Planning Act 2016 for particular purposes

Governor

Date: 26 November 2019

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 26 November 2019, from His Excellency the Governor, recommending the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill 2019 [[2118](#)].

### Introduction

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (2.56 pm): I present a bill for an act to facilitate the implementation of a master plan for the Southport Spit, and to amend this act, the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012, the Land Act 1994 and the Planning Act 2016 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill 2019 [[2119](#)].

*Tabled paper:* Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill 2019, explanatory notes [[2120](#)].

I am pleased to introduce the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill 2019. The primary objective of the bill is to facilitate the implementation of The Spit Master Plan. This will improve the Spit as a community asset for future generations while balancing open space with the release of commercial site opportunities.

For over 30 years the Spit has been a site of conflict over competing views on how it should be managed. In August 2017 the Premier sought to bring that period of hostility to an end when she announced that a re-elected Palaszczuk Labor government would develop a new master plan for the Spit which would include ensuring that building height limits would not exceed three storeys and that the open public space to the north of Sea World would be preserved for future generations.

Central to that process was a commitment to engage in extensive consultation with the community. This included a series of stakeholder engagement seminars where attendees participated, through an inquiry-by-design process, in a ground-up development of a new master plan for the Spit. This was complemented by dozens of information pop-ups across the Gold Coast where local residents could have their say on what they wanted to see on the Spit. There was also an opportunity to participate in online surveys and provide detailed feedback on different elements and versions of the plan. Over 23,000 individual pieces of feedback were received. The result of that consultation has been the development of a plan that has been designed by the community, for the community.

The Spit Master Plan will create a clearly defined tourism and recreation destination to boost existing world renowned attractions such as Sea World and activate vacant and under-utilised land by providing certainty to developers, investors and the community. Quite simply, the Palaszczuk Labor government spent the time to get it right. We spoke to the community and we listened to what they

wanted. We balanced their desire to protect the area's important environmental value with their advocacy for better access to all the Spit has to offer, and we weighed the need for sensible, sustainable development against the responsibility to ensure that public amenity was improved. The result is a master plan which was recognised for excellence in public engagement and community and for best planning ideas for a major project at the Planning Institute of Australia's annual Queensland awards, held earlier this month. The Spit Master Plan also took out the overall planning award for Queensland.

When the Premier released the final master plan for the Spit at Sea World in May, she announced that the Queensland government was committing \$60 million towards infrastructure projects to progress its implementation. It is expected the projects identified in the master plan will create a potential 1,800 new jobs during the lifetime of the master plan's implementation.

In total, \$145 million has already been committed for investment by the public and private sector, with a significant \$50 million investment from Village Roadshow and a \$35 million contribution from the City of Gold Coast in addition to the Queensland government's \$60 million investment. Of course, this kind of careful, inclusive, collaborative approach is not supported by everyone—and certainly not those opposite.

The LNP had a different plan—one which involved plenty of concrete, including on Wavebreak Island, which they planned to cover in apartment blocks. That was their plan—to turn the Broadwater into the Gold Coast's largest canal estate. The Spit Master Plan provides us with an opportunity to build consensus out of conflict and to develop this extraordinary space in the interests of all Queenslanders. The Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill represents another important step in that process.

Provisions in the bill will enable unallocated state land in the master plan area to be granted to the state in freehold without competition, streamline the process for road closures in the master plan area and empower the Gold Coast Waterways Authority to deliver a series of capital works projects, such as public realm improvements on the Spit. The bill will facilitate the release of development sites identified in the master plan to the market for commercial developments. These sites are currently state owned land and the current tenure arrangements restrict lease durations and commercial dealings.

The most appropriate tenure pathway to facilitate the release of the development sites is to grant the land in freehold to the state with long-term commercial leases to be granted over freehold titles as required. No freehold title to land in the master plan area will be granted to private interests. It is intended that some areas would be leased to the state under the Land Act either as perpetual or term leases if required to meet the objectives of the master plan.

Currently, the Land Act restricts the granting of unallocated state land to the state as freehold without competition, other than to the Minister for State Development in their capacity as the Minister for Economic Development Queensland or a constructing authority if it is needed for a public purpose. The bill seeks to enable state owned land to be granted to a state entity—in this case my department—as freehold without competition. This will only apply to the master plan area. The bill further specifies that section 16 of the Land Act is not applicable in relation to the grant of unallocated state land in the master plan area to the state as freehold. The bill further clarifies that no fee or amount is payable by the state in relation to a freehold grant on the Spit.

The bill also proposes to exempt roads in the master plan area from the road closure process under the Land Act. Instead, the bill enables all or parts of roads in the master plan area to be permanently or temporarily closed where needed to support the outcomes of the master plan. These provisions will ensure road closure applications are processed immediately and not subject to delays and/or cost increases. Any permanently closed roads may be dealt with as unallocated state land. To be clear, these new provisions, both in relation to road closures and granting of unallocated state land to the state, will apply to the master plan area only and do not otherwise affect the operation of the Land Act.

The bill also proposes amendments to the Gold Coast Waterways Authority Act 2012 to expand the role of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority. The Gold Coast Waterways Authority is a trusted statutory authority with a strong local presence and established role in managing and enhancing the Gold Coast waterways and land parcels associated with and under control of the authority. The authority was actively involved in the preparation of the master plan and is considered the most appropriate entity to lead the capital works program for the implementation of the master plan.

Currently, the authority's function and expertise relates to the management of waterways on the Gold Coast. This bill proposes amendments to expand the authority's functions to enable it to undertake the broader capital works program for the implementation of the master plan. Additional amendments

are proposed to enable the authority to recover costs incurred in dealing with contravening property and any abandoned property as a debt to the state. These amendments will address the limitation in the authority's cost recovery power under the existing legislation.

The bill also includes minor amendments to the Planning Act 2016 which clarify the scope of compensation that may be available for 'adverse planning changes' to local government planning schemes. The current wording implies that compensation related to assessable development is available only if the development becomes assessable in connection with the adverse planning change. In reality, a landowner's interests may be adversely affected, even if the development was already assessable before the adverse planning change—for example, through a change to assessment benchmarks for the assessable development.

The current wording is inconsistent both with the intended scope of compensation arrangements for assessable development and the scope of compensation under the legislation preceding the Planning Act 2016. The proposed amendments address this by clarifying that compensation is available in relation to assessable development, irrespective of whether the development was assessable before the adverse planning change. The proposed amendments include transitional arrangements ensuring that any landowner who may have been adversely affected by the current wording, and who has fulfilled the other prerequisites for claiming compensation, is afforded up to six months from the commencement of the amendment to claim the compensation.

This bill delivers important operational amendments required to implement The Spit Master Plan and support landowners of Queensland. These amendments will assist my department and the Gold Coast Waterways Authority in their work towards preserving the Spit as a community asset for future generations, creating jobs through tourism, entertainment and recreation activities, and boosting private sector investments in Queensland.

The Spit Master Plan provides a clear example of what can be achieved when you provide clear leadership and take the community with you. This award-winning project is a tribute to all who participated in its formulation and to the vision of the Premier, and our government, who saw the opportunity to deliver something very special for this very special place. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (3.06 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

### Referral to State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee.

## TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (DISABILITY PARKING AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.06 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) Act 2017, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014, the Traffic Regulation 1962 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport and Public Works Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Transport Legislation (Disability Parking and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2121\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Transport Legislation (Disability Parking and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[2122\]](#).

I am pleased today to introduce the Transport Legislation (Disability Parking and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. The main purpose of the bill is to expand the Disability Parking Permit Scheme to include persons with a vision impairment who are legally blind.



In speaking to this bill, I acknowledge that the member for Hinchinbrook introduced a private member's bill to the House on 16 October this year which also proposes to amend the eligibility criteria for the Disability Parking Permit Scheme. I will not, however, speak further on that matter as the bill is before a committee.

The Queensland Disability Parking Permit Scheme currently provides various parking concessions to people with certain mobility impairments. That includes, of course, being able to access disability parking spaces at a range of locations such as shopping centres, medical facilities, train stations and entertainment venues. These parking bays ensure that permit holders can access convenient and wider parking spaces that allow them to go about their daily business.

Under the current scheme, eligibility for a disability parking permit is based on the applicant's functional ability to walk. Therefore, people with a vision impairment are not eligible unless they also have an impairment that impacts on their functional ability to walk. The intent of this bill is to expand the scheme to include those people who are legally blind—whether on a permanent or temporary basis—recognising the unique challenges that persons with a vision impairment face.

Vision impairment will be defined as legal blindness, consistent with the term 'permanent blindness' in the Commonwealth government's Social Security Guide under the Social Security Act 1991. This is the definition currently used by TransLink to determine eligibility for the Vision Impairment Travel Pass and sets an appropriate criterion for the provision of government assistance. This also assists our health professionals to make clear determinations on eligibility.

Using this definition, it is estimated that there will be approximately 14,400 new applicants for a permit—which represents only a 7.5 per cent increase on the current scheme membership. This expansion is not expected to have a substantial impact on the availability of disability parking spaces. What can impact the availability of those parking bays, however, is people who do not hold a permit and unlawfully occupy these parking spaces, thereby depriving those with a genuine need. To address this concern, the bill increases the current penalty for illegally parking in a disability parking space from \$266 to \$533—a doubling of the fine. In the five years to 30 April 2019, police officers in Queensland issued over 7,500 fines to people who illegally parked in a disability parking space. This figure is only a fraction of the fines issued for this offence, as local governments issue the majority of parking fines in this regard. I recognise that local governments set their own penalty amounts and these vary across Queensland, but setting a higher penalty recognises the seriousness of illegally parking in a disability parking space. I note that a considerable number of local governments take the state law as their own.

While people may think they are only going to be a few minutes when they use a disability parking space illegally, it effectively means that a person who truly needs to access a space may be forced into a situation where they have to abandon their outing altogether or try and navigate unsafely among traffic. For persons with a vision impairment, walking through traffic lanes to reach their destination is dangerous. The person with a vision impairment and a sighted guide must walk two abreast, which means that one of them may be exposed to car park traffic if they cannot get a disability parking space. Also, persons with a vision impairment who have a guide dog need the extra space to get the guide dog out of the car so they can fit the harness in the safety of a parking bay. It is expected that the prospect of a \$533 fine will dissuade people from unlawfully using these valuable parking spaces. The penalty itself is only one element of deterrence, and for this reason a range of targeted measures will be deployed. The Department of Transport and Main Roads will work with local governments and relevant Queensland government agencies to improve education and communication to support awareness of the penalty increase and deter the misuse of disability parking bays.

The amendments proposed in this bill are intended to improve the lives of Queenslanders who are permanently or temporarily legally blind and will assist in ensuring that members of the public recognise the importance of leaving disability bays vacant for members of the public who hold a disability parking permit. To ensure that the proposed changes are delivering the intended benefits, a post-implementation review will be conducted 12 months after commencement.

Of course, ensuring that people with disabilities have access to transport facilities is not just about disability parking spaces. An holistic approach is needed to improve accessibility. The Palaszczuk government's commitment includes our New Generation Rollingstock passenger trains, and accessibility upgrades are being made to a number of train stations. The \$335 million upgrades to the new generation trains will deliver the most accessible rail fleet Queensland has seen. The upgrades include, for example, two accessible toilets, a 10 per cent increase in circulation space inside the toilet modules and increasing the number of priority seats from 24 to 88 per six-car train set. The first upgraded trains will be in service next year, with the entire fleet upgraded and in service by 2024. Along

with train upgrades we are rolling out a station upgrade program which will make it easier for commuters with a disability. The upgrades are part of a \$57 million boost to the Palaszczuk government's \$300 million Station Accessibility Upgrade Program.

The changes in this bill and the accessibility upgrades to trains and stations demonstrate the Palaszczuk government's commitment to creating a future where Queenslanders with a disability have the same access to opportunities as every other Queenslander. The government is also committed to the Passenger Transport Infrastructure Investment Program, valued at over \$536 million over the next four years. Projects include: the rollout of Braille and tactile stop numbers and QR codes at bus stop signs; a \$2.7 million lift to Queen Street bus station platform 2, which was completed in August of this year, and new help phones for the Queen Street bus station. I would like to say thank you to all those involved in this process. There have been other ministers and other agencies, and I acknowledge the Minister for Disability Services, the Attorney-General and their staff and departments for all of their assistance to this point.

The bill also makes a minor amendment to ensure that where a person no longer meets the eligibility criteria for a disability parking permit, if necessary there is a ground for amending, suspending or cancelling that permit. For other kinds of approvals such as vehicle registration, an explicit regulation-making power is being included in the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 to recognise that regulations may also prescribe grounds for amending, suspending or cancelling approvals. Finally, the bill amends Queensland's rail safety legislation. The amendments are technical in nature and will remove definitions of level crossing and rail or road crossing from that legislation. The effect of that is that the definitions contained in the rail safety national law will apply in Queensland, ensuring a consistent national approach. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.15 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Transport and Public Works Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport and Public Works Committee.

## ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.15 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Associations Incorporation Act 1981, the Collections Act 1966, the Fair Trading Inspectors Act 2014, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014 and the acts mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2123\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[2124\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 into the parliament today. The bill progresses important reforms for more than 22,000 not-for-profit associations incorporated in Queensland. These associations represent and support many vital aspects of the Queensland community. The hard work and dedication of Queensland's associations sustain a range of important activities that are vital to our way of life. Incorporated associations provide a means for like-minded people to collaborate and participate in activities such as sport, social activities and hobbies, industry representation, advocacy, as well as support for a range of charitable or community causes. Queensland's incorporated associations therefore play an important role in generating

community connections and strengthening civil society. The government is committed to supporting the work of these incorporated associations and assisting them to operate more effectively. The amendments contained in the bill are a reflection of this commitment.

The bill proposes a number of amendments aimed at reducing the regulatory burden experienced by incorporated associations and modernising the legislative framework that applies to them; for example, the bill will ensure all associations have the ability to conduct general meetings via communications technology if they desire to do so without necessarily having to amend any of their rules. The bill will also amend the act so that incorporated associations are no longer required to use a common seal. This will reduce red tape for associations in the execution of contracts and other documents and will bring the Associations Incorporation Act in line with equivalent legislation in other states. Associations may, however, continue using their seal if they wish to do so.

Significantly, the bill recognises the duplicated annual reporting burden of approximately 3,759 Queensland incorporated associations that have registered as charities with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission—the ACNC—for the purpose of obtaining certain tax concessions from the Australian Taxation Office. These ACNC registered associations represent almost 17 per cent of all associations incorporated in Queensland. As a result of their dual registration, ACNC registered associations have an obligation to submit annual financial reports to both the Queensland government under the Associations Incorporation Act and the ACNC.

I am pleased to announce that the Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will address this situation by providing the Queensland government with the ability to exempt, by regulation, certain classes of association from the financial reporting obligations of the Associations Incorporation Act. Subject to Governor in Council approval, the government will use this exemption power to remove the requirement for ACNC registered incorporated associations to submit financial statements to the Office of Fair Trading.

Importantly, the bill proposes similar amendments to the Collections Act 1966, which provides the framework under which charities and associations with community purpose objects may conduct fundraising in Queensland. The Collections Act amendments, coupled with subsequent amendments to the Collections Regulation 2008, will remove the duplicated reporting requirement to the benefit of an estimated 3,200 charities and community purpose organisations, representing some 70 per cent of those authorised to fundraise in Queensland. This is a highly desired reform for charities and I am pleased to introduce legislation providing for the necessary amendments today. It is intended that the changes will be in place for most incorporated associations and Collections Act entities before the reporting deadlines for their 2020-21 reporting period.

To ensure the Office of Fair Trading will still be able to maintain an appropriate level of risk based oversight of exempt ACNC registered entities if required, the bill provides the chief executive with the ability to enter into an information-sharing arrangement with the ACNC. The chief executive will also have the power to direct an exempt entity to provide financial statements and to have those statements audited, verified or examined.

For incorporated associations with a continued obligation to report to the Office of Fair Trading, the bill addresses a situation in which a smaller association may incur the cost of having their financial statement reviewed or audited because a one-off grant or insurance payment has temporarily increased their annual revenue above the audit thresholds contained in the Associations Incorporation Act. The bill will provide the chief executive with the discretion to allow the association to report under a lower reporting tier in these special and unusual circumstances if requested to do so by the association. The bill will also reduce red tape with regard to the administration and winding-up of associations.

The bill applies part 5.3A of the Corporations Act 2001 to provide associations with a formalised process to appoint a voluntary administrator. Currently, incorporated associations are not able to place themselves into voluntary administration under the Associations Incorporation Act if they experience financial difficulties. Instead, an incorporated association would need to apply to the Supreme Court for the appointment of a provisional liquidator which is often a time-consuming and expensive process. The ability to appoint a voluntary administrator will greatly assist an association to overcome periods of serious financial difficulty and help to optimise the outcome for the association's creditors and members if the association is ultimately wound up.

The bill also introduces a process whereby an association may apply to the chief executive to cancel its incorporation without having to undergo a formal winding-up process. This voluntary cancellation process will only be available if the association has no outstanding debts or liabilities, has paid all fees and penalties applying to it under the Associations Incorporation Act, and is not a party to any legal proceedings. The association must also arrange for the appropriate disposal of its assets.

The ability for an association to voluntarily cancel its incorporation will provide a more cost-effective and less burdensome means of ending an association where the association has no ongoing obligations arising from the property in its possession. Eligible associations will not be required to undergo formal liquidation, making it easier for associations to cease operating as an incorporated association.

The bill also amends the Associations Incorporation Act to reduce the period during which a person convicted of certain criminal offences is ineligible to serve on a management committee from 10 years to five years. These amendments will create consistency with other jurisdictions and are intended to give associations greater freedom regarding who they may elect to their committees. It is anticipated that vital associations in some remote areas will be the primary beneficiaries of the change.

In response to longstanding stakeholder views expressed over a number of years, the bill also seeks to provide greater standards of transparency and accountability within associations. For example, the Associations Incorporation Act does not currently include clear guidance about the obligations of those who hold influential positions within incorporated associations. Consequently, the bill includes amendments to clarify the governance obligations for management committee members and officers. The amendments will assist management committee members and officers in meeting their fiduciary duties. This is particularly important in light of the growing sophistication of the not-for-profit sector and the resulting increase in public expectation that those who hold influential positions within incorporated associations should be held accountable to minimum standards of behaviour.

The amendments impose obligations on officers to exercise their powers and discharge their duties with care and diligence, in good faith, in the best interest of the association, and for a proper purpose. Officers must also not improperly use their position or use information obtained from their position to gain a pecuniary benefit or material advantage for themselves or another person. Management committee members will also have a duty to prevent the association from trading while insolvent. Management committee members will also be required to disclose any material personal interest they have with regard to any matter being considered at a meeting of the management committee.

These obligations merely reflect the basic governance principles that officers and management committee members would generally be expected to observe at present. The obligations are also largely consistent with those codified in the associations incorporation legislation of other Australian jurisdictions. Although penalties for noncompliance with these obligations will apply, it is important to note that they are balanced where relevant by the introduction of presumptions. These presumptions take into account an officer's reliance on information or advice and ensure that an officer who makes a business judgement will be taken to have acted with a reasonable degree of care and diligence, provided certain pre-conditions are met.

In addition to their fiduciary obligations, management committee members will be required to disclose the details of remuneration paid and other benefits given to committee members, senior staff and their relatives at the association's annual general meeting. This will ensure that the members of the association are appropriately informed of how the association's funds are being used, particularly with regard to payments that management committees might authorise to themselves. The way in which the disclosure must occur will be prescribed in a regulation.

Another measure aimed at improving the internal governance of associations under the bill is the introduction of a requirement for the rules of an association to have a grievance procedure. Currently, the Associations Incorporation Act provides that members who believe they have been deprived of rights conferred upon them by the rules of the association may only seek redress through application to the Supreme Court. The introduction of a requirement for incorporated associations to have a formal mechanism by which to address internal disputes will ensure parties to a dispute attempt to resolve the matter internally before seeking adjudication through the court system.

The grievance procedure must enable a member to appoint any person to act on their behalf and provide each party to the dispute with an opportunity to be heard. The grievance procedure must also provide for mediation. The mediator, and any person who may be optionally appointed under the rules of a specific association to decide the outcome of the dispute, must be unbiased.

The bill provides that if an association's rules do not contain a grievance procedure, or contain a grievance procedure that does not comply with the principles set out in the bill, the grievance procedure outlined in the model rules will apply. This approach ensures all incorporated associations will be

obligated to observe a compliant grievance procedure while also relieving associations of any implementation burden, as associations may choose to allow the model rule procedure to apply automatically.

The bill also assists the Office of Fair Trading in conducting investigations under the Associations Incorporation Act. Currently, the regulator's investigation powers under that act are encapsulated in part 10 of the Financial Institutions Code 1992, despite the repeal of that instrument in 1999. It is unreasonable to expect that a modern and innovative regulator is required to rely on a code that was repealed two decades ago as the repository for its investigative powers. It is therefore intended to apply the Fair Trading Inspectors Act 2014 to investigations conducted under the Associations Incorporation Act. The Fair Trading Inspectors Act already consolidates inspector functions and powers across a number of acts within the fair trading portfolio, and its application to the Associations Incorporation Act will bring about efficiencies and consistency for fair trading inspectors. Importantly, the Fair Trading Inspectors Act is the most contemporary piece of legislation dealing with inspectorate provisions and the checks and balances to inspectorate powers.

The bill applies the Fair Trading Inspectors Act in a way that does not make available some powers deemed unnecessary to investigations of not-for-profit incorporated associations. For example, inspectors will not have the power to stop and move vehicles or the power to obtain criminal history reports.

The bill also introduces a number of amendments to clarify the operation of the Associations Incorporation Act, including inserting an objects clause to clearly identify its purpose and scope and amendments to make clear that an association may replace its rules with the current version of the model rules at any time and not just at incorporation.

Further, the bill introduces amendments to streamline internal government processes regarding the vesting of property in the Public Trustee under the Associations Incorporation Act and the Collections Act and the appointment, under the Collections Act, of the Disaster Appeals Trust Fund Committee. Minor and consequential amendments are also proposed to be made to the Food Act, the Hospital Foundations Act, the Liquor Act, and the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland Act. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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

## BIODISCOVERY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (3.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Biodiscovery Act 2004 and the Right to Information Act 2009 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2125\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[2126\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. Queensland is home to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, representing the world's oldest continuously living cultures. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are the custodians of thousands of generations of traditional knowledge—knowledge that has been passed through the millennia and continues to be central to many First Nations communities and to society more broadly.

This bill will amend the Biodiscovery Act 2004—the act—and the Right to Information Act 2009 to ensure the use of traditional knowledge in biodiscovery is protected and to support economic opportunities for First Nations communities in Queensland. The bill will also help us meet our international obligations, fulfil the government's commitment to support the commercialisation of new bioproducts and improve the business environment for biodiscovery in Queensland.

Biodiscovery is the take and use of minimal quantities of native biological material from state land or waters for molecular, biochemical or genetic analysis for commercial purposes. Practical applications for biodiscovery include pharmaceuticals, foods and bioplastics. Queensland was the first jurisdiction in Australia to introduce legislation about biodiscovery. The act establishes an access and benefit-sharing framework for use of the state's native biological material and was established in part to meet the requirements of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which deals with access to genetic resources.

Since the act commenced in 2004 the biodiscovery industry has grown, and international regulation of access and benefit sharing evolved with the introduction of the Nagoya protocol in 2014. The Nagoya protocol provides a framework for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources, including the use of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources. Access and benefit sharing in accordance with the Nagoya protocol acknowledges and involves the contributions of Indigenous peoples and local communities. An independent statutory review of the act, and extensive public consultation with biodiscovery entities and First Nations peoples, has identified that improved alignment with the Nagoya protocol is necessary. In order to align with the Nagoya protocol, the act must provide for First Nations peoples to consent to, and negotiate benefit sharing for, the use of their traditional knowledge.

Biodiscovery entities in Queensland unable to demonstrate compliance with the Nagoya protocol are at this very moment at risk of failing international checkpoints and not having access to global markets. Importantly, without formal recognition and legal protection, First Nations peoples cannot prevent the unauthorised use of their traditional knowledge or their resources.

The bill will amend the act to ensure that it is contemporary, effective and equitable by reflecting international standards, including an obligation to obtain the agreement of traditional knowledge custodians for the use of their traditional knowledge for biodiscovery. Amendments are also proposed to simplify approvals under the act and clarify the relationship between the act and other relevant international protocols for access and benefit sharing. This bill will help to ensure that Queensland's biodiscovery industry remains globally competitive and the benefits of biodiscovery are shared equitably throughout Queensland, including with First Nations peoples and regional communities.

To recognise and protect traditional knowledge used for biodiscovery, the bill establishes an overarching obligation requiring biodiscovery entities to take all reasonable and practical measures to ensure that traditional knowledge is used for biodiscovery only with the agreement of the custodians of the knowledge. This traditional knowledge obligation will apply to any person using native biological material for biodiscovery, whether or not the material has been taken from state land or Queensland waters. This recognises that as a consequence of past government policies that removed custodians of traditional knowledge from country, traditional knowledge about native biological material is not always associated with the land where the material is collected.

The bill provides for a traditional knowledge code of practice which will outline how biodiscovery entities can comply with the traditional knowledge obligation. This code will state the minimum steps required, that is, obtaining the free and prior informed consent from—and negotiating benefits on mutually agreed terms with—the traditional knowledge custodian. Outlining requirements in a code of practice ensures that both industry and First Nations communities have the information needed to fulfil the traditional knowledge obligation. Furthermore, guidelines will be produced to further support industry engagement with First Nations peoples by identifying culturally appropriate ways to negotiate free and prior informed consent and benefit sharing.

The code of practice and guidelines will be developed in consultation with First Nations peoples and biodiscovery entities within 12 months of the bill passing and before the provisions commence. To assist the further growth and development of biodiscovery in Queensland, the bill provides for a simplified approvals process by removing the requirement for biodiscovery entities to apply for and obtain an approved biodiscovery plan. This can be done without affecting the state's capacity to effectively regulate biodiscovery activities as the information is already contained in the application for

a collection authority or in the negotiation of a benefit-sharing agreement with the state. It will reduce the time required to comply with the act by making the process more efficient and will encourage new biodiscovery activities in Queensland.

Finally, the bill clarifies the relationship between the act and international protocols, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Nagoya protocol and the plant and genetic resources for food and agriculture—known as the FAO—treaty. Clarifying these relationships was a key recommendation of the statutory review and was reinforced through subsequent stakeholder consultation. The FAO treaty was ratified by Australia in 2005 and establishes a multilateral benefit-sharing system for the sustainable use and equitable sharing of key farming crops. The different permit requirements to transfer and use material under the FAO treaty compared to those under the act have caused confusion for biodiscovery entities when specific material is subject to both access and benefit-sharing regimes. Resolving this confusion is critical both to support development of the biodiscovery industry and to support the sharing of crucial food and agricultural crops.

To provide greater regulatory clarity for biodiscovery entities, the bill will provide an exemption for a range of plants that are crucial for global food security that are subject to the FAO treaty's multilateral access and benefit-sharing framework, which includes traditional knowledge. This exemption will only apply on the basis that these plants are used for food or agricultural purposes and subject to the FAO treaty. Minor amendments are also proposed to the Right to Information Act 2009 to remove reference to 'biodiscovery plans', which will become obsolete.

In relation to a very practical application of what is before the House in terms of the introduction of this bill, I was privileged to recently see firsthand what First Nations communities sharing in the economic opportunities presented by biodiscovery actually looks like. Recently I visited Camooweal, just west of Mount Isa, and met with traditional owners who operate the Myuma Group, which includes the Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation. The Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation is commercialising Indigenous intellectual property rights in exciting new technologies derived from harvesting spinifex grass.

The corporation has constructed processing infrastructure to harvest and extract oils and resins from spinifex based on traditional knowledge in uses of the grass, something that has been used for millennia. In partnership with the University of Queensland, the Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation uses a bio-industrial process to convert the spinifex grass itself into cellulose nanofibres. These strong, stretchy microscopic fibres have the potential to be used in a range of products including stronger, more durable latex and as an industrial biological thermoplastic.

The potential economic benefits for traditional owners are immense, as are the job creation opportunities. The jobs that have been created already in Camooweal are significant. The managing director of the Dugalunji Aboriginal Corporation, Colin Saltmere, and other traditional owners, including Cody Saltmere, were great hosts in Camooweal. I met the half a dozen or so young men already employed as a result of this great project. John, Anthony, Sajahn, Neil, Patrick, Jeremy and Maverick are involved in harvesting spinifex grass and operating the new machinery for the pilot plant being installed as I speak. These young men have incredible stories. They have seen some real challenges in their life. They spoke to me and others as scientists in the creation of this pilot plant in Camooweal. I extend huge congratulations to all those involved. Of course, that is just an indication of what we might be able to see right across this state in terms of economic opportunities for First Nations people.

The bill is further proof of the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to economic growth and opportunity. It will amend the act to recognise and protect the use of traditional knowledge in biodiscovery, simplify approvals processes and clarify the relationship between the act and relevant international protocols. This will enable biodiscovery entities to collaborate with international partners, attract global investment and commercialise new products as well as ensure that benefits are shared more fairly and equitably with Queenslanders, including First Nations peoples and regional Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (3.41 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

## Referral to Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is referred to the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee.

## MOTION

### Revocation of Protected Area

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (3.41 pm): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
  - (a) revoke by regulation the dedication of part of a national park; and
  - (b) dedicate by regulation the revoked area of the aforementioned national park as part of an existing conservation park,
 under section 33 of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, **viz**

#### Description of area to be revoked

Bellthorpe National Park	An area of about 45 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Bellthorpe National Park revocation: sketch A”.
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#### Description of area to be dedicated

Bellthorpe Conservation Park	An area of about 45 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Bellthorpe Conservation Park addition: sketch B”.
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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.

This proposal relates to the revocation of about 45 hectares from Bellthorpe National Park, which is located seven kilometres north-west of Woodford, for addition to the Bellthorpe Conservation Park. The addition to Bellthorpe Conservation Park will provide for activities consistent with the management principles of the protected area, its natural and cultural resources and values and will ensure the continued ecologically sustainable use of the area. Importantly, this proposal will provide certainty for the Woodford Folk Festival and ensure it can continue at this site well into the future.

As many in this House will know, the world renowned Woodford Folk Festival is one of the largest cultural celebrations in Australia and is held in the Sunshine Coast hinterland near the town of Woodford on the property known as Woodfordia. Those who attend and manage the festival are socially and environmentally conscious. Much effort is put in each year to ensure a sustainable festival experience. I have had the opportunity to attend the annual festival a few times, and I would like to acknowledge the great work of Bill Hauritz and his team, who do a great job every year.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to the permanent preservation and protection of Queensland’s protected area estate—a commitment that balances natural and cultural resource conservation while providing opportunities for educational and recreational activities, ensuring any commercial use of the estate is ecologically sustainable. Protected areas in Queensland are defined under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and include both publicly owned and managed or jointly managed protected areas such as national parks and conservation parks. Not only are they cornerstones of conservation; many of the state’s protected areas offer opportunities for a diverse range of educational, recreational and ecotourism activities, provide opportunities for connection to country, and contribute to supporting and enriching Queensland’s vast conservation network.

However, with such a large and dispersed protected area estate there is the occasional need to change the class of protected areas to rectify errors in how they have been described, dedicated or used; to recognise the rights and interests of traditional owners in the management of protected areas; and, on rare occasions, for commercial or private purposes. I will only support changing the class of a protected area where it can be clearly demonstrated that it is in the interests of the specific protected area; it provides for greater protected area management effectiveness; it is in the interests of traditional owners; and the proposed use is in the broader public interest.



Careful consideration has been given to this proposal, with consultation occurring with landholders, lessees and traditional owners. The proposal will not extinguish or affect native title rights or interests in relation to the land. Indeed, it goes some way towards acknowledging the cultural and spiritual significance of the land to the Jinibara people, the traditional custodians and registered native title holders of the Woodford area.


Formerly farming land, the original festival site was purchased in 1994 for the purpose of securing a permanent home for the then Maleny folk festival and has expanded over the years to include a number of adjoining freehold properties and about 45 hectares of state land. Prior to 2014, the 45 hectares of state land, although largely cleared, was managed as part of Bellthorpe State Forest. In 2014, as one of the former LNP government's raft of environmental decisions, the forest reserve was amalgamated with the adjoining Bellthorpe National Park as part of the transfer of a number of forest reserves to protected area tenure. I am advised that the erroneous dedication was part of a raft of urgent actions necessitated by the Newman government's abolition of the forest reserve tenure. The removal of legislative provisions for forest reserves would have resulted in the department no longer having a head of power to manage the land in a forest reserve or issue a permit in relation to a forest reserve, so that area was carelessly transferred to the category of 'national park'. Today, our government will remedy that mistake and ensure future certainty for the Woodford Folk Festival.

To be clear, this proposal will not reduce the extent of Queensland's protected area estate; it will simply change the class of a small part of it from national park to conservation park, enabling the authorisation and continuation of the world renowned festival. The majority of the festival site is on freehold lands managed under a lease agreement between Moreton Bay Regional Council, which owns the land, and Woodfordia Inc., the not-for-profit community-driven organisation that owns all the infrastructure and improvements on the site and runs Woodfordia.

The vision of Woodfordia Inc. for its Woodfordia festival site is more than the dream of long-term security; it is a commitment to future generations, a future of community and environment that are intertwined, and a commitment to caring for the land. This year will be the 34th annual Woodford Folk Festival and the 25th held at Woodfordia since the festival moved from Maleny—a remarkable achievement for a community-driven organisation.

The festival appeals to a diverse audience of all ages and many nationalities, attracting patrons and artists from across the globe to the small community of Woodford, bringing much needed tourism and injecting tens of millions of dollars into the local community. It is the largest gathering of artists and musicians in Australia, with more than 2,000 local, national and international artists, musicians and presenters showcasing over 400 acts to an audience of over 130,000 people. The 2018 event contributed nearly \$24 million to the Queensland economy and attracted 12,500 visitors from interstate and overseas, generating close to 226,000 visitor nights.

Underpinned by a strong commitment to the environment, the festival site is a rehabilitated forested parkland dedicated to the arts, humanities and folklore, continually improving over time with help from Woodfordia's annual The Planting event. In keeping with Woodfordia's vision of an environmentally conscious, inclusive and creative community of culture and tradition passed through generations, as expressed through story and ceremony, the Jinibara people and Woodfordia Inc. have worked together in partnership to incorporate Jinibara traditional lore and custom into the festival through ceremony. The Jinibara people and Woodfordia Inc. are working towards formalising their partnership through the development of an Indigenous land use agreement—an agreement that will recognise the Jinibara people's native title rights and interests on the land and provide Woodfordia long-term tenure security for the festival. The Department of Environment and Science is also assisting the Jinibara people and Woodfordia with the agreement-making process and in particular is working with the Jinibara people to rename Bellthorpe Conservation Park with a traditional name—a name that reflects Jinibara traditional law and customs. This motion will deliver good outcomes for local tourism, local jobs and the Sunshine Coast hinterland community. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (3.49 pm): The opposition will be supporting this revocation motion and I thank the minister for her contribution. The minister used a couple of words that struck a chord with me, and they were the words 'consistency' and 'continued sustainable use'. That for the opposition is the key reason we will be supporting this revocation motion. It is important that we protect areas that need protection while also maintaining flexibility. We note that this was to facilitate the continuity of what has become an iconic Queensland festival and the next contribution from this side of the House will be from not only the former environment minister but also the local member. As someone who has had an incredible involvement with that festival over a long period of time, it is great that the member for Glass House will make a contribution in this debate. The minister mentioned that the

patrons who attend the Woodford Folk Festival are socially and environmentally responsible. I thank the minister for those words because both I and the local member have attended that festival and I would like to consider myself both socially and environmentally responsible.


**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** The Leader of the Opposition has also attended the Woodford Folk Festival and she, too, is socially and environmentally responsible.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** In fact, many of those on this side of the House have attended that festival. The festival is an incredible gathering of people from across the country, but do not underestimate how important it is for the local community as well. The local member will inform us of the hours that go into putting it on. The local member will inform us of the contribution it makes to the local community directly in the form of an economic impact, socially in terms of what it does for the reputation of the local community and indeed the money that it generates that continues to go around the community.

Finally, the minister mentioned in her contribution that it is important that revocations like this clearly demonstrate the interest of a protected area and the broader public interest. I seek to ensure that we always keep that as the barometer for revocations but also that we be broad-minded when matters like this come before us from traditional owner groups and from councils on other festivals, on other opportunities and on other ways that communities can be improved. I would like to see this same open-minded approach offered and utilised on other occasions. The opposition will be supporting this revocation motion.

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (3.52 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion to revoke the dedication of part of a national park and change its class to conservation park, and I thank the Minister for Environment and Minister for Science for bringing forward this revocation motion. Community engagement and partnerships are a significant focus of the Palaszczuk Labor government, particularly to ensure economic and cultural prosperity for all Queenslanders. The proposal to change part of Bellthorpe National Park to Bellthorpe Conservation Park will allow for the continuation of the much loved and world renowned Woodford Folk Festival. As we sit here this afternoon in the Queensland Legislative Assembly, literally hundreds of volunteers—many of whom have been there year after year after year—are contributing to the build of the temporary infrastructure needed to get this village up and running in order to entertain more than 130,000 visitors come 26 December.

Artists and patrons from across the globe attend the annual Woodford Folk Festival, organised and run by the community-driven, not-for-profit organisation Woodfordia Inc., bringing significant tourism, economic and cultural benefits to the local community. I myself have gone to the Woodford Folk Festival for many years. In fact, the first time I went was when it was the Maleny folk festival.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms TRAD:** Yes, I am that old. I want to join with the minister in acknowledging the founder, Bill Hauritz, for his tireless dedication to this festival and for his incredible vision and the fact that it has been realised through much love, very little resourcing and the dedication of so many volunteers. I also want to acknowledge Amanda Jackes, who is the 2IC for Woodford. I thank them for all of their hard work year in, year out to put on this fantastic festival.


I also want to acknowledge that it has been a much loved event for the former prime minister Bob Hawke. As have many people on this side of the House, I have spent some time up at Woodford having a beer with Bob while he smoked his cigars and did crosswords and talked about a whole range of things in the Kremlin. Bob was as much loved at Woodford as he was throughout the rest of Australia and this year will be a very sad year without Bob being there.

Woodfordia, the home of the Woodford Folk Festival, was established more than 20 years ago on a former dairy farm and part of what was then Bellthorpe State Forest. Woodfordia is a parkland dedicated to the arts and humanities underpinned by a strong environmental ethos. It has been transformed with subtropical rainforest trees, orchids, ferns and sedges planted to create a habitat for butterflies and wildlife, and all of this has been voluntary. This loving restoration and regeneration of former farming lands has been supported by the Palaszczuk government's Community Sustainability Action grants and the grants contribute to Woodfordia's annual Planting event that not only supports conservation outcomes but also creates a wonderful sense of community through its volunteers. The government recognises these important community benefits and has also contributed significant funding to the establishment and upgrade of necessary transport and visitor infrastructure to support the festival, and I was very pleased to have announced that some three years ago.

This year will be the 34th annual Woodford Folk Festival, as the minister has said, and the 25th held at Woodfordia since the festival moved from Maleny—a remarkable achievement for a community-driven organisation. It is the largest gathering of artists, as the Minister for Environment and Minister for Science said, and musicians in Australia, with more than 2,000 local, national and international artists, musicians and presenters showcasing over 400 acts to an audience in excess of 130,000 people. Each year construction begins in early December and continues up until Christmas Day, transforming Woodfordia into a village that hosts over 25,000 daily patrons, performers, stallholders, volunteers and organisers. Over 450,000 contractors and as many as 2,680 volunteers come together to build this village, contributing to its set-up and day-to-day running. Many come from around the world to be part of the festival build and then stay for a week after to pull the event down.

Importantly, this proposal is supported by the traditional owners of this country. The Jinibara people are the traditional custodians and registered native title holders for the Woodford area and Woodfordia, the land on which the Woodford Folk Festival is held. The Jinibara culture is rich in sacred sites, Dreaming places and ceremonial grounds including bora rings, stone arrangements, camping places, food resource areas and story places. It is through stories, song and dance that the Jinibara people connect with country and ancestors. Woodfordia Inc. and the Jinibara people have commenced discussions about the Indigenous land use agreement, providing an amazing opportunity to further incorporate traditional law and customs into this multicultural event.

The Palaszczuk government is also working with the Jinibara people with a proposal to alter the name of Bellthorpe Conservation Park to a traditional one—one that reflects the Jinibara culture and this government's ongoing commitment to support First Nations peoples. I am proud to extend my support to this proposal to revoke part of Bellthorpe National Park and change it, for the time being, to Bellthorpe Conservation Park knowing that the native title rights and interests of the Jinibara people will be recognised on a much loved and world renowned stage. I commend the motion to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.00 pm): As the member for Broadwater alluded to, the LNP and I support this revocation and I am pleased to be able to speak to it. I have been another socially and environmentally responsible participant at the Woodford Folk Festival on a number of occasions. I am a regular attendee at the festival. I loved attending what was the former Bunya Dreaming festival and I have spent a bit of time at the Planting festivals as well. Some of those trees and vegetation that both the minister and the member for South Brisbane referred to were planted by yours truly. It is great to see the transformation of this former dairy farm into the wonderful cultural site and venue that it is now. I have also had the opportunity to speak at the Woodford Folk Festival in one memorable contribution at the GREENhouse when I was the environment minister. Whilst Bill Hauritz, the coordinator, would love to have me back, I am not sure too many others there would. But that is okay. I am happy to go along and enjoy the music, the food and everything else that the Woodford Folk Festival has to offer.

As others have mentioned, I was very privileged to attend the native title declaration that was held on site for the traditional owners, the Jinibara people. That is the only one that I have had the privilege to attend in my electorate, and it is likely to be the only one that I am likely to attend in my electorate. I have been fortunate to attend similar declarations on the cape and elsewhere around the state, but to be there with the traditional owners of the land on which a lot of the electorate of Glass House is based was particularly special and I continue that relationship with the Jinibara elders to this day.

As others have alluded to, there is enormous economic and cultural benefit from what is held on the Woodfordia site. That is recognised by all tiers of government and by all political parties regardless of their political persuasion. The Moreton Bay Regional Council has gone to great lengths to ensure the financial viability of the Woodford Folk Festival. It purchased the land on which it is held to underwrite and keep safe that site. In so doing it freed up some capital that could be reinvested into other opportunities, including more toilet blocks—the festival became so popular that it needed more toilet blocks—a sewage treatment facility, more theatres and amphitheatres. That has been great to see. The festival has received state contributions on an annual basis through tourism funds from both the ALP and the LNP governments. There has been infrastructure investment from state governments and federal governments, again of each political persuasion. I think everyone would agree that the economic and cultural benefit of this internationally renowned festival is well worth the investment.

This morning I talked to Bill Hauritz and informed him that this revocation was coming up for debate. Of course, Bill never missed an opportunity to again make sure that I got out there to Woodford to see his latest addition to the site. He again extended an invitation to the Leader of the Opposition,

who has been there on a couple of occasions. Bill pointed out that has revocation is necessary. Otherwise, the amphitheatre, which will be hosting Kate Miller-Heidke this year, would technically still be in a national park. In that regard, this revocation is a sensible outcome.

**Ms Trad:** They've got Kasey Chambers this year.

**Mr POWELL:** He mentioned Kate Miller-Heidke, too, I think, so they are both there. This revocation demonstrates the benefit of some of the ranges of protected area estate tenure that perhaps are not fully understood by the broader public and perhaps are not utilised by governments as much as they should. We all get the term 'national park'. We all think that is the pinnacle in protecting our natural wonders but, by declaring the area a conservation park, as the minister herself said, there is no less protection over the environmental values of the site but it also allows cultural and commercial benefit to continue to operate side by side with that protection and preservation of the environmental values of that property.

I think that is something that we need to bear in mind. Revocations are not made lightly, but perhaps declaring an area a national park in the first place is possibly not the best outcome for that area of protected estate. I think governments from both sides of politics would be well considered in taking a closer look at the level of protected estate tenure they apply to certain areas. The declaration of areas as conservation parks certainly produce better outcomes in the sense that the environmental protection can be balanced with other opportunities—in this case cultural and commercial opportunities—to still get a fantastic outcome.

With those few words I, too, commend this revocation to the House. I again commend the work of Bill Hauritz and Amanda Jackes and their team in putting together the Woodford Folk Festival. If members have not bought their tickets for this year, I ask them to please get on and do so. It will be another cracking year. I wish the Woodford Folk Festival all the best well into the future.


Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## HOLIDAYS AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 19 September (see p. 3022).

### Second Reading

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (4.05 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Palaszczuk government introduced this bill to declare a part-day public holiday from 6 pm to midnight on Christmas Eve starting from Christmas Eve 2019 and continuing each year after that. In doing so, we recognise the special status of Christmas Eve in our community, in our places of worship, and in our homes. It is now society's view that this is no ordinary night. For many, the night before Christmas is as important as the day itself. It is a night that most of us get to spend at home with family and friends, at religious and community services and festive events, or travelling to be with family and friends on Christmas Day. Christmas Eve is the one time of the year above all that busy families make that special effort to be with one another.

The special magical nature of Christmas Eve is a message that comes strongly from everyday workers and their families and who had their say during the consultation process that preceded the introduction of this bill. Karen Moller said—

Those precious hours from 6pm on Christmas Eve are times that families are making memories with children in preparation for santa ... these are important special times within the Australian generations and should be protected or at least compensated with penalty rates.

Shannon Bartlett said—

Christmas Eve is nearly more important than actual Christmas as I love watching the kids setup for Santa watching a Christmas movie reading a book, the excitement of the expectation but not knowing what they are getting the next day.

Thomas Carr said—

After working hard all year this is one of the most special times of the year for everyone to be together and celebrate everything that Christmas is about. Not to mention the joy it brings to all children to have loved ones there before the big day. So please consider this as a YES to a public holiday. It would never be a wrong decision.

There is a group of workers who miss out on these special things because they have to work on Christmas Eve—in pubs and clubs, in warehouses, in hospitals and aged-care facilities, in retail outlets, on public transport and across the emergency services. Some have been working every Christmas Eve for years, like Rhonda Jenner, who said in her submission to the RIS consultation process that a public holiday would be excellent to spend time with family. Rhonda said, 'If this happens this year, it will be the first one I've had home with family for 8 years.'

Luke Ahern, who appeared before the committee hearing into the bill, said—

I have been working in the distribution centre for 22 years. In that 22 years, I think I have had two Christmas Eves off through the company ... There are all of the things that I have missed out on with my kids. My kids are older now, I do not want to see all of my members and friends go through the same things that I have missed out on throughout the years. You are staying up until three in the morning trying to put presents together and you are knackered the next day ... It puts a lot of pressure on the family.

Brett Carpenter, a shiftworker, said—

This change would mean for the first time in 21 years, other than Christmas falling over a weekend, I would be at home with family and not at work, and tired the next day. This proposal would be fantastic for all shiftworkers.

Workers such as Rhonda, Luke and Brett have missed out on that special time and it is time they cannot get back. The Palaszczuk government believes that these workers should get the extra legal protections and entitlements that come with a public holiday.

By declaring Christmas Eve a part-day public holiday from 6 pm to midnight, this bill means that workers who are required to work that evening will be entitled to refuse to work in reasonable circumstances, as set out in the Fair Work Act for the vast majority of workers in the federal jurisdiction, or in the state Industrial Relations Act for state jurisdiction workers in state and local government. If they do work and miss out on Christmas Eve celebrations with family and friends, workers will be compensated fairly with an entitlement to the relevant public holiday penalty rates in their award or agreement.

I note that Christmas Eve is already observed as a part-day public holiday from 7 pm to midnight in other Australian jurisdictions: South Australia since 2012 and the Northern Territory since 2016. A review of the South Australian provision in 2013 found strong community support for the significance of Christmas Eve. The results of our consultation process in Queensland suggest a similar level of support here in this state. I note again that there is no indication that the South Australian government, led now by Liberal premier Steve Marshall, intends to do anything other than keep their Christmas Eve part-day public holiday firmly in place.

The government's proposal for a part-day public holiday from 6 pm on Christmas Eve has been the subject of a wideranging consultation process involving workers, unions, business and employer organisations, church groups and the community as a whole. The proposal itself has been public since 4 August 2019, when it was announced by the Premier and me and received widespread media coverage. A consultation regulatory impact statement, or RIS, was released on 4 August, and was open for public comment for 28 days, closing on 2 September 2019. During this period I also met personally with major employer groups in Queensland to hear their views firsthand.

A total of 1,779 submissions were received in response to the RIS. Of those, 1,271 submissions, or 71.4 per cent, supported the proposal. In anyone's language that indicates overwhelming support for the proposal. As I said when introducing the bill, most members in this House could only dream of having support levels over the 70 per cent mark. It is the personal submissions to the consultation RIS that really bring home why there is such public support for this measure. Gwen Fraser said in her submission—

To be able to spend Christmas Eve with my family on Christmas Eve and share this time preparing for a special Christmas Day is priceless. No money can make up for the lost time with my family. If people are required to work during this time they should receive a special rate of pay to do so.

A bus driver made the following submission—

Christmas is a time for family. I have not spent a Christmas Eve with my family for the past seven years because I have worked driving a bus so others can go about getting ready for the festivities. I think anyone who works on Christmas Eve deserves to be paid extra.

Cassandra Leigh, a retail worker, submitted—

As someone who has worked in the retail industry for 10 plus years and was often given no choice but to work until sometimes midnight on Christmas Eve to set up for Boxing Day sales, this is a great and necessary move for workers' rights. I support it wholeheartedly. Thank you for putting forward the proposal.

Following its introduction into the parliament on 19 September, the bill was referred immediately to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for scrutiny and a further round of consultation. After hearing further submissions from the department and stakeholders, the committee tabled its report on 4 November 2019. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee and the committee chair, the member for Nudgee, Leanne Linard, for their deliberations and their final report. I would also like to thank those who made submissions to the committee about the bill and those who appeared as witnesses as part of the committee's inquiry. I note that the committee in its report made only one recommendation: that the bill be passed. The government is pleased to accept the committee's recommendation.

I note that the LNP members of the committee made a dissenting report in opposition to the bill. I also acknowledge the fact that the RIS process received 508 submissions, or 28.6 per cent, against the proposal. The government respects the views and concerns of those individuals and employers who have expressed their opposition to the proposal. We do not pretend that the proposal has universal support, nor do we pretend there is not a cost attached to the proposal. We have been up-front about that.


It is, of course, difficult to precisely calculate increased wage costs as a result of a proposed part-day public holiday which has not been observed before. Our best estimate of annual increased wage costs, as published in the consultation RIS, ranged from a lower end cost estimate of \$31.9 million to an upper end estimate of \$115.8 million across the private sector. We are confident that the lower end cost estimate of \$31.9 million is a more likely indicator of the cost impact because it is based on employment patterns for Christmas Day, which has similarly restricted retail trading hours to Christmas Eve compared to the higher end estimate, which is based on Boxing Day employment numbers where there is much greater retail trading. We had to take a base and we believe it is more commensurate with the lower end. I also note again the experience in South Australia, which has had a Christmas Eve public holiday since 2012, which found the actual costs were much lower than originally forecast.

In the end government is about choices and priorities and we have taken the view with this bill that on balance the costs are justified because of the special status of Christmas Eve in our community, in our places of worship and in our homes. We acknowledge that the Christmas period is an important time for business in Queensland and for the provision of essential public services. That is why, for example, we legislated in 2017 to provide additional retail trading in the lead-up to Christmas. We increased those trading hours substantially which meant that businesses and retail outlets did not have to make applications year upon year for extended trading hours. They are now automatic in legislation.

At the same time, it also has personal, social, religious and cultural significance for many of us in the community. This was borne out by the more than 70 per cent of public submissions in support of the proposal. In fact, many individuals who made submissions to the consultation process wanted the public holiday to start earlier in the day on Christmas Eve. We believe the declaration of a part-day public holiday after 6 pm is a reasonable way to strike that balance, giving workers in those parts of the economy that continue to operate on Christmas Eve after 6 pm an opportunity to have an evening off against a test of reasonableness set out in state and federal industrial laws or to receive extra compensation for working at a time when so many others in the community are observing Christmas and enjoying time with family and friends.

In addition to the amendments in the bill to declare a Christmas Eve part-day public holiday, a number of amendments will be moved during consideration in detail in relation to the Liquor Act 1992. These amendments will modify the mandatory ID-scanning framework in the state's safe night precincts to provide increased flexibility for licensees in the nights they are required to scan and allow for streamlined patron re-entry processes. The Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Leader of the House will speak to these amendments in further detail during her contribution to the bill.

The bill continues the proud record of the Palaszczuk government leading the nation in standing up for workers' rights and continually striving to improve the lives of working people, in particular during special events like Christmas Eve. We have done it through labour hire licensing laws—which were, of course, voted down by those opposite; through our industrial manslaughter laws—once again voted down by those opposite; with domestic and family violence leave; through our response to silicosis; with our reforms to workers compensation; and the list goes on. Now, through this bill, Queensland workers will get the extra legal protection and entitlements that come with a part-day public holiday, giving them the opportunity to have this special night off or to get penalty rates in accordance with their agreement or award if they do work on Christmas Eve. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (4.19 pm): Here we are again at the end of a year and this minister is fixing up another mess while also doing the bidding of the union movement in Queensland. In the past two years we had the Easter trading holidays legislation. I am going to call this for what it is: it is blatant corruption between the Labor Party and the union movement in Queensland. This is just doing the bidding of the union movement.

I have to say: if the Crime and Corruption Commission cannot see an analogy between the Labor Party receiving donations from the union movement and then legislation being put before this parliament, there is something wrong. If it is okay for the CCC to say that developers should not be able to donate to political parties because of a perceived conflict of interest and influence, how can the CCC not say that the same potential conflict of interest does not arise with the union movement making donations to the Labor Party? That is an important point, because, as the minister indicated, the minister announced these changes on 4 August 2019 in a big splash in the *Courier-Mail* and then on 5 August, one day later, the shoppies union gave about \$4,000 to the Labor Party. The day after it appeared in the paper, the shoppies union wrote the cheque and said, 'Thanks, Minister; here's \$4,000 to the Labor Party.'

Let us look at the history of the shoppies union. When this minister introduced changes to Easter trading hours, the shoppies union also wrote a big cheque to the Labor Party. Therefore, I say to the Crime and Corruption Commission that there is a direct link between legislative reform by the Labor Party in this place and what the unions get for their money. They are donating money to the Labor Party and they are getting legislative changes. The reason that the shoppies union wants this legislative change is that they want to build their membership as they know that if they build their membership they control the workforce.

This legislation is about nothing more than doing the bidding of and thanking the union movement, and the union movement then saying, 'Thanks, here's \$4,000.' Is it any coincidence that the day after the government announced these changes the shoppies union, which advocated for this change, cut a cheque to the Labor Party of about \$4,000? If we look over the past five years, thousands and thousands of dollars have gone to the Labor Party from the shoppies union and legislation has been brought into this place.

I put it to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the reason we are debating this Christmas Eve part-day public holiday is that the Labor Party has had advocacy and donations from the shoppies union. As I said at the start, I will be blunt: the time for skirting around these issues with the union movement and the relationship they have with the Queensland Labor Party is gone. The Labor Party needs to be exposed for the dodgy relationship it has with the union movement and not just the shoppies union, as we are debating today, but also the CFMMEU, the ETU and other unions in Queensland.

Here we go again: this is about more favours for the unions from the industrial relations minister—favours that will sell out Queensland jobs and rip off Queensland consumers. We have heard it all before. The song is on repeat from Labor's broken record of economic mismanagement. When it comes to public holidays, this minister knows how to make a complete mess of things—and I am referring just to public holidays and not the 200 amendments she made to the racing bill.

**Ms Grace:** That wasn't my bill. You know that.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The minister keeps saying that it was not her bill. It was poor Bill Byrne's bill, but when he absolutely mucked it up this minister had responsibility for that bill, which in turn became her bill to which she moved 200 amendments or more in the parliament.

We all remember the Easter Sunday debacle. Last year, the minister gazetted Easter Sunday as a public holiday, but she forgot to make sure that the trading hours legislation was also updated so that the shops could actually open. She said that Easter Sunday would be a public holiday and then I reminded the minister that there is a separate piece of legislation called the trading hours legislation. Of course, then they had to whip amendments into the parliament, because she had told businesses that it would be a public holiday but had she forgotten to tell businesses that they could open on that public holiday, so she then had to amend the trading hours legislation. As the media rightly described it at the time, it was the great hot cross bungle. Despite all the protests and excuses made by the minister, she had to run through the changes to fix it.

With this legislation and amendments, we have not only the hot cross bungle but also the Grinch who stole Christmas from the workers and the business groups. Do members know what the Labor Party and socialists do not understand when you put a tax on business, which is what this is? This is another tax. The minister has indicated that it will be at the lower end of the scale and not \$115 million, which is at the higher end. She said it would likely be around \$31.9 million. How can she be confident

of that if the department is not confident about whether it will be \$31 million or \$115 million? I do not accept it when the minister comes in here and says, 'We cannot actually estimate it, but we assume it will be at the lower end.' We know that with anything the Labor Party touches you have to triple it. It will not be \$115 million; it will be half a billion dollars by the time this minister is finished with it. It will be a half-a-billion-dollar tax on businesses in Queensland.

The other thing that this former union heavyweight and now minister does not understand is that when you tax business they are not going to open their business.

**Ms Boyd:** That is rubbish.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Employees will lose out. I take the interjection. I assume it was the socialist for Pine Rivers, the member for Pine Rivers, who said, 'That is rubbish.' She said that it is absolute rubbish; employees will not lose out because businesses will not close. I ask the member for Pine Rivers: if you put a tax of \$115 million on business in Queensland, who pays for it? Does the money just fall from the sky? Does the member for Pine Rivers seriously think that at the end of the rainbow there sits a little leprechaun with a pot of gold which businesses can just grab? I ask the member for Pine Rivers: where does the money come from? I understand that the member for Pine Rivers thinks that they just print money and that small business has money to burn. I can tell the member for Pine Rivers that they do not. I expect that in her life the member for Pine Rivers has never had to do a hard day's work for an income. That is why she does not understand and why Labor does not understand the impacts of taxing business.

**Ms BOYD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the contribution from the member for Kawana personally offensive and ask him to withdraw.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. The member for Pine Rivers said that it is rubbish. I can tell the member for Pine Rivers this: if you put a tax on business of \$115 million, someone has to pay it. Guess what? When it comes to small business, it is not the Labor Party or the taxpayer who pays for it; it is the individual mum-and-dad operators who pay for it. It is not the government and it is not the taxpayer; it is the individual members. This tax will mean that businesses will close. If the member for Pine Rivers wants some examples, she can read the committee report, because some of the submissions, including to the member for Pine Rivers—

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I have not finished. The member for Pine Rivers should let me finish and then she can go for all she likes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): Stop the clock. Members for Kawana and Pine Rivers, you will not have a battle between the two of you. You will talk through the chair at all times.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** A shop trader from Alexandra Headlands, in the electorate of the member for Maroochydore, said that he will not be able to afford to open his business. He said he will close his business on Christmas Eve. How can the Labor Party think that that would not impact employees, who will not make any money on Christmas Eve because the business will be shut?

**Ms Boyd:** Time with their families, time with their loved ones.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Pine Rivers, who said that this is about having time with families. Not according to the minister. According to the minister, this is about making sure that they are financially compensated for working on Christmas Eve and that that is why you declare it a part-day public holiday.

Is the member for Pine Rivers saying that the whole deliberate strategy of this is to ensure that businesses do not open? If that is the strategy, that shows that the Labor Party have had it in for small business and business across Queensland right from the start. If that is what this is about, then small business should be shivering at what is to come next from the Labor Party. We know that the Labor Party is not the friend of small business or business in general in Queensland.

This legislation will have a negative impact on employees. Employees will not make any extra money on Christmas Eve. The employees I speak to like working on public holidays, Christmas Eve and other days because they make more money to pay for their Christmas presents and their bills over Christmas. I have spoken to many employees. I was at the Minyama McDonald's for McHappy Day the other day. Three great employees were working there that Saturday and the manager asked if one could take an extra shift that night, working overtime. All three of the employees jumped at the opportunity—young kids who are determined to work and determined to make money.

**A government member:** How much an hour?



**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take that interjection. They want more money and they want more pay, but guess what? If the business does not open, they will not earn a thing; they will receive zero dollars. This legislation will mean that businesses will not open. This is what the Labor Party does not get.

I understand where the Labor Party has difficulty with this. To see this, you only have to look at the Queensland Labor Party over the past five years, achieving the highest unemployment rate in the country. If anyone thinks that is not due to the policy failings of the Labor Party, they are kidding themselves. This will add to the unemployment troubles that we are already seeing in Australia, particularly in Queensland.

When Queenslanders woke up on 4 August to the front-page story from this minister, I am sure they all thought, 'Here we go again.' When these changes were first flagged we said that the LNP would not support anything that would cost local jobs or drive up prices for consumers. I will outline in more detail how this legislation will in fact do both.

Industry group after industry group lined up to pan these changes and criticise Labor's approach in their submissions and evidence to the parliamentary committee. I acknowledge the great work of the deputy chair of the committee, the member for Currumbin; the member for Pumicestone; and, for a short period of time, the member for Ninderry. The LNP members on the committee understand what is the beating heart of the Queensland economy. They understand what works and what does not. Their dissenting report clearly shows that what the Labor Party is trying to achieve will not work and will have a negative impact. I thank the LNP members on that committee.

As I said, industry group after industry group lined up to criticise the changes. Their submissions and evidence to the committee speak volumes about how the Labor government is anti business and anti jobs. Let us all remember that these changes are being rushed through the parliament at a time when Queensland has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, with more than 177,000 Queenslanders on the jobless queue. Make no mistake: these changes will cost jobs.

No-one disputes the fact that workers deserve to be paid for the work they do, but these changes will mean that businesses will not open or will reduce rosters, which means workers will lose out. The economic analysis shows that these changes will result in nothing short of a shambles. As I said earlier, some of the stakeholders have said that as well.

The Queensland Hotels Association appeared at the committee's public hearing. I note that we are hosting the Queensland Hotels Association's president's drinks here this evening. It will be interesting to hear what the Labor Party members say to the president after the QHA said about this bill—

The RIS states that there is no statistical information on the intention of employers to employ workers or open their businesses on a Christmas Eve public holiday. In the absence of that collected data, as the industry body representing over 88 per cent of the general licence holders in Queensland we polled our members. I can tell you that 100 per cent told us that their intention will be to reduce staff hours, close and negatively impact the workers of Queensland by reducing their shifts.

They have no option but to do that. The QHA also mentioned in its submission to the parliamentary committee—

The RIS uses 8 year old data from Adelaide for justification. This is not relevant or reliable and totally disregards the particular challenges of Central and Northern regional Queensland where communities are suffering from drought and financial hardship.

The RIS did say that the additional costs from the bill to the Queensland economy are estimated to be from about \$41 million to \$136 million. The preliminary estimate for the Queensland public sector per annum is estimated at \$9.4 million to \$21 million. It should also be remembered that there are other public holiday costs that businesses have to meet during this week—a point well made by industry. As I mentioned, these changes will cost Queensland jobs. Clubs Queensland told the committee—

The real effect, however, in these clubs and other forms of hospitality is that many clubs will simply choose to close their doors so that they do not incur a loss.

I repeat that for the member for Pine Rivers. Clubs Queensland said—

The real effect, however, in these clubs and other forms of hospitality is that many clubs will simply choose to close their doors so that they do not incur a loss—

even in the member for Pine Rivers' own electorate. It went on to say—

This negatively impacts staff by way of a reduction in overall shifts and it also affects the loyal clients. This also applies to tourists in some areas.

Of course, there has been silence from the tourism minister. It continued—

Businesses will also choose to roster skeleton staff.

These changes are also inconsistent and out of step with the majority of Australia. Since when did Queensland follow South Australia and Northern Territory on economic reforms? Give me a break! In the private sector, industries that would be impacted by the declaration of a Christmas Eve public holiday include private hospitals and aged-care and disability care facilities; accommodation services; continuous manufacturing processors; private transport, including freight and airport services; small and independent retail shops; takeaway and fast-food outlets; petrol stations; and licensed premises, restaurants and clubs. Large retail groups such as Woolworths, Coles, Aldi, Myer and David Jones are required to close in Queensland from 6 pm on Christmas Eve, in accordance with the trading hours laws that Labor already changed in 2017 following the Mickel review. These large retail shops may employ other staff such as night fillers after the 6 pm closing time. An analysis of business by the department provided that 15,338 Queensland businesses would likely be impacted by the changes, yet the minister says not to worry, that there will be not much impact.

I will list the businesses that will be impacted by the changes. They are business accommodation, 1,597; cafes and restaurants, over 6,000; takeaway food services, 3½ thousand; pubs, taverns and bars, 752; clubs and hospitality, 480; fuel retailing, 507; supermarket and grocery stores with fewer than 20 employees, 991; fresh meat, fish and poultry retailing, 657; liquor retailing, 60; and other specialised food retailing, 640. These are the businesses that will be impacted by these changes, yet Labor tries to talk down such impact. As the Australian Retailers Association said during the public hearings on the bill—

Just because one government legislates a bad policy does not mean everyone should clamour to make the same mistake. Seven years down the track, Queensland is the only state government that has attempted to emulate South Australia. Governments of both political persuasions in every other state have declined to do so.

I suspect there is a reason for that. It continued—

That speaks volumes and once again inevitably turns the spotlight onto the 2020 election.

It does, indeed.

In September, when the bill was introduced, the National Retail Association CEO, Dominique Lamb, said that the new public holiday would put more pressure on small and medium businesses at a time when there were already several public holidays. She said—

It's likely that consumers are going to see prices, particularly in service industries, increase via surcharges, and that's just not what families need at Christmas time.

What is not staggering is that this minister—a former union boss—panders to the union bosses and toes the line continually. What is staggering is that she would introduce legislation that would impact Queensland's night-time economy—a key part of her local electorate—putting local jobs at risk. As the committee also uncovered, these changes will increase prices for consumers. The QHA mentioned this in the public hearing on the bill when they said—

Public holiday surcharges are not acceptable to most consumers. They cannot cover the additional costs anyway in the surcharge. The bill creates that perfect storm to kill off small business: increase costs and reduce your customers.

An important stakeholder has told the Labor Party members on the committee that this bill could kill off small business, and the Labor Party proudly come in here and march to the union line, march to the union song: *Solidarity Forever*. That is all we see in the Labor Party: solidarity forever. That is all we see.

**Mr Minnikin:** They just don't get business.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth: the Labor Party do not get business. This minister does not get business. All they know is the union way. All they know and rely on is the unions to support them in their preselections. That is all this is about. It is another tick of a box, pleasing another union movement in Queensland—this one being the shoppies union—time and time again. That is what we expect from this minister. About once a year we get a declaration of a public holiday and then the union donate to the Labor Party. We expect this now on a yearly basis.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): Order, shadow Attorney-General and minister!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the honourable minister along the lines of we take the side of big business all the time, considering it is the Attorney-General who has been caught out accepting donations, a gift in kind, from the Star Entertainment Group, who I suspect is a large

organisation in Queensland. I do not think it is a small business operation. The Attorney has been caught out herself taking large donations from 'big, bad companies' as the minister would describe them.

**Ms Grace** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Oh, Minister. Look to your own side first before you cast a stone.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Shadow Attorney-General and member for McConnel, cease your interjections.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** These changes are pro union and anti worker. They were reviewed by the Mickel report and suggested by the unions in 2016. Guess what? They were not recommended by John Mickel. John Mickel did not recommend this change when he reviewed these laws only two years ago. When the Labor Party hire a consultant, being a former Labor member and former Labor Speaker of the House, to conduct a review of trading hours, would you not think, Madam Deputy Speaker, that John Mickel would look at this issue and, if he thought they should change it, he would announce it and recommend it? He did not. In fact, in the review he made reference to this point and made reference to South Australia and said that in South Australia the situation was because an agreement was reached between employer and employee groups and that it was quite a different situation. We even have the Labor Party conducting its own review of trading hours. This was not recommended by the Mickel review, yet here we are.

The only ones pushing these changes are the union bosses who call the shots in the labour movement, specifically the shoppies union. They could not get their mate over the line on the Senate ticket at the last federal election in Queensland. That is how well they are going in Queensland. Queensland will be a ghost town this Christmas Eve. That is a time when tourists are here and people are spending money enjoying the festive season. When these changes are rushed through this evening, the Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk, as well as the minister, will forever be known as the grinch who stole Christmas Eve.

What is next on the agenda for Labor—a part-day public holiday on New Year's Eve? That is what they have in South Australia. That would turn Queensland into an international laughing-stock as a key tourism destination. Talking about being a complete laughing-stock, we now have amendments thrown at us. This minister has a habit of amending her bills, but I do feel for her on this occasion, because these are the Attorney's amendments.

**Ms Grace:** I am very happy to sponsor them.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I know the minister will be happy to support them because I know the grief she has received in her own electorate over the liquor licensing laws and the ID scanners. Every letter the member for McConnel received they CCed the opposition, so we know how many of her constituents complained about the ID-scanning regime and the complete bungle of the ID-scanning regime that was introduced by the Attorney-General. I might add that when she rushed them through we said at the time, 'This is a complete bungle. The government and the Attorney-General will regret doing what they have done.' Then we saw international princes kicked out of—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Kawana, please come back to the bill we are debating.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, these are amendments to the bill that are to be moved.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Kawana.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The amendments, which have been thrown at us now that we are debating the bill, are not relevant to this holidays bill. Yes, we will be debating them in consideration in detail, but they are not relevant to the Christmas Eve public holiday. Again, they have to throw these amendments in just before Christmas because they bungled it. They bungle it time and time again. The last sitting week of parliament is usually dedicated to Labor members fixing all of their bungles, fixing their mess, sorting out all the crises before they go on their Christmas holidays. Nothing has changed. Nothing has changed in the 10 years of Labor governments that I have seen. They even they spent their last week in opposition trying to fix all of their bungles.

My great concern—I am going to be writing to the Crime and Corruption Commission again about this issue—is that there is a concerning direct correlation between legislation like this we are debating today and donations received by the Labor Party in Queensland from the union movement. It seems that when donations are made a bill is introduced into the parliament. I think that should be concerning

to members of this House. I think it should be as concerning as the government thinking that developers are donating to political parties or politicians. I might add that there was no evidence of any malfeasance or conflict of interest with developers and politicians, and the CCC did not recommend that change.

Here we go: I will be writing to the Crime and Corruption Commission because I think now is the time for the Crime and Corruption Commission to conduct a full-scale investigation into the Queensland Labor Party and its relationship with the unions, particularly the shoppies union. I have said it before. I have said it with respect to the relationship between the CFMMEU and the Minister for Industrial Relations and her office, which currently is subject to a CCC investigation, I might add, with respect to Enco. That is ongoing. As we have the highest rate of unemployment in the country—

**Ms Grace:** Did you say I was subject to a CCC investigation?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** No. I said the minister's Office of Industrial Relations is subject to a CCC investigation.

**Ms Grace:** That is only because you wrote to them.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** That is true.

**Ms Grace:** Crazy person.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Actually, it was not because I wrote to them, Minister. It was because the CCC said it was of such a serious nature that they would investigate it.

**Ms Grace:** Yes and referred it back to the department.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I would be very careful, Minister, with your commentary—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, I just took counsel from the table. There is a bit of a stretch between what you are debating and the bill. I ask you to come back to the bill please.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I was taking interjections from the minister.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. As I said, there is a clear correlation, a concerning correlation, between the shoppies union and this minister, the Labor Party and the Labor government. The CCC should investigate thoroughly.

**Ms Grace:** You have said that once. You have said that twice. This is now the third time.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** And I am going to keep saying it and I am going to write to the CCC about it.

**Ms Grace:** Write to them! You have said that. Do it. I dare you. Do it!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am going to write to them because I think it is concerning. I think Queenslanders should be as concerned as me and the Liberal National Party opposition in Queensland.

**Ms Grace:** Do it!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I cannot understand, Madam Deputy Speaker, that when I am making allegations of corruption by the Labor Party this minister is laughing. This minister is not taking these issues seriously, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms McMillan):** Order! Member for Kawana, please resume your seat. As I indicated, you are making allegations of corruption. There is an appropriate path to report that. I ask you to come back to the bill. If you cannot, we will move to the member for Nudgee.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** This bill is bad for business in Queensland. This bill is bad for employees. This bill is bad for employer groups. This bill will cost Queenslanders jobs. This bill will mean that businesses close on Christmas Eve. This bill will ensure—

**Ms Grace:** You're a joke! No-one can take you seriously. You're a joke!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The minister is continually interjecting—


**Ms Grace:** Because you deserve it! You were taking my interjections before.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister! Member for Kawana, you have 11 seconds.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am praying and hoping the minister will move an extension of time for me, because I have not got to half of the things I wanted to talk about. The reality is that Labor is bad for business and Queenslanders will change that in October 2020.

*(Time expired)*

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I caution all members, particularly the minister, in relation to unparliamentary language.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (4.51 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The objective of the bill is to provide for Christmas Eve to be observed as a part-day public holiday from 6 pm to midnight in recognition of the personal, social, religious and cultural significance of Christmas celebrations. Declaring a public holiday from 6 pm enlivens the public holiday provisions of the Fair Work Act, the Industrial Relations Act and industrial instruments for all employees in the national workplace relations system and the Queensland industrial relations system to ensure that workers have the right to reasonably refuse to work or be fairly compensated by the payment of public holiday penalty rates should they work after 6 pm on this special day, Christmas Eve.

The proposal to commence the part-day public holiday from 6 pm emerged from the findings of the review of trading hours completed by the Hon. John Mickel published in December 2016. The review recommended changes to trading hours on Sundays in the lead-up to Christmas for the whole of Queensland and until midnight on all days in the period from 18 to 23 December each year. It also proposed that all non-exempt shops be closed from 6 pm on Christmas Eve.

The review considered that 6 pm represented an appropriate dividing line between the finishing time for most day work and the starting time of night shiftwork. The 6 pm closing time is considered a reasonable compromise which allows most workers to go home at a reasonable hour, balancing costs for all industries if a public holiday was to be declared from 6 pm. Hence, it is important to clarify that the bill's proposal to start the part-day public holiday at 6 pm aligns with amendments made to trading hours legislation in 2017 and does not conflict with our government's take-up of the outcomes and recommendations of that review or the subsequent amendment to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act, as some submitters asserted in their submissions to the committee.

Following the Premier and Minister Grace's announcement in August 2019 that the government would consult on the amendments, a consultation RIS was released in August and a decision RIS was released in September 2019. Of the 1,779 submissions received in the consultation RIS, 71 per cent supported the proposal. In my own electorate, approximately 80 per cent of the constituents who completed an online survey likewise supported the proposal. Whatever else may be in dispute in respect of this bill, I do not believe the special significance of Christmas Eve is—certainly not by anyone who has ever had to work it and miss out on time with loved ones or had a loved one who has had to do likewise.


Submissions in support of the proposal were received from: the SDA; the Rail, Tram, and Bus Union; the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union; the Australian Workers' Union; the Australian Council of Unions; and individual workers and community members. Support was also expressed by religious and faith organisations in respect of the cultural, religious and social significance of Christmas celebrations which routinely commence on Christmas Eve. Submissions in opposition to the proposal were received predominantly from business organisations and their members, including: CCIQ, Australian Industry Group, the National Retail Association and the Queensland Hotels Association. Unsurprisingly, opposition to the proposal stemmed predominantly from the impost of higher labour costs through public holiday penalty rates and suggested potential closures to avoid increased labour costs. Opposition also stemmed from the argument there is no need to legislate the right to refuse to work, as businesses reported adopting a flexible approach to rostering on Christmas Eve to accommodate the personal circumstances of staff.

I applaud those businesses that have indeed adopted such flexible and supportive rostering practices, but it certainly has not been my family's experience and no such discretion is afforded. Regardless of how early the request is made, neither the importance of planned events, the birth of a child or having young children, to whom the celebration means so much, count as a reasonable excuse to not be rostered on. The protections afforded in this bill are important. The compensation afforded in this bill to those who do work in the form of appropriate penalty rates is important.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge all of the frontline workers—the police, paramedics, emergency service workers and health and hospital workers—who are required to operate 24/7 on special holidays like Christmas and every other day to keep our community safe. I also acknowledge the transport and logistic workers, including road, freight and airport services, those working in continuous manufacturing processes, small and independent retailers, petrol stations, and licensed premises, restaurants and clubs who spend their Christmas Eve and other relevant holidays serving the families of others while missing time with their own.

The value of work is incredibly important and the nature of work in many industries is 24/7, but there is a balance to be found between the pursuit of work and productivity and social cohesion. I believe the provisions contained in this bill that afford workers compensation in the form of penalty rates or the right to refuse to work in reasonable circumstances is appropriately balanced by a limiting of

those entitlements to the hours post 6 pm in appreciation of higher labour costs to employers. The committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I commend the bill to the House and I thank the minister.

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (4.56 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 which was referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee, of which I am a member, for detailed consideration. From the outset, the LNP will not support this bill. It is fundamentally flawed and its only outcome will be to cost jobs, increase prices for consumers, increase costs for employers and add extra taxes to Queenslanders. The objective of this bill is not only flawed but it shows just how out of touch the Palaszczuk Labor government really is.

They want to establish a new part-day public holiday on Christmas Eve from 6 pm to 12 pm. No other state has done this with the exception of South Australia and the Northern Territory. It is ludicrous, totally out of touch and only serves to demonstrate their reckless abandonment of small business in this state. Queenslanders know that our once vibrant economy is in a world of pain, and they know that the Palaszczuk Labor government is solely responsible. Instead of delivering legislative changes that support Queenslanders, they are happy to put another nail in the coffin of our lagging economy with the introduction of this out of touch and fundamentally flawed bill.

A local hospitality worker told me about the difficulties their family will face if this bill is passed. You see, for many years they have chosen to work on Christmas Eve, as this shift provides their family with the ability to purchase a Christmas ham and take their kids on an annual theme park trip. They count on this shift each year, but because of this bill the small business for which they work has advised they will close on Christmas Eve. This will leave their family unable to give their loved ones that little bit extra that many of us take for granted. Several small businesses have told me that they will be forced to close their trading on Christmas Eve because they cannot afford to pay their staff penalty rates. If they do open, the bonuses they give their staff each year will not be given as they will need to use those funds to keep the doors open New Year's Eve.

This government say they are standing up for workers but what they fail to acknowledge is the need to support the businesses which actually employ the workers at the same time. They just cannot get the balance right—never have, never will. The LNP are not the only ones who believe that this bill is fundamentally flawed. The CCIQ raised concerns that 48 per cent—almost half—of small businesses will close on Christmas Eve under these proposed changes and that 26 per cent of business owners will send some staff home or just do the work themselves. Need I remind those opposite that the recent CCIQ Pulse Survey revealed that business conditions in Queensland are worse now than what they were during the GFC. They said that confidence in Queensland's economic future has collapsed, but still Labor wants to put another nail in the coffin of Queensland businesses.

The Queensland Hotels Association said that this bill is completely out of touch with the hospitality industry in Queensland and is one that will negatively impact regional Queensland, small businesses and the Queensland tourism industry. The Queensland Tourism Industry Council submitted that businesses have planned and budgeted based on existing legislation and that changes this late in the year will impact the bottom line of businesses and put undue strain on businesses and their employees—all of which will make for a very unhappy Christmas for many. The Australian Retailers Association were scathing in their written submission and during the public hearings, strongly believing that this bill should be abandoned and that it is a populist pre-election stunt a year ahead of a state election. What a costly stunt it is indeed.

Other issues raised by submitters highlighted the lack of evidence and support needed for a new part-day public holiday, as the regulatory impact statement used data that was eight years old and from Adelaide to justify the government's position. Furthermore, it was not relevant nor reliable data—completely disregarding the challenges faced by central and northern regional Queensland communities already suffering from many challenges.

It is not the first time that a part-day Christmas Eve public holiday has been examined by the Palaszczuk Labor government. In December 2016 the Mickel review into Queensland's Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 considered the issue of a part-day public holiday and made no recommendations for the designation of a public holiday from 6 pm on Christmas Eve. At that time while the SDA union wanted a part-day public holiday, organisations representing small business and tourism were opposed. In response, the Mickel review recommended that non-exempt shops—large retailers—were to close by 6 pm on Christmas Eve. In fact the Mickel review stated—

Reducing complexity and removing the heavy hand of Government regulation will enable Queensland businesses to determine how best to grow and service customer demand.

It went on to say—


There is also a case for ensuring stability by placing a moratorium on applications for further changes being made to the State's trading hours' arrangements.

Queensland has recently received the title of unemployment capital of Australia—a title that this government has earned solely and squarely on its own shoulders. Unless the Labor government can guarantee that this bill will not cost more jobs or increase costs for consumers and businesses at an already cost-demanding time of year, then this bill should not be supported by anyone in this House.

I imagine that there will be Labor members who do not want to see this bill passed, and if there is not we have big problems on our hands. I am sure there must be Labor members who see the stupidity in all of this, and now is the time during the last sitting week of the year before the festive season begins for them to stand up and do what is right and just and fair and vote against this fundamentally flawed bill that will have devastating consequences for the backbone of our state's economy—small businesses.

The LNP will not support this bill in any way, shape or form. It is bad policy penned by a Labor government which has failed Queensland and its people on too many fronts. Again, I reiterate the Australian Retailers Association's view that 'this proposal is flawed at best and baseless at worst'. To even be debating this bill at a time when Queensland has the highest unemployment rate in the nation, with over 177,000 in the unemployment queue, and a youth unemployment crisis that is escalating is ludicrous.

This bill will hurt Queenslanders. It is inconsistent with the vast majority of the nation and is only being rushed through ahead of Christmas because of next year's state election. Shame on this government for their arrogance and their win-at-all-costs approach to running this magnificent state.

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (5.05 pm): I rise to support the bill. Let us get a few things straight and have a look at the bill. I was on the committee, but I cannot understand something. The LNP says this is once again another example of the Palaszczuk government being pro union but anti worker. I cannot work that out. It has been doing my head in since I read the report. I am struggling to understand that.

I have been in small business for many, many years. The LNP are talking about the costs. We are talking about six hours on Christmas Eve. The people over there talk about the wonders of Christmas and family, but they do not want people to spend Christmas Eve with their families, with their young ones—but they are all pro families and all pro businesses. I just think that some people over there speak with forked tongue. I could be wrong. I may not understand it but I think they do. They are worried about small business.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): Order! There is way too much chatter in the chamber. Member for Pumicestone, you have just resumed your seat.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** During the Newman era, 14,000 public servants were sacked and there was a trickle-down effect. Actually, it was not a trickle; it was an avalanche. It was like thunder rolling down the hills in small communities. They have the hide to tell me that six hours is going to send businesses under, that six hours is going to make a big impact. Well, they did not get go through the Newman GFC, because I did and I know a lot of small businesses that never recovered from that.

They talk about looking after small businesses. That is a joke. Is this 1 April? Have we got in the TARDIS and come down on 1 April? It is a joke that they are standing there and telling us that this will send small businesses broke because we know their manifesto clearly states they are going to cut, sack and sell again. They will cut, sack and sell. They think that six hours is going to affect small businesses.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr SAUNDERS:** I take the interjection from the member for Toowoomba North when he tells me—

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Order! Member for Maryborough, resume your seat. Member for Toowoomba North, I called for order three times. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** He has the hide to sit there and tell us that this is going to really affect the economy of Queensland and it is going to send businesses broke.

**Mr WATTS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I have not told the member anything. He said that I had the hide to sit here and tell him, but I have not said anything.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. Member for Toowoomba North, resume your seat.


**Mr SAUNDERS:** Thank you for that protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. If that is the best they can do, we are in trouble! We will be here for another 30 years. We will have to be cemented in this place. If that is the front bench on their side, we are going really well.

This bill is good for workers. Let us calm down and have a look at it. I live in regional Queensland. How many people in regional Queensland have got small businesses? I had small businesses in regional Queensland. After 4.30 or quarter to five, you could shoot a cannon down the streets because most people were home with their families, they were at their family celebrations, they were going to church or they were going to a get-together. If you have to work on Christmas Eve and you have to take time away from your family, I think you should be compensated and remunerated. I believe that is fair.

Some people do not have a choice. The member for Pumicestone said they have a choice. I say no, they do not. I know that businesses tell people, 'You will be here or else.' That is what happens in the real world. We know the only way we get change is through legislation; it is through legislative change, and that is what is happening right now.

We are hearing that this is a tidal wave, it is going to cost jobs, Queensland is going to be shut down, we will all be in the dark and all the dreadful things that are going to happen to Queensland between 6 pm and midnight on Christmas Eve. Let me tell honourable members something. Those opposite think this is bad. However, after another two years of the Morrison government that is what we will see. We are now seeing the worst retail figures we have ever seen. Those opposite are talking about the GFC, but we are talking about a government that is bringing business to its knees. They can sit there and yell and talk about it, but I can tell them they only have to look at the retail sales figures and the discretionary spending in Australia right now, all because of the Morrison government; that is what is causing the problems. It is a disgraceful government. Those opposite talk about looking after small business. They say they are the champions of small business. However, there are crickets when we talk about Scott Morrison and what they are doing to the economy of this country, what they are doing to the workers and what they are doing to the small business owners.

Those opposite come in here and huff and bluff and then they go and have a little tippie of eggnog on Christmas Eve with their business leaders and talk about 'those dreadful unions'. We can see them now. We can see them poncing around saying, 'Oh those dreadful unions!' Then they go out and say to the workers in factories, 'We're with you, fellas. We're with you, brothers. We're looking after you.' I have said it before and I will say it again: there are a lot of forked tongues on that side of the House. They could not lie straight in bed. We know what happened during the Newman era. Do honourable members remember the 'pooper scooper'? Everyone would remember that. He was talking about the former premier and the public servants. Let me tell honourable members something. If this mob gain control of the treasury benches in this state again they will make Campbell Newman look absolutely brilliant because they are ready to cut, sack and sell. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.11 pm): The Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 was introduced into the parliament on 19 September by the Minister for Industrial Relations and was referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for consideration with a reporting date of 4 November. The bill proposes to amend the Holidays Act 1983 by providing for Christmas Eve to be observed as a part-day public holiday from 6 pm to 12 midnight. Before 6 pm Christmas Eve will operate as a normal business day. The bill intends to entitle workers to refuse to work in reasonable circumstances or to receive the payment of public holiday penalty rates where work is performed on Christmas Eve after 6 pm, and it will activate certain public holiday provisions.

In August this year the Premier and the Minister for Industrial Relations announced the government would consult with stakeholders on a proposal to declare Christmas Eve from 6 pm to midnight a part-day public holiday and they released the consultation regulatory impact statement on 4 August. The RIS was open for consultation for 28 days and closed on 2 September. A decision RIS was published, and lo and behold the bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly on 19 September. That is a pretty quick turnaround for a non-urgent, not life-threatening, not disaster recovery bill.



The former Labor minister John Mickel undertook a review in December 2016 when he rejected the call for Christmas Eve to be a part-day holiday, yet here we are less than three years on with the unions flexing their muscle and getting their way with yet another bad-for-business piece of legislation. The committee made one recommendation, and that was that the bill be passed. However, the LNP oppose it in its entirety, and so should members opposite if they give a toss at all about small business. We stand side by side with small business.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): Order! Member, the term you used is unparliamentary and I ask that you withdraw it.

**Mrs STUCKEY:** I withdraw. We stand side by side with small business—always have, always will. As the LNP stated in the dissenting report, we would only offer support for this legislation if the Palaszczuk government could guarantee that it will not cost jobs or increase prices for consumers. The government failed to guarantee jobs and prices.

The committee report No. 24 of this parliament states—

A total of 1,779 submissions were received. The majority ... (71 per cent) supported the proposal to declare Christmas a part-day public holiday from 6.00pm to midnight, and 29 per cent opposed ... Of the 1,271 submissions that supported, 1,149 were provided by the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association (SDA) from its members.

Some were just a handful of words. The report continues—

Of the 508 submissions that opposed, 422 were provided by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland (CCIQ).

Some submitters to the Bill expressed concern over the lack of prior consultation with industry, while others stated there was insufficient statistical information to inform the proposed changes. Some submitters expressed concern over the department's consultation process, noting that many submissions to the Consultation RIS were single line comments.

That is it, honourable members: 49 words to express the many pages of detailed concerns as to why this legislation would do more harm than good—it gets 49 words in the committee report.

I was ill and was unable to attend the public hearings. I would like to thank the honourable member for Ninderry for filling in for me and the honourable member for Pumicestone for her contribution. However, I really wish I had been there as there is no way I would have tolerated the rude comments and condescending tone from the chair towards Mr Zimmerman, the Executive Director of the Australian Retailers Association. I stand here to apologise to Mr Zimmerman for the honourable member for Nudgee's behaviour. She berated Mr Zimmerman in front of others present saying she was—

... perturbed by some of the tone of the comments that you made particularly, Russell.

...

It was quite political and deliberately antagonistic to members of the government, of which I am one.

I note the Queensland Council of Unions were witnesses—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Currumbin, through the chair. That means directing your facial expression towards the chair.

**Mrs STUCKEY:** I note the Queensland Council of Unions were witnesses at the public hearing on 25 October and felt the need to criticise the 2005 Howard government in their submission. They did not get scolded. It is out of character for the honourable member for Nudgee to attack an individual like this. We would expect that from some of her colleagues. Perhaps she has been told to 'Jackie up' if she wants to be a minister. Whatever the reason, it is intimidation and it is typical of Labor's modus operandi.

**Ms LINARD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find the comments offensive and misleading but maybe typical and I ask that they be withdrawn.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, the member finds the comments offensive. Do you withdraw?

**Mrs STUCKEY:** I withdraw. This member did not think twice about taking an extended holiday when she went to the UK for a gender conference, tacking on three to four days to visit the—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Through the chair.

**Ms LINARD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, resume your seat.

**Ms LINARD:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I take offence at the comments and the lack of an unreserved apology from the deputy chair and I ask her to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Currumbin, you are now warned under the standing orders. That is the second time. Again, you should be directing your comments through the chair, which means you are looking at me and not at other members. Member, I ask that you withdraw.

**Mrs STUCKEY:** I withdraw and I unreservedly apologise. Of the 14 submissions—

**Ms SIMPSON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Could I have your clarification with respect to the standing orders? Where is the standing order that indicates you have to direct your facial expressions towards the chair?

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Maroochydore, you obviously were not watching the member for Currumbin. I have made the call. The member for Currumbin will direct her comments through me.

**Mrs STUCKEY:** Of the 14 submissions only four supported this bill and they are, of course, unions, not the job creators—private enterprise—but unions. Let's have a look at some of those submissions. Daniel Gschwind, respected chair of QTIC, which represents 2,500 tourism businesses, stated—

Our stakeholders and business operators emphasis that there is no compelling rationale to support the introduction of Christmas Eve as a part day public holiday. We therefore urge the State Government not to pass this bill.

...

This piece of proposed legislation unfortunately works in the opposite direction and will adversely affect the industry.

Daniel responded to the minister's comment that only 28 per cent of respondents to the inquiry opposed the proposal with an extensive list of employer group submissions that represent a huge number of businesses and members. He said—

These collective voices should not be ignored and need to be given the appropriate weight.

The LNP also believes so. They include the Chamber of Commerce & Industry representing 448,000 businesses, Clubs Queensland, Queensland Hotels Association, National Retail Association, Restaurant & Catering Industry Association, Australian Meat Industry Council, Baking Association—I am sorry, I am not looking at you; I am reading from this document—and the Caravan Parks Association of Queensland. I agree with Daniel, because if we add up all those members and businesses we get a massive total of 559,475. That makes the 1,271 submissions listed in the committee report look very light on—and, of course, 1,149 were provided by the SDA from its members.

Many of the other well-prepared submissions voiced similar concerns as well as added costs that could not be recouped, job losses and reduced hours, and inconsistency with the vast majority of Australia. Fancy using a model from South Australia! It is my birth state and I am really fond of it, but seriously? Mind you, its unemployment rate is lower than Queensland's.

Then there is the lack of evidence and absence of published data on employment patterns on Christmas Eve. Using data from legislation introduced in 2012 in South Australia, when this experiment resulted in Adelaide being labelled a ghost town, is just not on. The minister and her department are all over the shop in terms of the estimated costs of implementing this.

The insufficient time frame for implementation is another point that was raised, with most rosters being prepared six to eight weeks out. 'Out of touch' was another phrase used. Several submitters warned that businesses would do one or all of the following: pass on the added cost to Queenslanders via increased prices; close for trade during the affected hours; or reduce their staffing, and then they would not earn income. Consumers and the public miss out, as do suppliers; our reputation as a tourism destination is damaged; and the government loses revenue.

Why is the government doing this? It is a rushed process. Why the urgency? Hilary Jacobs, President of the Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce, says that its position on this is clear. She states—

We're very disappointed that the Queensland State Government has allowed its union bosses and paymasters to run the State again and has proposed to introduce an unnecessary and costly imposition on small businesses.

...

No-one other than the unions was asking for this holiday before it was introduced as a Bill.

She continues—

This will in effect be a party tax ... Small business is affected by increased wages costs already, and the imposition of another penalty rate for another day that is at a time of year which for some businesses is the only time that actually run in profit, is a further reflection of how out of touch this Government is in relation to small business needs and the way to grow the Queensland economy.

It is just as well Hilary did not present as a witness, isn't it? A lot of businesses in my electorate are still suffering from the lack of trade during the games. Many have told me that they will close on Christmas Eve—my cafes and surf clubs.


This Labor government is hell-bent on killing off our unique businesses that pay premiums just to trade near the ocean. Labor's candidate for Currumbin, Kaylee Campradt, is listed as the campaign secretary for the QCU, which made a submission on this bill, yet she was at the November meeting in my local chamber as the Currumbin State School P&C representative. There was no mention of that, because she was too busy introducing herself as the Labor candidate. Infiltrating a chamber of commerce for small businesses under false pretences? Talk about a wolf in sheep's clothing!

This blanket, one-size-fits-all approach shows how hopelessly out of touch the Palaszczuk government is. This bill is being called a grinch tax, a party tax and the 'night before' bill. I quote—

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;

That is what Christmas Eve may well look like if this bill is passed.

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.22 pm): I rise to speak obviously in support of the bill. I am pleased that there are no children in the chamber to see some of the immature activities taking place.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr HEALY:** You will not learn anything when you are talking. I appreciate that there are significant philosophical differences here, but the capacity to get the message across without attacking one another is seriously disappointing.

On 4 August 2019 the Premier and Minister for Trade and the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations announced that the Queensland government would consult with stakeholders on a proposal to declare a part-day public holiday on Christmas Eve. On 19 September 2019 the Hon. Grace Grace introduced the Holidays and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 into the Queensland parliament. The bill was referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee, of which I am very proud to be a member, for detailed consideration.

The objective of the bill is to provide for Christmas Eve to be observed as a part-day public holiday from 6 pm to 12 midnight. We are not talking about the world changing; it is six hours. Declaring a public holiday will recognise the personal, social, religious and cultural significance of Christmas celebrations that commence on Christmas Eve, and so recognise the importance of that evening for people to spend time with family and friends and prepare for Christmas Day. Declaring a public holiday from 6 pm will also ensure that workers have the right to reasonably refuse to work or be fairly compensated should they work after 6 pm on Christmas Eve.

The bill will achieve its objective by amending the Holidays Act 1983 and making other consequential legislative amendments to provide for Christmas Eve—24 December—to be observed as a part-day public holiday, from 6 pm. The policy objective of the amendment is to enliven industrial relations rights and protections for workers. This means that workers are entitled to refuse to work in reasonable circumstances or to the payment of public holiday penalty rates where work is performed on Christmas Eve after 6 pm. It is not intended that the amendment displace or otherwise impact on Christmas Eve being a business day or for any other purpose, so the amendment applies only for working out a person's entitlements under certain prescribed acts or industrial instruments within the meaning of those acts.

As we have heard and has been said, a total of 1,779 submissions were received and 1,271 submissions, or 71.4 per cent, were in support of the proposals. Some 508 submissions, or 28.6 per cent, opposed the proposal. I acknowledge the concerns raised by some of the parties. I have spoken to a number of retailers in Cairns in relation to their concerns. I explained that the beautiful city of Cairns receives over 2.8 million visitors from around Australia and the world annually and that, if they want, they have the right to increase their prices by way of a 15 per cent surcharge. Most people are used to paying a public holiday surcharge. It happens currently and is pretty well expected. I am confident that most people would be aware of the additional charges over holiday periods, as the majority of people in this chamber would be.

I take the liberty to highlight a few other issues that I think are significant to the debate. Sixty-four per cent of our national economy is based on household spending. That means take-home pay and disposable income. Under the Morrison federal government, we are experiencing the lowest wage growth over the past six years. Any economist will tell you that telltale retail markers on the

productivity of an economy are new car sales and the sale of whitegoods. They are both down—significantly and consistently. We have seen the Morrison government introduce cuts to fast-food, hospitality and pharmacy employees, reducing the take-home pay of hundreds of thousands of workers. While all of this is happening, these great economic managers have managed to double our national debt!

There are significant contributing factors to the erosion of wages, take-home pay and workers' rights. The simple facts are in front of us. All of these hardworking people contribute to the foundations of our banking system. They are the strongest deterrent to social upheaval. Ensuring their wages are protected, ensuring a better take-home pay packet and protecting their rights in light of the onslaught by this federal government is fair and just, and it is what we are doing. For those who do not get it—I suspect there might be quite a few—we are building the consumers of tomorrow. This is how you build economies—not by creating vast economic and social disparity but by providing economic opportunities and securing people with a basic wage.

These proposed provisions have been in place in South Australia since 2012 and the Northern Territory since 2016. They observe Christmas Eve as a part-day public holiday from 7 pm to 12 midnight. Both also observe a similar public holiday on New Year's Eve.

From what I understand, the sky has not yet fallen in in these areas. Businesses are still operating, things are still going well and, as I said, the world has not collapsed. Before I thank the chair and some of those in the executive committee, I want to touch on the fact that we need to ensure that as we move forward we create an environment where everybody can get a basic wage, where everybody can earn a wage. This is not about creating disparity; this is about providing opportunity. These people need to be looked after. We need to recognise that this is a special time. We do it in a range of other areas. Why is their contribution any different to anybody else? Some of the statements and comments made here have been impressively disappointing. All we are trying to do is help people and thinking that we are attacking workers is absolutely ridiculous. When I was working I never, ever saw a payroll tax cut by an LNP government, but I have seen 112 businesses in Cairns be the beneficiaries of payroll tax changes, so to even make—


Debate, on motion of Mr Healy, adjourned.

## **VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (CLEARING FOR RELEVANT PURPOSES) AMENDMENT BILL**

### **Second Reading**

Resumed from 2 April (see p. 998), on motion of Mr Katter—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (5.30 pm), continuing: The KAP was very proud to introduce the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill in March 2018. It is now November 2019 and this bill was last debated three or four months ago and I had the call. In this part of the world this bill may not be considered very important, but vegetation management and land management are very big issues that are important for rural and regional Queensland, particularly those people in drought. Land management is about sowing the good seed, producing the best crop and, in the end, putting good food on the table. If a person is applying for an application for a clearing permit, most of the time it is not about beautiful rainforest trees or eucalyptus. It is normally crap scrub that they are trying to get an application to clear.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order!

**Mr KNUTH:** I withdraw, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr KNUTH:** In the end it is about them trying to give people a good steak at the Story Bridge Hotel or the Breakfast Creek Hotel. That is what it is all about. However, this bill is also about giving landowners the right of appeal under section 22A of the act where the application has been rejected and drags on without even the chief executive making a decision. For some of these clearing applications they have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars with consultants trying to get the foundations right for this application. Sometimes from the department there is dead silence or it comes out and rejects the application but does not even tell the landowner why it has rejected the application.

I will give the House an example, and there are a number of examples that I could mention. In the Cape York Peninsula the owners of Kendall River have spent over \$150,000 on the assessment and application. The project that was going to be put in place was also going to be carbon positive and it was rubbish land. I am not condemning the property owner or anything like that. It was not rubbish land but rubbish vegetation that they were asking to clear. They were asking to clear 400 hectares of rubbish timber, and during dry times it is so important that they can irrigate and grow crops such as sorghum and Rhodes grass.


Because clearing has been held back over the years in Cape York Peninsula, Einasleigh Uplands, the gulf plains—the whole lot—it starts to get dry so they have to order trucks from South-East Queensland or elsewhere in Australia to bring up hay which may introduce noxious weeds to that region. They should not have to do that when they could grow it right there. That is all they are asking for. It is just a very simple process of clearing a few acres and growing their own fodder so that in drought they can feed their cattle. It is very simple. These applications are being rejected and this is about providing an appeals process. There is nothing hard about it.

We have to remember that people say, 'We've got to be careful. We want to save the planet,' and all this nonsense that is going on. In Cape York 98 per cent is remnant vegetation. Graziers are trying to put in an application. In the gulf plains 98 per cent is remnant vegetation. The Einasleigh Uplands is 96 per cent remnant. That is the Charters Towers-Georgetown region, so there is no great impact from that region when it comes to run-off. However, the gulf does not run off into the Great Barrier Reef at all, so there is no excuse in rejecting those in the gulf because it is not running into the Great Barrier Reef but rather it is running into the gulf.

The current legislation allows the clearing for high-value agriculture, but this is allowing for high-value grazing. High-value grazing is very important given the fact that if you sow the Rhodes grass into the area it holds the soil together, so it is good logic. A landowner can grow a sorghum crop, harvest it and sell it, but cattle will not feed on it. That is why we are trying to include high-value grazing into the legislation. It is something that is very simple, and that is why this is part of this bill.

The member for Traeger will also be moving an amendment to allow fodder harvesting of mulga to remove the restrictions that are in place at the moment. There are 60 million acres in Australia that are just sitting there doing nothing that could be utilised for cattle feed in a time of drought, with 45 million acres in Queensland, so fodder is available. We are just trying to remove the restrictions in place because there are dead cattle everywhere and we are in drought. When in drought you are flat out seeing a weed, yet there is all of this fodder everywhere. This is not about knocking it down, clearing it, bulldozing it and then ploughing it up. It has nothing to do with that. It is about selectively knocking over trees to save cattle.

The member for Traeger will be moving that amendment to ensure that mulga harvesting will be included. This is very important because the mulga regenerates within seven months. Within seven months it can grow almost seven feet—sometimes more with rain, sometimes not. It is better than having the cattle die. It is also free fodder for all of the landowners, plus it keeps the economy growing in those communities. We were very pleased to be able to introduce this bill and we encourage the House to support this sensible amendment that will be moved by the member for Traeger. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise to oppose the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill as the Minister for Natural Resources did earlier in the year. The first thing I want to point out in light of the foreshadowed amendment about regulatory burdens preventing the harvesting of mulga for fodder—and this is something that we have dealt with numerous times in vegetation management—is that there are no inhibitions on harvesting mulga for fodder. Landowners can notify and then do it. Property owners can do it numerous times. That is the regulatory burden: they need to notify and then they get on and do that. Therefore, I remind all members as they get up to speak on this issue over the next 1½ hours tonight that landowners can already harvest mulga for fodder but that they just need to notify.

This bill is before us because one clause of the original bill, introduced by the member for Traeger, has survived and that is clause 3. The rest of the bill was ruled out under standing order 87(1). Clause 3 of the private member's bill proposed a right of appeal to a landholder who has applied under the Vegetation Management Act to clear vegetation for relevant purposes and has been refused. This clause proposes a process where the chief executive issues a notice and an appeal and review mechanism that would allow an appeal to QCAT.

To get an approval to clear native vegetation, the chief executive of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy must be satisfied that it is for a relevant purpose as described under the act. If it is not for a relevant purpose, the application is refused. A 'relevant purpose' includes clearing for relevant infrastructure, extractive industry, special Indigenous purposes, managing weeds, controlling pests, weed encroachment and fodder harvesting. Landholders can apply online to clear and there is no fee involved. We know that there will be very few cases where the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy makes a determination that the proposed clearing was not for a relevant purpose. It is very rare. The relevant purposes are clear to applicants and they do a good job in making their applications.

As members of parliament, it is fair to consider that there may be a review process in those cases where there has been a refusal, but we also need to consider that there is already a process for appeal if an application under section 22A for clearing for a relevant purpose is rejected. Let me be clear about that: there is already a process. That is because all decisions made under the Vegetation Management Act, including in relation to section 22A, can be subject to review under the Judicial Review Act.

We also need to consider that, since 2013, there have been only three refusals for applications for clearing for relevant purposes outside of clearing for high-value agriculture, which does not exist anymore—three refusals in about six years. That has been since the time we originally introduced the legislation. There may have been one or two refusals since. That is a refusal rate of 0.3 per cent of all the requests for this determination. I think it is absolutely right that the government and the department monitor the requests and refusals under section 22A. If we need a more appropriate review and appeal mechanism, it will be progressed. The minister talked about that when we originally debated the legislation. I think that is the best outcome.

I want to address the issue of vegetation management as it is raised by opposition members, and I have no doubt it will be raised in the same vein again tonight, and that is their continued obsession with the Vegetation Management Act. I point out to the opposition that it is the Vegetation Management Act 1999. We have had this legislation since the last century. The act has been operating how it was meant to operate for the past 20 years.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** After 20 years, Queenslanders are well and truly familiar with this law and they are working well with it. The vast majority of landholders are getting on with the job. They have said that they do not want any more political debate about these laws. They just want political certainty and when we have been speaking with them that has been clear.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** We can already hear that the LNP members opposite want to re-run the debate and re-run the argument. The rest of the state has moved on and they have not.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order! Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, I see you are down on the list to speak. You will have plenty of time to refute any of these claims in your speech in the debate. I ask you to cease your interjections.

**Mr WHITING:** I was just about to say that the rest of the state has moved on and the LNP members have not. I was going to say that they are still stuck in the 20th century, but, with the member for Gregory, I wonder if it is the 19th century. I oppose this bill. Let us hear the wonderful contributions that we will have from the other side.

**Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (5.43 pm): I rise to speak to the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. At the outset, can I say that the LNP will not be opposing this bill. I note that the policy objectives of the bill are to amend the Vegetation Management Act 1999 to—

Create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing, as assessed under section 22A of the Act, has been rejected; and—

Remove 'grazing activities' from the definition of high value agriculture clearing to ensure that it is considered a relevant purpose in the chief executive's consideration of an application to clear under the Act.

Having regard to the second objective, I note that on 17 May 2018 the honourable the Speaker ruled clause 4 of this bill out of order as it offended the same question rule under standing order 87(1). I note that the committee made two recommendations regarding this bill, including—

... that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy examine the merits of providing an information notice to applicants under section 22A of the Vegetation Management Act 1999.

Clause 3 proposes to insert a new subsection into section 22A of the act, which would state—

If the chief executive decides the development applied for is not development mentioned in subsection (2)(a) to (l), the chief executive must give the applicant an information notice about the decision.

Section 22A of the act deals with situations where applicants can apply for a development approval to clear vegetation on land. Before applying for a development approval, the chief executive of the department must be satisfied that the development is for a relevant purpose. Currently, there is no provision that states that the chief executive must give an applicant an information notice about a decision made under section 22A of the act. However, information notices are required under other sections of the act. Under the act, an information notice is defined to mean a notice stating each the following—

- (a) the decision, and the reasons for it;
- (b) the rights of review under this Act;
- (c) the period in which any review under this Act must be started;
- (d) how rights of review under this Act are to be exercised.

The provision of an information notice under this act is significant as it triggers the internal and external review processes that are available to applicants under part 4 division 1 and 1A of the act. At present, applicants whose applications are considered not to be for a relevant purpose under section 22A of the act, as determined by the chief executive, have no recourse to internal review of the decision under the act or external review of the decision to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Therein lies the problem. I note that the LGAQ in its submission on the bill to the committee stated—

The inclusion of this clause provides greater accountability and transparency around decision-making for landholders and councils.

AgForce in its submission stated—

A greater degree of transparency on s22A assessment and approval would have provided landholder applicants with a far better understanding of the prospects of their application being successful and most certainly would have reduced their need to resort to expensive court costs and legal proceedings simply to receive an answer from Queensland Government.

This amendment strikes at the heart of what those on this side of the House have been saying for some time and that is that this government is not interested in giving farmers a fair go. In fact, if nothing else, this term of government will be known for its attack on farmers and the introduction of the most draconian, anti-farmer vegetation management laws this state as has ever seen. For too long this government has betrayed the hardworking men and women who put food on our tables and clothes on our backs as environmental vandals. I take this opportunity to remind the House that 500 farmers protested outside this parliament, thousands of people attended hearings that were meant to be consultation, and 17,500 Queenslanders signed a petition protesting not only this government's legislation but also this government's blatant political stunt to demonise farmers in an attempt to prop up the member for South Brisbane.

This government may have chosen to conveniently forget its attacks on regional Queenslanders, but I can assure the members opposite that the members on this side of the House have not. I can assure them that my colleagues and I will make sure that this gross betrayal is never forgotten. Time after time, this government has engaged in sham consultation with primary producers. Time after time, this government has twisted the facts to appeal to inner-city voters at the expense of families in regional Queensland—families who have responsibly cared for their country for generations, families who today are fighting for the survival of their businesses in the face of one of the worst droughts in history.

Whilst this government continues to bombard us with virtue signalling about rights, primary producers are being denied the basic right to appeal or review a decision made by the department. The right of appeal is a common principle of law in this state and it is a principle that should apply to every Queenslanders regardless of their occupation or where they live.


I cannot in all good faith stand in this place tonight without reminding those opposite of the impact their changes to the Vegetation Management Act have had on the agricultural sector in this state. In short, it has sledgehammered the industry. It has sent a shockwave through rural and regional Queensland that has fundamentally changed the way farmers manage their properties. I can assure those opposite that whilst they may have appeased their greenie mates they have not broken the spirit of the bush. We will continue to fight these laws to the next election and never miss an opportunity to remind Queenslanders of this government's outrageous and ill-conceived attacks on our farmers.

This government failed to tell Queenslanders that the so-called science they relied on cannot measure changes in regrowth. This government failed to tell Queenslanders that only 0.23 per cent of Queensland's land area was cleared in 2015-16. They failed to tell Queenslanders that two-thirds of that vegetation management was to control regrowth, remove invasive weeds, construct fences and harvest fodder for starving stock, to name just a few activities. This government failed to tell Queenslanders that, instead of a commonsense approach to vegetation management, primary producers would be subjected to a full development application process, including fees of \$3,500 or more.

Whilst this government claims that changes to the Vegetation Management Act were based on science, they abandoned a system that actually took into account regional ecosystems, individual districts and individual property locations. Little to no consideration was given to the second order effects of this government's amendments. Not only did these laws affect primary producers; they also affected small businesses, they affected the ability of families to provide a good education for their children and undoubtedly they affected the mental health of many producers who were already doing it tough thanks to year after year of drought.

The amendments that those opposite rammed through this House were an insult to Queensland primary producers. They were a kick in the guts for entire communities in regional Queensland. I will not be opposing this bill because it is the first small step in restoring the balance. It is a step in acknowledging that Queensland primary producers are not environmental vandals and it is a step in acknowledging that Queensland primary producers deserve to be treated with respect. Neither the LNP nor Queensland primary producers advocated widescale unregulated land clearing. We advocated for a fair system based on real science, not a faulty system that did not even take into account that, after clearing, trees grow back. Yes, that is right: they actually grow back!

As I said, the primary producers of Queensland have been sold out for a few votes in the city while people in the city have not been given the full story. In short, this government is doing its best to turn Queenslanders against each other. I will not be opposing this bill because I, like those on this side of the House, are sick and tired of farmers being portrayed as environmental vandals. Most of all, I will not be opposing this bill because I will proudly stand up for our hardworking farmers who are being unfairly targeted by a government with no interest in agriculture. I will not be opposing this bill because I stand shoulder to shoulder with our farmers who are the backbone of this state. I ask all members to join me and stand for a Queensland that is honest and provides a fair go for all—in particular, at the present time when 66 per cent of this state is drought declared and our farmers have their backs to the wall and are out there trying to make a living and in doing so are faced with a bureaucratic nightmare that they have never before experienced.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.53 pm): I rise to speak against the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. On 21 March 2018, Mr Robbie Katter, the member for Traeger, introduced the bill into parliament as a private member's bill. The key objectives of the bill as stated in the explanatory notes are, firstly, to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing as assessed under section 22A of the act has been rejected and, secondly, to remove grazing activities as a definition of high-value agricultural clearing to ensure that it is considered as a relevant purpose to the chief executive's consideration of the application to clear under the act.

Subsequent to being tabled, the Speaker ruled clause 4 of the bill out of order as, by seeking to reintroduce high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture as relevant purposes for clearing, it offended the same question rule under standing order 87(1). The rest of the bill was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. In its report No. 14 of the 56th Parliament tabled in September 2018, the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee made two recommendations: firstly, that the bill not be passed; and, secondly, that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy examine the merits of providing an information notice to applicants under section 22A of the Vegetation Management Act 1999.

The history of land clearing laws are that prior to the 1990s in Queensland there was very little regulation of land clearing. In late 1997 the Land Act was amended by the Borbidge government to introduce a new system of controlled vegetation clearing on the 70 per cent of state land held as leasehold or other state land. In late 2000 the Beattie government introduced a new mapping and classification system with the Vegetation Management Act 1999 and the Integrated Planning Act 1997 to regulate the clearing of the 30 per cent of Queensland held as freehold land and freeholding leases.




Faced with ongoing controversy and high levels of clearing, in 2004 the Beattie government introduced major reforms to phase out broadscale land clearing of agricultural land in Queensland by 31 December 2006. The reforms moved the system of land clearing laws for state lands from the Lands Act to the Vegetation Management Act and the Integrated Planning Act system. The change of government in 2012 with the election of the Newman-Nicholls government saw a major change in land-clearing laws in Queensland, with the legislation passed by this government in 2013. The slash-and-burn mentality of the Newman-Nicholls government set Queensland back 15 years and, under its watch, land-clearing rates in Queensland escalated.

In 2015 the Statewide Land Cover and Tree Study, otherwise known as the SLATS report, showed that the rate of clearing of woody vegetation in Queensland had increased since 2009-10 from about 78,000 hectares per year to an incredible 296,000 hectares per year—an increase of over 300 per cent in just three years. More than a million hectares of woody vegetation was cleared in Queensland in those terrible years between 2012-13 and 2015-16. During that period the state accounted for between 50 and 65 per cent of the total loss of native forests right across Australia.

The effect of this excessive land clearing has been increased carbon emission rates and risks to the Great Barrier Reef from sediment and pollutant run-off. The vegetation clearing has also had serious impacts on wildlife, waterways and wetlands such as when vegetation is cleared for development, mining and agriculture purposes. Excessive land clearing, along with other pressures like excessive fertiliser use, is having a serious impact on water quality in Queensland as well as the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

To rein in excessive land clearing, in 2018 the Palaszczuk government introduced new land clearing laws, as it promised to do if elected. On Thursday, 3 May 2018 the Queensland parliament passed the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill following three days of debate. This legislation reinstated the vegetation management controls repealed by the Newman-Nicholls government in 2013.

The need for further legislative amendment as proposed by the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018 has not been established and, therefore, I do not support the bill. In closing, I thank my fellow members of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, I thank the submitters and I thank the committee secretariat, led by Jacqui Dewar.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.59 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the private member's bill, the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. The bill was introduced into the House by the member for Traeger, Mr Robbie Katter, on 21 March 2018. The bill was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, of which I am a member, for consideration. The bill moved by the member for Traeger is in response to the draconian vegetation management legislation that was passed in this House on 1 May 2018, despite the opposition highlighting the many failings of that particular legislation. This bill attempts to address one of those injustices.

The explanatory notes state that the objectives of the bill are to amend the act to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing as assessed under section 22A of the act has been rejected. The explanatory notes go on to state that under the current legislative framework 'there is no right of appeal or review for a person who has made an application under section 22A of the act where that application has been rejected'. That should be a basic right.

The department stated that landowners do have options to appeal through the Planning and Environment Court or QCAT, but of course that is at great expense to the individual landowner. Creating an obligation for the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application has been rejected on the basis of section 22A would create a mechanism for an external review. The department stated—

If the Bill is passed, DNRME would update this form to include requests for internal review of decisions under s22A and update its existing internal procedures to include these reviews.

However, the department also stated that the amendment had the potential to affect resourcing implications if the bill is passed. The department stated—

The resourcing impacts on DNRME would include both resourcing of the internal review; resourcing for the department to provide evidence at QCAT hearings; and additional costs through its responsibility for providing appropriate funding to QCAT under a Memorandum of Understanding.

In itself, this should be no justification for opposing the bill. As I said before, this should be a basic right. The LGAQ stated—

The Bill ... creates an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing, as assessed under section 22A of the Act, has been rejected. The Inclusion of this clause provides greater accountability and transparency around decisionmaking for landholders and councils. The LGAQ therefore supports *Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018*.

AgForce also supports the bill, stating—


The fact that applicants have had to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars through the courts to force the Queensland Government to administer legislation and regulations in a fair and equitable manner has adversely affected rights and is certainly not consistent with the principles of natural justice.

The report makes two recommendations, the first of which states that the committee recommends that the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018 not be passed. That recommendation is certainly not supported by this side of the House. As stated before, a right of appeal should be a basic right.

I note that the member for Hill has foreshadowed that the member for Traeger will move some amendments to the bill relating to mulga. As the committee did its investigation of the original vegetation management bill earlier this year, we found that that was a particularly contentious issue. I particularly remember going to Charleville, where the largest protest at any of the hearings was held. We went to a town hall that was jam-packed. People were concerned about their ability to harvest mulga. I remember one man who was very passionate about the issue, Scott Sargood. Scott Sargood had an enormous wealth of knowledge around mulga and mulga harvesting. He had big billboards outside of Charleville. Unfortunately, earlier this year Scott Sargood was killed in a gyrocopter accident. I take this opportunity to extend my sympathies to his family on their tragic loss. His death is a loss not only for the Sargood family; it is a loss for the west and a loss for the mulga lands.

We are going through one of the worst droughts on record. The price of stockfeed has gone through the roof, whether it be grain, fodder or cottonseed. This drought is different to most, because it has affected the whole eastern seaboard. Hay has been coming from as far away as Western Australia. The drought is increasing its hold. No cotton has been planted on the Downs, which will affect accessing cottonseed as we go forward. Any grain crops were in the south, but most of those have failed and been chopped for silage. There is precious little fodder available and the expense of keeping stock alive is enormous.

However, in western Queensland they have fodder. It is called mulga and it is available now. This is an opportunity for people to reduce their fodder bill by allowing them to access a product that is already there, readily available. In this extreme drought, if we cannot grant that access there is something seriously wrong with our thought processes. It should be a no-brainer. Members on this side of the House strongly support that. We encourage members from the other side of the House to show some compassion for our western producers and allow them to access mulga to keep their stock alive.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (6.06 pm): The Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018 attempts to insert unnecessary provisions into the Vegetation Management Act. The need for further legislative change has not been established by those opposite. We already have an appeal mechanism for section 22A determinations through the Judicial Review Act. For some decisions made under the Vegetation Management Act, the landholder also has a right to request an internal review and to follow that with an external review by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The trigger for that process is that the applicant received or was entitled to receive an information notice with the decision.

The act presently requires an information notice to be provided upon request for: a decision to make or not make a property map of assessable vegetation or PMAV requested by a landholder; a decision to not make an area into category X in a PMAV; a decision to issue a stop-work notice or a restoration notice; or a decision to refuse to approve a restoration plan. Between 2013 and the end of 2018, DNRME made 839 determinations under section 22A, of which only 11 or 1.3 per cent were refused. Of those refusals, eight related to HVA or IHVA, that is, high-value agriculture or irrigated high-value agriculture. As a result of HVA and IHVA no longer being relevant purposes, no further requests for a determination in relation to these can now be made.

Between 2013 and the end of 2018, only three refusals have been made relating to other relevant purposes, that is, 0.3 per cent, at a rate of 0.5 per cent refusals per year. The minister has previously said that the government will monitor the rate of requests and refusals under section 22A and, if the need for an additional review and appeal process emerges, will progress a proposal for a more appropriate review and appeal mechanism to be implemented.

It is important that the Palaszczuk government's land clearing laws be allowed to continue to stabilise land clearing rates across Queensland. The Palaszczuk government can do this because we lead the nation and we have the balance right. This House is well aware of what happened the last time the LNP got the reigns of Queensland's land clearing laws. Rates of land clearing more than doubled in Queensland after the LNP abolished virtually all controls, peaking at about two-thirds the rate of the Amazon's deforestation and killing millions of native wildlife.


I note the recent commentary relating to bushfires and the ability to clear and maintain firebreaks. I think it is important to put a couple of facts on the record about the Palaszczuk government's vegetation management framework. Responsible measures to manage firebreaks have always been permitted, and these regulatory exemptions under the vegetation management framework have not changed in 20 years.

Queensland's responsible vegetation management framework includes measures that ensure landholders can protect their property from bushfires, including firebreaks and fire management lines. No approval or notification is needed to clear necessary firebreaks or fire management lines. A fire management line can, among other uses, be used to access water for firefighting and divide the property into sub-units to allow fuel reduction burning. In an emergency, landholders can do any clearing required by an authorised fire officer. These measures again show that we have the balance of vegetation management right.

I will finish by reflecting on the committee's tour around regional Queensland—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Ms PUGH:** You will get your go, member for Buderim. Thank you very much. This was my very first tour of duty, if you will, as a committee member, and I enjoyed the experience very much. One of the things we heard again and again from stakeholders was that they wanted consistency and clarity. They wanted to be able to go forward with some certainty and know exactly what the rules would be. I think it is really important that we leave the laws in place. We should give the clarity and consistency that our stakeholders were asking for and leave the laws as they are.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (6.11 pm): I rise to speak on the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. I note at the outset that the LNP will not be opposing this bill, which seeks to improve government transparency and accountability of Labor's unfair vegetation management laws—vegetation management legislation based on ideology rather than science, that relies on incomplete and inaccurate information and that stops farmers and graziers from sustainably managing their land.

It is clear that Labor want to demonise farmers for their own selfish political benefit. Because of Labor's flawed vegetation management laws, graziers are restricted in their ability to harvest fodder to supplement drought-affected stock. We have heard plenty of gnashing of teeth from the Minister for Natural Resources and his choir opposite. They do not like to hear it, but it is true. As a consequence, Queenslanders everywhere are paying more for locally grown food.

The LNP acknowledges that legislation is required to ensure that land clearing is performed in a properly regulated manner, and we are committed to environmental protections, but this Labor government's legislation was a bridge too far and it is bringing our rural communities to their knees. What is required is sensible legislation that is informed by accurate and complete scientific data, rather than the incomplete and flawed SLATS data that this government relied on to justify their assault on farmers and graziers last year.

This amendment bill is a commonsense proposal that seeks to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing, as assessed under section 22A of the act, has been rejected. It is a small first step and it makes sense. As it stands now, there is no right of appeal or review for a person when their application under section 22A is rejected. Perhaps this was the objective of the government when they introduced their rushed vegetation management amendment bill last year. If it is good enough to appeal a traffic infringement, surely it is reasonable that farmers and graziers have a right to appeal in relation to a decision that affects their very livelihood.

The government's entire approach in relation to farmers, graziers and the bush has been divisive and disingenuous. We saw the incompetent minister for agriculture sit silently on the issue of greatest concern to the very industries that he supposedly represents in the form of this government's draconian vegetation management legislation. He was missing in action at the public hearings in Gracemere, Townsville, Cloncurry, Longreach, Charleville, Cairns and Brisbane, and he was missing in action when thousands of farmers and graziers rallied on the doorsteps of this place to ensure their voice was heard.

**Ms Pease** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Okay, boomer. Perhaps if those opposite had taken the time to listen during the public consultation—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Address your comments through the chair, please, member for Buderim.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** Sorry, Mr Deputy Speaker. Perhaps if those opposite had taken the time to listen during the sham public consultation last year—


**Ms PEASE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the statement by the member for Buderim.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, would you like to withdraw and continue?

**Mr MICKELBERG:** I withdraw. As I was saying, perhaps if those opposite had taken the time to listen during the sham public consultation last year we would not be here today remediating some of the many failures of Labor's politically motivated vegetation management legislation. Such a sentiment is probably wishful thinking, given that not a single tangible recommendation from the committee was accepted in relation to the previous bill, and the rights of farmers and graziers were traded for Greens votes in Brisbane. Queenslanders deserve better.

Stakeholder feedback in relation to the proposed amendment bill is broadly supportive of the provisions contained in amendment 3. Both the LGAQ and AgForce were supportive of the provisions, which provide greater accountability and transparency around departmental decision-making.

In conclusion, I urge the Labor government to support this sensible proposal. It will provide greater transparency in relation to departmental decision-making on this important issue and will go some of the way to restoring faith in the bush.

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (6.16 pm): I rise to oppose the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. The State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee recommended that this bill not be passed.

The provisions of this bill were first proposed in 2017, before the Palaszczuk Labor government passed our fair and balanced tree-clearing legislation. We passed those laws to reinstate responsible land clearing in our state. We had a mandate from the people of Queensland to end broadscale clearing of remnant vegetation, and that is what we did. We keep our election promises—something the Newman government could have benefited from perhaps more than they did.

If the member for Traeger had his way, Queensland would have even weaker land-clearing legislation than existed under the Newman government and the LNP. Under Campbell Newman, the equivalent of 1,000 football fields were being cleared every day.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BAILEY:** That is a simple fact. Those opposite may wish to debate it, but good luck on that. The bill also seeks to add a new provision to section 22A which would require the chief executive to provide an information notice to applicants following the refusal of an application. There is an existing appeal right under the Judicial Review Act. The rate of refusals is less than half a per cent for matters other than high-value agriculture.

The Palaszczuk government supports transparency and accountability in decision-making. We are also delivering for rural and regional Queenslanders. Since we were elected we have invested \$29 billion in infrastructure in the regions to improve services and boost regional economies. I will never forget the number of mayors who approached me in early 2015 to express their shock and dismay at the cuts to rural and regional Queenslanders under the LNP. They thought they were on a good thing, but the reality was that they received the opposite of what they were expecting. Even mayors from quite the conservative end of the spectrum were expressing that.

This year alone our infrastructure commitment across the regions will support more than 25,000 jobs. That is 63 per cent of all jobs supported by our budget this year. Today we have heard a lot of detail about our infrastructure deal, which is very good for regional Queensland and many parts of the state. We have had record infrastructure budgets in four out of five budgets.

This side of the House acknowledges that land clearing is a key contributor to greenhouse gas pollution and climate change impacts. We must never forget that land clearing in Queensland doubled after the LNP lifted controls, from 153,000 hectares to almost 300,000 hectares between 2012 and 2014. We must act to prevent excessive land clearing in Queensland and to protect our natural environment.

The need for further legislative amendments to vegetation management laws has not been established. There is already an appeal mechanism, as I mentioned earlier. Let me make a couple of comments in relation to the existing appeal rights under the Vegetation Management Act.


All decisions made under the VMA are subject to appeal under the Judicial Review Act, including determinations made under section 22A. For some decisions made under the VMA, the landholder also has a right to request an internal review and to follow this with an external review by the Queensland Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal. This secondary appeal process applies where the Vegetation Management Act requires the decision-maker to provide an information notice with their decision. Information notices are required for decisions to make a property map of assessable vegetation, or PMAV as it is referred to, or to refuse to make a PMAV, or to refuse to make an area category X on the PMAV. Information notices are also required with the issue of a stop-work notice or a restoration notice and when the decision-maker refuses to approve a restoration plan.

In relation to the number of refusals on section 22A determinations, since 2013 the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy has made 839 determinations under section 22A of which only 11 were refused—11. That is 1.3 per cent. These are the facts. Of these refusals, eight relate to high-value agriculture or irrigated high-value agriculture. As a result of HVA and IHVA no longer being relevant purposes, no further requests for a determination in relation to either one of those can now be made. Since 2013, only three refusals have been made relating to other relevant purposes at a rate of 0.5 refusals per year—three refusals, 0.5 refusals per year. That is a rate of 0.3 per cent, not even one per cent.

Let us acknowledge some of the facts in this case. In terms of this bill, the case has not been made out. This was well debated last year in this place. It is a matter that this government took to the election. We have a mandate. We are a majority government. We were very clear about it. We did not mislead people like the LNP in opposition did before the 2012 election by promising all kinds of things and then once elected junking it and doing something else. We value our integrity in terms of keeping our election commitments. We will always do that. That is what good government is about.

When it comes to vegetation management and tree-clearing laws, we have been very clear on this from the day of our election. We did seek to legislate in the first term. Due to a minority government situation and being one vote short, it was not passed. We went to the people and said, 'We will come back and we will get that mandate.' That was received with a majority government. We acted soon and swiftly, as we said we would do. This bill attempts to subvert that election commitment and that commitment to protecting our environment.

The current laws are reasonable. They are well implemented. They are fair about balancing the need to protect our environment while allowing people in agriculture to work. I do not support this amendment from the Katter party. It deserves to be voted down.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (6.23 pm): As a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, I rise to make a contribution to the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. As usual, I would like to acknowledge my fellow committee members and the secretariat for working through this bill in a positive manner.

Last year land-clearing laws regrettably passed through this House. Those opposite voted to pass the changes despite uproar from both us as LNP members and, more importantly, our constituents in regional Queensland. Labor had no interest in listening to or hearing from those who would be affected. The laws kicked our hardworking farmers, showing little care or respect for those who provide us with our food and fibre. Not one recommendation from the committee was accepted and landholders' concerns were completely dismissed.

Today we debate another bill which seeks to make some improvement. This bill is one of common sense, and from the outset I would like to voice my support for its passing. While on my feet I will address the current situation for landholders—what the passing of this bill will mean for landholders going forward—and also the LNP's plan for the future.

Earlier last year emotions were running high for farmers right across Queensland. Our committee was given an incredibly short time frame to produce a report and, despite the inquiry receiving the largest number of submissions of any committee of the Queensland parliament to date, our request for an extension was denied. We travelled the state and heard from stakeholders who expressed their anger, frustration and disappointment in the proposed changes to legislation. Locally in my electorate of Bundaberg I consulted with peak industry bodies like Canegrowers and Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers which had similar concerns about the lack of government consultation and their inability to make decisions for themselves.

In spite all of this, thanks to those opposite those proposed changes are now the law. Labor has no idea when it comes to regional Queensland or agriculture. Since the laws came into effect, this city-centric government has locked up almost half a million hectares of agricultural land, removed the clearing of high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture, and has installed a full development application process for clearing which includes a development application fee of over \$3,500—all while our farmers are battling more than two-thirds of our state still under drought declaration. These changes were not built on science and, sadly, they affect everyone. They stop our farmers from sustainably managing and clearing their own land, forcing Queenslanders to pay more at the checkout for quality locally grown meat and fruit and vegetables.


In addition to these negative influences, the vegetation management laws have left farmers with incredibly limited rights. At present, under section 22A of the act, there is no possibility to appeal or review a rejected application. This is simply unfair and needs to change. That brings me to the purpose of the bill being discussed today.

The bill being debated here today seeks to amend section 22A. Ensuring the chief executive has that obligation to issue a notice where an application has been rejected creates a mechanism for an internal review. An avenue for review should be expected in situations such as this. As the member for Condamine said, it should be a no-brainer.

The LGAQ, or Local Government Association of Queensland, supports the change, stating that the change provides greater accountability and transparency around decision-making for the benefit of landholders and councils. AgForce also principally supports the increased transparency of departmental decisions for landholders.

When the LNP was in government in 2013, we reduced the burden on Queensland landholders with a commonsense vegetation management framework. In 2016, while in opposition, we successfully defended its reforms and late last year we strongly opposed Labor's arrogant changes to the law. The LNP works with farmers, landholders and key stakeholder groups to deliver workable, commonsense solutions that allow our farmers to get on with the job of managing their properties. Labor works against them, making life so much more difficult.

We believe farmers and landholders deserve to be treated fairly, not demonised as environmental vandals. We are the only party that has consistently stood up for our hardworking families and we will always fight for our farmers and their property rights. The amendment under debate tonight will make a positive difference to our agricultural industry in Queensland. I strongly encourage everyone in the House today to support its passing to allow our farmers the transparency they deserve.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (6.28 pm): I am grateful to make a contribution to this bill, a bill that has been put forward only because Labor's vegetation management laws are bad legislation. Labor's laws are proving damaging to Queensland's primary producers and to the towns of rural and regional Queensland. These cynical, unscientific laws are damaging the interests of Queenslanders and the management of Queensland's agriculture and ecosystems.

Good environmental legislation at its heart is about stewardship. Countries around the world who are the most successful at environmental protection recognise that land ownership confers stewardship. You cannot separate the two. This nexus is at the centre of every successful environmental initiative. When you attack the ownership, you lose the stewardship. As I brace for the jeers from the government benches, let me say again that environmental stewardship is in the DNA of Queensland's farmers and graziers. They are the ones who live the environmental values that Labor pretends to espouse.

Labor, on the other hand, shows little understanding of Queensland's landscapes and seems to care even less about learning. If they did, then their disgraceful vegetation management policies might—just ever so slightly—connect with reality. They might recognise there are 13 different and distinct ecosystems in Queensland that require different management if they are to thrive. What is best practice for one ecosystem might be irrelevant or not very good for another. Evidence based policy would look nothing like Labor's approach. Their approach is rigid where it where it needs to be responsive; slow and bureaucratic where it needs to be agile and timely.

A perfect example of that is Tom Marland from Gin Gin. After nearly 12 months he was still waiting for hazard reduction permits when fire jumped a road and devoured his grazing lease. There is no point in the permit now, but guess what? The permit had been approved but not processed. As I said, it is rigid, slow and bureaucratic when it needs to take into account the reality on the ground and respond in a quick and timely way.

Because we understand this, when in government the LNP reduced the burden of red tape on Queensland landholders. We consulted widely and put in place a commonsense vegetation management framework. When Labor tried to overturn these laws with a brutal and clumsy approach—including a reverse onus of proof that denied farmers the presumption of innocence—the LNP led the fight that saw those laws thrown out. While examining Labor's recent Human Rights Bill it occurred to me that in drafting the bill Labor simply demonstrated that they knew their 2016 vegetation management bill trashed the human rights of a whole class of Queenslanders. They knew it and were happy to do it for votes in the West End of Brisbane.

When that evil bill was defeated in the chamber I knew that Labor would have another crack. For them it is all about consolidating their power. They actively demonise our farmers and graziers not because they think they are bad; they do not think about farmers and graziers because they could not care less about them. They are a convenient pantomime villain to show off Labor's green credentials to the city elites. Labor's vegetation management laws attacked landholders' property rights by locking up almost half a million hectares of agricultural land with no compensation. At the same time, Labor shifts the cost of environmental stewardship onto those same landholders because Labor knows their deep love for the land and cynically exploits it. They know that those same farmers and graziers will work until they drop battling the erosion of our fragile soils and taking control of native plants, animals and feral pests and the infestation of our landscapes by exotic weeds.

Let me quote Dr Bill Burrows. Before his retirement Dr Burrows held the position of Senior Principal Scientist (Woodland Management) at the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. He spent over 40 years researching Queensland's vegetation scientifically. As he told a federal inquiry into the topic—

... research has shown that a practical approach to restructuring our grazed woodlands, based on detailed field trials, can lead to a tree-grass balance and structure that will deliver on both production and conservation objectives. The fact that agenda driven politicians, green bureaucrats and conservation zealots completely ignore such studies is telling. Their actions suggest that they—

**Dr LYNHAM:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

**Mr MILLAR:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Pugh): I have not ruled on the minister's point of order so you cannot have a point of order before I have made a ruling. The minister has raised relevance. I have been listening. I would ask the member to stick to the long title of the bill.

**Mr MILLAR:** Dr Burrows continued—

Their actions suggest they have no real understanding or interest in the continued well-being and livelihood of rural landholders in the grazed woodlands.

He is right. He also demonstrates scientifically the problem of regrowth and woodland thickening without active management. This can create real erosion problems, because without grass to hold it in place heavy rainfall will wash away topsoil. Grass is like glue for the soil; it holds the soil in place. Being around agriculture all my life, I have seen that firsthand. It plays an absolutely critical role in making sure we do not see erosion. The last thing that farmers and graziers want to see is soil erosion. When they cannot manage their properties and clear woody vegetation to allow the grass to come up to protect the soil, they see erosion. When the soil erodes it creates major problems for our production cycles. The trees choke out the grass but their deeper root systems let soils wash away. Farmers actively manage their land to prevent this from happening. Sadly, Labor is happy to paint farmers as environmental vandals, but it is their own unscientific laws that are setting up disaster.

There is barely an aspect where their approach is not deficient. The bill before the House seeks to address one aspect: accountability and transparency on the part of the government and the administrators making the decisions. Labor's vegetation management regime does not require the chief executive to give an applicant any explanation when rejecting an application based on section 22A. This is unacceptable. It is not a fair process and it is not a process that allows landholders to understand the legislation and learn how to work within it. They pay their \$3,500 application fee and are told no and to go away with no explanation.

This set-up also creates unnecessary administrative risks. It is likely to damage the reputation of the vegetation officers because they will be seen as arbitrary and even vindictive. Those officers are part of our local rural communities and live in our rural towns. They play sport, go to the RSL and are friends with these people—and they continue to be friends—but they are put in a position that stretches that friendship. We need to make sure that those officers—and obviously the graziers and farmers—

work together and are not combative. The legislation that Labor put in has made it combative and unjust for farmers and graziers. That is something that we, as Queensland legislators, must not facilitate or endorse. That is why this bill is important.


It will compel the chief executive to issue an information notice where the application has been rejected based on section 22A. In doing so, it creates a rare opportunity for the scrutiny of those decisions. Not only will landholders better understand the requirements of the legislation but departmental officers can use the opportunity of the internal review to ensure their decisions are correct. Local government is, of course, a key landholder in regional Queensland, and the LGAQ supports this amendment because of the greater transparency it will create for local governments across Queensland when they make decisions on behalf of ratepayers.

**Mr Bennett:** The state has got to do more.

**Mr MILLAR:** But we need the state to do more, and I take that interjection from the member for Burnett. We have to make sure that we get this right. When Labor introduced the current vegetation management regime last year we saw a sham consultation process that completely ignored farmers and landholders. We saw our parliamentary committee process mocked. Not a single recommendation of the committee was accepted. I went to those meetings, along with many of the members of this side of the House, and saw how landholders, farmers and graziers were ignored.

I always like to quote this statistic because Labor always talks about clearing football fields. The amount of vegetation cleared in Queensland is 0.23 per cent. If you want to include regrowth and land clearing in urban areas I think it comes to about 0.45 per cent. It is time for the Labor Party to stop demonising farmers and let them get on with the job of creating opportunities—

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (6.38 pm): I rise to speak on the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. This bill aims to improve transparency and accountability in relation to unfair and restrictive laws. It makes commonsense changes and the LNP will not oppose the bill.

The bill aims to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing, as assessed under section 22A of the act, has been rejected and to remove grazing activities from the definition of high-value agriculture clearing to ensure that it is considered a relevant purpose in the chief executive's consideration of an application to clear under the act.

The first policy objective is to enable a reasonable appeals process, and I note that the second objective—to remove grazing activities—was ruled out of order. The committee noted that the amendment about the provision of an information notice is significant under this act as it triggers the internal and external review processes available to applicants. It recommended that the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy examine the merits of providing an information notice to applicants under section 22A of the Vegetation Management Act 1999.

The government's changes last year to the Vegetation Management Act are the most draconian, extensive and aggressive attack on rural and regional landholders. It has had two goes at railroading changes through the parliament. It was about the political appeasement of the activist green movement which is driving this government and holding rural industries hostage. Every time I get up to speak in this parliament, I have to say that this is yet another example of the lip-service this government pays to consultation. It pays lip-service to providing transparency in decisions.

The consultation on vegetation management changes of the Labor dominated committee was purely about going through the motions; it was disingenuous. At one time the minister told us, 'I have repeatedly said that a key element of achieving this commitment will be through thorough consultation with a range of stakeholders.' They were shallow words. The consultation process was a sham and farmers were completely ignored. It only highlighted Labor's arrogance. Not a single recommendation from the committee was accepted, and landholders' concerns were arrogantly disregarded. Many of the activist groups which have the ear of the government are anti agriculture, anti resources and anti economic development. In fact, as payback some of the worst offenders are now employed by the government.

Under the act, the provision of an information notice by the department's chief executive triggers the internal and external review process. Section 22A of the act deals with situations where applicants can apply for a development approval to clear vegetation on land. Under section 22A, no such requirement to provide an information notice exists and consequently no review process trigger exists.




This means that rejected applicants have no remedy to internal review of the decision or an external review to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal, or QCAT. In respect of the operation of the high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture provision of the act, AgForce noted—

Despite following all criteria in the HVA/IHVA guidelines, some members have been refused a positive s22A determination and not been provided with an information notice, leaving them with no recourse to an internal review. Some members have communicated that they have had to go to extraordinary lengths with Queensland Government in order to receive s22A approval ... In some instances, this has involved inordinate costs and extended timeframes with the engagement of lawyers in cases before the Planning and Environment Court and/or QCAT. A greater degree of transparency on s22A assessment and approval would have provided landholder applicants with a far better understanding of the prospects of their application being successful and most certainly would have reduced their need to resort to expensive court costs and legal proceedings simply to receive an answer from Queensland Government.

Farmers and graziers are trying to run their businesses with their hands being tied behind their backs. They work in an environment which is subject to conditions outside their control, such as the weather, international trade issues and the fluctuation of our currency. Government legislation and regulation should not make it harder for them to do their job. Labor has effectively locked up almost half a million hectares of agricultural land, while two-thirds of the state is still drought declared. As it removed the ability to self-assess for mulga clearing, it just added another layer of bureaucratic red and green tape to slow down the entire process. Farmers are true environmentalists and responsible custodians of the land. It always makes good sense for them to sustainably manage their land. Grant Maudsley of AgForce said last year—

... rather than being 100 per cent focussed on ecology the whole time, we have to do both. We have to grow food for this state and we have to look after the environment. We accept that and we are proud to do that.

The current vegetation management laws are a kick in the stomach for our hard-working farmers who put food on the table. They are a brutal and unprovoked attack on farmers, their families, their workers and farming communities right across the state. The LNP will continue to work with farmers, landholders and key stakeholder groups to deliver workable, commonsense solutions that allow farmers to get on with the job of managing their farms. I do not oppose the bill.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (6.45 pm): I rise to support the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. This bill has been sitting before the House for nearly two years now, and it is great that it will finally see the light of day and be debated for the second time in the last three to four months.

The objective of the bill is to amend the Vegetation Management Act 1998. This will create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing, as assessed under section 22A of the act, has been rejected. I will expand on what that means for farmers right now. There are farmers out there who are too scared to apply for these permits at the moment because they are too scared to spend \$400,000 or half a million dollars to go through the process and have it drawn out by the department and not hear what is going on with their application for month after month, only to finally get a 'no' with no actual response on why it is a no.

I have gone through applications—although they were not Vegetation Management Act applications—with other departments when I was working in my own small business. It is really disheartening to go through the application process and then just be given a 'no' from a department. It has happened to me before. If we then ask them to point out exactly where we have not met the criteria, they sit there and say, 'We're not here to go through the legislation with you. That's up to you to try to figure out.' Can you imagine these farmers who have spent up to a million dollars trying to go through the application process being given that answer?

It is timely that we are debating this bill when we are in the grips of one of the longest-running droughts we have seen in this great state for a long time. Some places have been in drought for up to seven years. That is why the member for Traeger will be moving amendments during consideration in detail, if that side of the House actually lets us get to that part of the process. The aim of the amendments will be to remove regulation burden from the practice of using vegetation, fodder, to sustain livestock with grazing in the drought declared areas.

This will mean taking away a regulatory burden from people who actually want to use some of this mulga country to feed their livestock. Right now there is a huge burden on graziers who are wanting to buy fodder, hay and sorghum from interstate. That is doing two things. It is putting a financial burden on our farmers during one of the worst droughts in history, and it is also putting a burden on the market for people who are trying to sell hay. People in New South Wales who are affected by the drought are being affected by the vegetation management laws here in Queensland because our farmers do not have the opportunity to access that fodder that sits on their property.

There are 45 million acres of fodder species like mulga in southern Queensland that is right now simply not able to be touched. These laws are holding back farmers from feeding their livestock. Their livestock are dying out in the paddock. They do not have the water right now but they have got the fodder and that fodder would keep these animals alive.

We have heard instances where farmers are saying they have fodder out there that they have knocked over. We have to remember that they are not clearing this vegetation. Farmers do not want to clear this vegetation; they do not want to plough it in and get rid of it altogether. They are just knocking it over so the cattle can actually feed on it. If mulga is knocked over in this particular way—and it is just harvesting fodder; it is not clearing—it regenerates so quickly. It is used to this. It is like mowing grass. Just because you mow your grass, it does not mean your whole lawn dies. Mulga is very similar; you cannot kill it. People have gone broke for many years trying to kill it but it just keeps growing back—so much so that two years after knocking it over it will grow 12 feet.

Because we probably will not get to the consideration in detail, I seek leave to table these amendments.

Leave granted.

*Tabled paper:* Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018, amendments to be moved by Mr Robbie Katter MP [2127].

*Tabled paper:* Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Mr Robbie Katter's amendments [2128].

We would like both sides of the House to consider the removal of 'grazing activities' from the definition of high-value agriculture clearing to ensure that it is considered a relevant purpose in the chief executive officer's consideration of an application to clear under the act. High-value agriculture is all about improving pastures. That is talking about getting out there and sowing some seeds, irrigating those pastures and doing a lot for the soil retention. That includes reducing the amount of sediment that runs off these farms into the Great Barrier Reef, which seems to be such a great concern for some members opposite.

Farmers know how to manage the land, and I must draw on an experience I had once when travelling with a committee out in the west country near Mount Isa. I was sitting on a bus with other committee members and I was sitting opposite the member for Nudgee. She said, 'I can't believe how beautiful it is out here.' She was watching the sun going down over a cattle station. That does not just happen. That land has been managed for over a hundred years. That did not just happen. Those improved pastures exist because our great farmers got in there and knew how to manage the land. When they turned up it was quite arid. A lot of work has been done to increase the profitability and the ability of farmers to supply a great product in terms of the beef stock.

I return to the long title of the bill. What we are trying to achieve is to give our farmers the right to appeal. It is such a great thing for our farmers to have the ability to appeal. One of the members opposite said earlier that only 0.03 per cent of applications are being rejected. Do honourable members know why? People do not want to go through the application process—

**Mr Katter:** Run the gauntlet.

**Mr DAMETTO:**—to run the gauntlet. Who the hell is going to spend all that money to go through the process when people who have an agenda have infiltrated our departments and do not want to give the tick of approval for any development on these agricultural lands? Last year the Labor government's vegetation management bill was passed and not one of these farmers who have now been told how they can and cannot manage their land, which they have done for hundreds of years, has been compensated. That is an absolute travesty. To be able to go through the process and at least be given a reason why their application was not successful is very important. That is something for which we on this side of the House will continue to fight.

**Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (6.53 pm): I rise to speak to the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018. We heard earlier the LNP will not be opposing this bill. The Palaszczuk-Trad Labor vegetation management changes have knocked the confidence from landholders, increased their paperwork and restricted their activities during drought—and that drought has been ongoing for eight years in some areas. This is why we are having this debate. Labor's laws are designed to demonise our hardworking farmers who have been putting the food on our table and the fibre on our backs.

Labor's vegetation management laws have proved to be a brutal, unprovoked attack on farmers, their families and the farming communities right across Queensland including in my electorate. The prolonged drought has made the impacts of these additional restrictions on the farmers in my electorate even greater. Labor's laws have had the effect of aggravating drought conditions by drawing more

moisture from the soil. They have increased the number of trees and that has also increased the severity of the drought. Across my electorate we are now seeing large areas of trees and mulga dying from the drought because they were choking themselves out of moisture. Where mulga and trees are too thick they are dying, and they are dying in large areas. These areas actually need to be thinned so that vegetation and trees can survive.

Managing mulga is not land clearing. It is about a regeneration process of the mulga trees and those mulga trees also happen to be a very good fodder source for stock. Unfortunately, we saw Labor's changes that removed the high-value agriculture and the irrigated high-value agriculture for clearing purposes. In my electorate during this drought I have had numerous constituents crying out for the high-value agriculture opportunities and the small irrigated high-value agriculture permits. Just having the opportunity to grow some silage would mean so much during this drought. It would help them to keep their core breeding stock alive without having to purchase fodder, in many cases from interstate. I have farmers who are purchasing fodder from as far away as Victoria and South Australia. The cost of the freight is the same cost as the load of fodder.

Labor have also introduced a development application process for which the DA fee is some \$3,500. How many of these development approvals under this legislation have been successful? I am advised there have not been very many. Labor's laws amended the definition of high-value regrowth to be vegetation that has not been cleared for 15 years from the current 29 years, locking up almost half a million hectares of agricultural land. This was a very sneaky restriction. This is what young landholders in the Augathella area in my electorate tell me in relation to how they have been restricted by these changes by the Labor government. They said—

My great grandfather purchased 20,000 acres of trees, it was considered lower grade country. He had a vision just like we do now.

Two generations later that area is now a productive buffel property turning off over 2,500 feeder cattle a year.

It also supports a huge biodiversity of fauna and flora, I challenge anyone to find the same in a national park/state forest.

Why can't we have the same opportunity?

Why can they not have the same opportunity their grandfather did? That is what landholders in my electorate are saying about the Palaszczuk-Trad vegetation management laws; they are highly disappointed and they feel highly restricted.

Labor's laws removed the area management plan that provided an alternative approval system for vegetation clearing under the Vegetation Management Act 1999 that takes into account particular vegetation categories and regional ecosystems in a given bioregion, geographic area, district or property location. Labor's anti-farmer laws removed the ability to self-assess for mulga clearing and harvesting and added a slow, bureaucratic, red-tape process. The Labor government might say that their approvals are now in place for two years, but what good is an approval for two years when the stock have actually eaten that fodder in the last two weeks?

Landholders are finding themselves having to do multiple permit applications so that they have sufficient mulga to keep their stock alive during this prolonged drought because nobody knows when the drought will end. There is a problem with the 500-hectare permit for mulga fodder. Say someone has a 60,000- to 90,000-hectare property and it is all on one title, what they get is one permit for 500 hectares. If the property is made up of three titles they then get three permits. If it is a large property on one title they will be feeding stock in different paddocks depending on the mulga and the waters, so they really need more than one permit to realistically feed their stock.

Around Charleville there are a number of properties that are one title. This is because of the south-west strategy back in the 1990s when there was a property build-up scheme to amalgamate titles. That is why we have a lot of properties with one title. These people are disadvantaged by Labor's vegetation management laws because of the one fodder permit per title situation.


Labor's laws removed the self-assessable code for thinning, and that thinning code worked very well with the fodder-harvesting code. Labor's laws expanded the power of entry to allow authorised officers to enter a place to monitor compliance for clearing of vegetation. The Palaszczuk Labor government created a situation where landholders have fewer rights than suspected criminals.

The policy objective of the bill is to amend the Vegetation Management Act 1999 to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice when an application for clearing is assessed under section 22A of the act and has been rejected, therefore creating a mechanism for an internal review.

Debate, on motion of Ms Leahy, adjourned.

## ADJOURNMENT

### Currumbin Electorate


 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (7.00 pm): Currumbin deserves a true community champion. I am far from perfect but I have always put my electorate first, ahead of my political party. Members of the Currumbin LNP branch and countless local residents believe Chris Crawford to be a true community champion and are firmly behind him. Disappointingly, it seems that the power and influence wielded by a few certain individuals in the LNP, including Gold Coast regional chair Roger Emmerson, want to deny him the opportunity to represent Currumbin.

Labor have announced their candidate for Currumbin for the next state election. They tossed aside poor Georgi Leader, who ran at the last election, for Kaylee Campradt from the far left. Ms Campradt is listed as campaign officer for the Queensland Council of Unions—that far leftie mob who incite youth to be activists, to wag school to take part in protests, and who want union members, under the guise of the Youth Workers Hub, to be allowed into schools to indoctrinate students to join unions. We can guess her stance on the Teachers' Union push to terminate the Independent Public Schools program brought in under an LNP government. PBC High was one of the first, if not the first, schools in Queensland to become an IPS. It has been fantastic to watch the school community grow stronger, build links with business and have autonomy in decision-making. With Kaylee and other Labor affiliates on the P&C committee, this could be destroyed.

Labor's candidate is also the P&C president at Currumbin State School. This explains why I have not been invited to any P&C meetings at the school. Parents contact me about a lack of air conditioning because the Palaszczuk government will not listen. Kaylee will not listen. It was announced at the November meeting of our local chamber of commerce, where I am the No. 1 life member after 25 years of support, that the Currumbin P&C had just become new members and that Kaylee is the contact person. The Premier announced that Kaylee had been preselected as the Labor candidate for Currumbin on 25 October, so she most likely was a candidate when the P&C joined the chamber. She is trying to infiltrate a chamber of commerce that supports small business while her employer—for want of a better word—the QCU, takes a stick to them at every opportunity. She even brought her campaign director fresh from Sydney along to our meeting. There was no mention of the P&C. I wonder who is paying her wage for the next 11 months. I bet it will come from the cashed-up QCU.

Kaylee Campradt is a wolf in sheep's clothing, but she will not fool the community-minded citizens of Currumbin. Those I have spoken to say that she is scary, but so was the wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood*. Labor's candidate cannot have the best interests of the Currumbin community at heart as she will be a puppet of the union and the Trad dominated Labor government.

### South Brisbane Electorate, Schools

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (7.03 pm): I, like many—


**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms TRAD:** I know; I am speechless. I think there is an Aesop's fable around the sour grapes idea. Like many in this House, over the past few weeks I have spent some time attending terrific graduations, speech days and awards nights to celebrate the achievement of students in high school, particularly those graduating from year 12. There is nothing quite like the excitement, promise, potential and feeling of freedom just after you finish graduating high school. Nothing beats that feeling.

Tonight I pay tribute to the leaders and seniors of the primary schools in South Brisbane who have joined me here tonight—as have others in previous years—so that I can thank them for their leadership and their contribution to their school communities over the past few years. There is no doubt that, with many schools moving to start middle schooling in year 5, some of our primary schools see fewer students stay on to finish years 5 and 6. It really is a terrifically special group of students who stay on at their local primary school and make the position of leader, to step up to the table and to contribute to their local school community. I am really proud of the 2019 school leaders who are here tonight. Of course, they are here with their parents, who have worked very hard over the past seven years—from prep until year 6—to bring them along on their primary school journey. These are very important school years. I acknowledge not only the parents but also the principals and teachers. Tonight is a moment to celebrate everything you have contributed before you move into your own graduations and awards ceremonies, which I know will be spectacular because I attend them every year.

There is nothing better in this job than seeing the look of satisfaction and thanks on the faces of kids who are getting a great state school education. We are so proud of our efforts in the area of education—supporting teachers, building new facilities and ensuring classrooms have teacher aides. There is nothing better than being able to deliver that. Tonight we thank the principals, teachers, parents and students for everything they have contributed.

### Toowoomba North Electorate, Gas Usage Charges

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (7.06 pm): I rise to record the frustration and disappointment of my constituents. I have here a petition that has been signed by 300 constituents. It calls on the Minister for Energy to urgently review gas usage charges and the state government subsidies available to pensioners, seniors and low-income earners to help bring urgent price relief to residents across Toowoomba. I table the petition.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding household gas supply in Toowoomba [\[2129\]](#).

I have spoken about this issue before. My constituents continue to be disappointed and are certainly unhappy with the minister's inaction on this issue. In Toowoomba, the meters of thousands of people were read incorrectly. Some bills were three times higher than normal. Others as much as eight times higher than normal. I wrote to the minister. I table my letter, as it clearly outlines that we understood the issues.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 16 September 2019, from the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham, to the member for Toowoomba North, Mr Trevor Watts MP, regarding residential gas supply [\[2130\]](#).


The companies sent out someone who was not reading the meters. The minister could not have read my letter as his reply outlines what my constituents should do about the issues raised. I table the minister's response.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 22 July 2019, from the member for Toowoomba North, Mr Trevor Watts MP, to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham, regarding residential gas supply [\[2131\]](#).

We needed the minister to intervene. Some of the people affected needed some relief and the ability to spread out their payment over a period of time. They needed to be able to manage their cash flow after receiving three or four very low bills followed by a massive bill. Many of these people are pensioners and self-funded retirees—people who are unable to suddenly magic some extra cash flow to deal with a gas company that unfortunately had employed someone who was not doing their job.

Whilst we have had a few meetings with the companies and have done a lot to try to mitigate the damage, it is disappointing that the minister really took no interest in this matter. Thousands of people in Toowoomba have been affected by this. This issue is ongoing. What people miss is that gas is critical in some Toowoomba homes in winter as it is their heating source. At the moment people's gas bills are low, but in winter people's gas bills are high. People are not budgeting for a high gas bill in the middle of summer, so to suddenly receive one is incredibly distressing for some of these people. Most distressing is the minister's complete lack of interest in trying to reach a solution and resolve some of these issues for my constituents. Again I call on the minister to read the correspondence and to help the constituents.

### Mansfield Electorate, Australian of the Year Awards


 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (7.09 pm): I rise to acknowledge every Queenslanders who was nominated across the four categories—Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and Local Hero—in the 60th Australian of the Year Queensland 2020 awards held on 11 November.

I was particularly proud of Craig Tobin from my electorate of Mansfield who was a finalist in the Local Hero category. Craig is a past state and national swimmer who, in his spare time, devotes his expertise and experience to voluntarily coach Down syndrome and special Olympic swimmers. Craig has volunteered more than 6,000 hours over the past 10 years, coaching these athletes to state, national and international levels of competition, improving the quality of their lives along the way. Craig began running free community based swimming programs for refugee high school children and other minority groups in the area. These days he volunteers his annual leave to coach Down syndrome athletes at national and international swim meets. Craig has established a strong reputation as a swimming coach, extending this teaching to valuable life skills such as self-respect, self-control, teamwork, dedication and commitment—empowering our young people to become active, valued members of their community.

I also want to congratulate teaching colleague Rachel Downie, who was announced Australian of the Year Queensland 2020. After losing a year 9 student to suicide and recognising our young people's reluctance to come forward to report bullying, Rachel developed a self-funded tool called Stymie. More than 300,000 students nationally are using Stymie to report family violence, bullying, cyberbullying, depression, illegal activity, harassment, self-harm and harm to their communities. Schools implementing the Stymie program received more than 40,000 notifications from concerned students, empowering them to use their empathy and conscience to report harm and further a culture of care in their schools.

Every nominee for these awards is a role model for all Queenslanders. Their achievements and contributions go above and beyond what is expected. Their commitment to their ideals and abiding sense of service should be a source of pride and inspiration to us all. Educator Rachel Downie now joins the ranks of previous Queensland recipients including Professor Ian Frazer AC and Elijah Buol OAM. We wish Rachel every success as she represents Queensland and contends the Australian of the Year Australia Day award at the national ceremony in Canberra in January 2020.


### **Blue Card System; Morris, Mr K**

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (7.12 pm): Everyone agrees that the protection of children should be a top priority and that vigilance is essential, and we have a blue card system in Queensland to provide for that protection. However, more can and should be done. I want to relate to the House a recent experience by a constituent of mine who contacted me. John contacted my office about his dismay at the current blue card system. He was hiring for his business that works with children and interviewed a man originally from India. The man had a current and valid blue card as required to get the job, but John was unsure of the references the man had given and had a gut feeling to follow it up and so paid a company almost \$400 out of his own pocket to do an international criminal background check. After three months, John found out that the man had a criminal history in India for crimes against children. If not for the dodgy references that alerted John and the inkling he had that something was not right, John may well have employed this man in a business that involves children.

John contacted Blue Card Services, thinking it would be horrified at what had occurred and what he had discovered. Instead, he was not taken seriously and so felt compelled to contact my office. I understand that Blue Card Services has a lot of work to do, but if there are any added measures to protect the safety of our state's children then those measures should be paramount. I do note that the requirement for international criminal checks was a proposal put forward by the LNP but was voted down by the ALP earlier this year. It is sad to see that recommendations made by the Attorney-General requesting those international checks were not supported. I call on the Labor Party and the Labor government, including the Minister for Child Safety, Di Farmer, to make these urgent changes to the blue card system so that employing dangerous individuals with an international criminal record will not go unchecked, as the man who applied to John is still able to flash his blue card around in this state and still able to go out and seek work with children—someone with a record and a record that is discoverable.

In the time available to me I want to pay tribute to someone who has played and continues to play an important role in this state, and that is Mr Karl Morris. Karl will be retiring after six years as the head of QSuper. I appointed Karl in 2013 and he was reappointed by you, Mr Speaker, if I recall correctly, to continue his service. Over that period of time he has met the challenges as the independent chair of QSuper including board renewal, including executive renewal and including a period of very high growth and returns of funds to members. Indeed, there may well be further changes on the horizon for QSuper if what we read in the paper occurs. I want to thank Karl, who will continue in his role as chairman of the Brisbane Broncos—and he has perhaps an even bigger task there than he did when he took on QSuper—and also his own business, Ord Minnett, which is now proudly a Queensland owned and run international finance house. Congratulations, Karl. Thank you for your service to the community.

### **Fuel Prices, Reporting**


 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (7.15 pm): The Australian government and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission are primarily responsible for fuel pricing. However, the Palaszczuk government has taken action to assist Queenslanders to get the best possible deal at the bowser. Queensland motorists are now able to save at the bowser by using fuel price apps and websites to find the cheapest fuel in town. Since December our fuel price reporting trial has required all fuel retailers to report fuel prices within

30 minutes of a price change. About 1,530 retail sites, or 98 per cent that are signed up in this scheme, are now reporting their fuel prices. There are already 10 apps and websites that are using the data from our trial to make these fuel prices easily available to motorists to find the best deal. Even more apps and websites are expected to get on board with our trial.

Just in September a new national fuel app called Simple Fuel was launched by comparethemarket.com.au. A gentleman from my electorate Donald Farquhar has played an important role in the development of an app that he was kind enough to update me on in recent times. Using the data from our reporting trial, Simple Fuel incorporates Google Maps to help motorists seamlessly navigate the best price and the most convenient fuel to them. Simple Fuel is a national app, but of the thousands of people who have downloaded it since the launch the largest proportion are in Queensland. I am advised that already some motorists have enjoyed savings of between \$5 and \$20 on a single tank of fuel thanks to using the app. That is a big saving when we think about how many times a year we fill the tank. That is a big saving made possible by the Palaszczuk government's petrol price data initiative.

As Mr Farquhar said to me, the Queensland government's fuel price reporting is an important enabler for this mobile app innovation that has and will continue to put real value into the hands of Queenslanders. This is exactly the sort of saving that the Palaszczuk government envisaged when we made this data available. While fuel price reporting may not in itself lower fuel prices overall, it does empower Queensland motorists to save big by giving them the tools to shop around and find the cheapest fuel in these areas. This is real, practical help for families and businesses to keep their costs down. That is better for Queenslanders and better for Queensland's economy overall. Mr Farquhar asked me to pass on his thanks and his regards in particular to Minister Lynham for commencing this initiative and the foresight of the Palaszczuk government to deliver outcomes that will save real dollars for Queenslanders at a time when prices are up, as they are at the moment. This is an important initiative that the Palaszczuk government delivers in supporting Queenslanders, on this occasion supporting Queensland motorists.

### Noosa Electorate, Bushfires

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (7.18 pm): Wildfire, catastrophic, evacuate—these are all words that send a shiver up our spines and are becoming too familiar. Whether we call it climate change, a climate emergency or the will of God, the reality is that we have a changing environment. Forget the labels for a moment and look at what the immediate desired outcome is—safety for our communities. Before the first of our fires in Noosa there was some opposition to cool burns as part of reducing fuel loads, yet our local First Nations people have requested these be increased. We have scientists, experts and specialists stating that the intensity of fires are a result of a simple formula and that since we inhabited Australia the fuel loads are 10 times those experienced by our custodians and that equates to a tenfold power in terms of the fire.


This is then contradicted. No wonder there is confusion. Whether it is a difference in weather patterns making it difficult to schedule cool burns leading to increased fuel loads, or that disempowering label 'climate change emergency', the blame game is not what Queenslanders are seeking. They seek surety, cohesion and action.

The Noosa electorate was fortunate in multiple ways. The areas that could have been easily lost were saved. Clear, wide and accessible firebreaks gave our incredible firefighters the ability to defend villages in the most unstable of conditions. Cool burns were done. Fortunately, weather predictions did not eventuate.

Queenslanders have not had to contend with the fire conditions that our southern counterparts have had. Changing weather patterns or otherwise, to keep our people safer we need to reassess how we look at fire, our laws, regulations and communications. That reassessment includes how fire bans are calculated, communicated and categorised and how alerts are labelled, tabled and disseminated. That reassessment should also include fuel loads, firebreaks and how really to be fire ready.

My electorate went through two unprecedented fires in six weeks. The second fire saw 8,000 residents evacuated, some twice. No words can again convey our deep appreciation to all frontliners, including our volunteer emergency services men and women, the departments, the Noosa council team, residents, businesses and evacuees. No words can convey how urgent it is that we amend how we look at fire. We cannot wait for reviews or inquiries to get it perfect. Queenslanders require changes that can be implemented immediately to make them safer, mitigate risk and assist to alleviate the duress that our emergency services are under whilst other processes and adaptations are underway. Queenslanders can do this. Please, let us not wait until we act.

### Redlands Electorate, Achievements

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.21 pm): I think a few people in this House would have seen Jacinda Ardern do her two years in two minutes. This week, as I think everyone would know, it is two years of the 56th Parliament and our last sitting week. So much has been done in my electorate—projects underway and projects completed. I am going to give it a go, but I do not think I can do it all in two minutes; there is too much.

In education, there is the new Macleay and Russell Island KindyLinQ program; \$1.2 million Russell Island State School classroom refurbishments; \$1 million for the Victoria Point State High School library upgrade; \$100,000 for the Thornlands State School multipurpose court resurfacing; \$2 million for the Victoria Point State High School hall expansion—underway; \$9 million for the Redlands District Special School new learning precinct—underway; \$1.6 million for Redland Bay State School new buildings—under construction now; \$700,000 worth of new classrooms for Bayview State School; \$400,000 worth of new classrooms for Redlands District Special School—delivered; \$6 million for the Cleveland District State High School new multipurpose hall, \$2 million for the manual arts building, \$9 million in their new classrooms—construction underway; \$2.4 million for the YMCA new vocational school and youth hub—construction about to start this month; \$3.9 million for the Carmel College new administration building; design about to commence; Thornlands State School refurbishment of the administration building—design being looked at currently; and \$10 million for our Redlands TAFE revitalisation. That is not to mention free TAFE for year 12s, free apprenticeship and traineeship costs for 139 trades and new school crossings at Bayview, Macleay Island, Russell Island, Carmel College, Victoria Point, Faith Lutheran and Redlands College.

In transport, we have the \$37 million stage 1 Cleveland Redland Bay Road upgrade; \$5 million for the Anita Street intersection upgrade; \$9 million for the Victoria Point bus terminal; \$20.1 million for the SMBI ferry terminal upgrades—design process underway, community consultation great; \$1 million for the Moreton cycleway—stage 1; \$5 million for the Old Cleveland Road-Gateway on-ramp upgrade—design work underway; \$500,000 for the Victoria Point bypass study; and free inter-island travel for our southern Moreton Bay islands residents.


There is \$1.2 million in skilling southern Moreton Bay islanders under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program; \$600,000 in Skilling Queenslanders for Work for the Redlands Rugby League Club; \$50,000 in small business digital and entrepreneurial grants; assistance with the Redlands Regional Jobs Committee start-up; and a partnership with QUT and investors for our new hydrogen pilot plant out at the Redlands research centre.

In health, there is \$1.7 million for the Redland Hospital emergency and birthing expansion—underway and construction should be completed on that in January next year; a new car park business case—that should be completed at the end of this year; a hospital expansion master plan—completed in March this year and we now have the preliminary business case that is underway that should be completed early next year; an additional paramedic resource for our southern Moreton Bay islands; and Redland Hospital pilot programs in mental health and skin cancers.

In communities, there is \$1.5 million across the Redland local government area from the Community Benefit Fund; \$1 million for the new Maybanke crisis accommodation for victims of domestic violence; \$2 million for the IndigiScapes upgrade; \$175,000 for the Macleay Island Bowls Club; \$160,000 for the Victoria Point Sharks for their oval upgrade; \$20,000 in Redfest sponsorship; two new police officers for Russell Island; two new boats; new Stingray—

*(Time expired)*

### Steinhardt, Sgt M

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (7.24 pm): Today I pay tribute to a much loved local police officer in my electorate, Sergeant Matt Steinhardt. Earlier this month Sergeant Steinhardt was awarded the Wide Bay Neighbourhood Watch Police Liaison Officer of the Year award in recognition of his work with the Burnett Heads Neighbourhood Watch group. In the words of Neighbourhood Watch's Dawn Lawrence, 'His dedication to the QPS as his job, together with the inspiration, consideration and support he gives to the Neighbourhood Watch Burnett Heads/Port is above reproach.'

Since taking over as officer in charge at Bargara in 2013, Matt has helped to bring together the neighbourhood to administer a very successful community based crime prevention program. Through his work within the community and within the Neighbourhood Watch group Sergeant Steinhardt has helped to build a safer community for everyone and created an awareness of the importance of policing.



After arriving in the Bundaberg area in 2006, Matt Steinhardt worked in general policing and then as a detective in the child protection unit, investigating some of society's more unspeakable crimes. In 2007, then Detective Constable Steinhardt became the adopt-a-cop for Kalkie State School to play a supportive role for students as they embark on their journey to adulthood. Matt spent time talking to the students about cyberbullying and preparing for high school. It is no surprise that in 2013 Matt was recognised for his sterling effort and awarded Adopt-a-Cop of the Year for the North Coast Region for his work with Kalkie State School.


The Burnett Heads/Port group is one of the 425 Neighbourhood Watch groups in Queensland. Sergeant Steinhardt has been involved with that Neighbourhood Watch group for some years. He has attended every meeting possible and if he cannot make it he always arranges a proxy. Matt makes sure that he is available to chat privately with residents as needed. He has actively encouraged the Cuppa with a Cop events. Elderly residents find the sharing of their concerns with a police officer reassuring, especially with one who has the best interests of their community very much at heart.

When nominating Sergeant Matt Steinhardt for the Police Liaison Officer of the Year, the committee noted—

Nothing is too much trouble and he communicates with our Group via emails and responds when we need assistance. This is over and above what anyone has done for the group. Sgt Matthew Steinhardt is a unique Police Officer and he shows this in every aspect of his involvement, be it in the Community or with NHW Burnett Heads/Port.

It is difficult to place a true value on peace of mind, but it is entirely possible to state that Sergeant Steinhardt's approach and involvement in my community makes all the difference. I know I speak on behalf of many in my community when I say thank you to Sergeant Steinhardt for his patience and kindness. My community is a better place for having such a police officer in it. I wish all police officers who are going through the festive season all the best. They have the support of our communities as they do so much in our communities.

### **Duxbury, Mr B; Grapevine Group**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (7.27 pm): I would like to pass on my sincere condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Brad Duxbury, who tragically lost his life in an industrial accident last night at the Carborough Downs mine, which is located south-west of Mackay.

Back in my teaching days there was a little Christmas rhyme that the students would recite with their music teacher. It went like this—

Christmas is coming the goose is getting fat,  
Please put a penny in the old man's hat,  
If you haven't got a penny a halfpenny would do,  
If you haven't got a halfpenny, then God bless you.

This little rhyme reminds us that there is a lot of excitement and anticipation in the community for the arrival of Christmas. The subtle message of this rhyme also reminds us that not everyone is going to have a great Christmas. In fact, for some members of our communities Christmas is a very difficult time.

Mackay's Grapevine Group is a local organisation that recognises that not everyone will be bathed in the glow of Christmas bliss. For some it is a painful time of the year that highlights loneliness or deep-seated issues that have been suppressed. Mackay's Grapevine is a suicide prevention group. It prepares our community for the lead-up to Christmas and to be aware and on the watch for those who are vulnerable at Christmas. On Thursday this week Grapevine will launch its Christmas message to the community to help everyone be aware of the 16 signs of suicidal thoughts and behaviours. The more education our community has about suicide, the more opportunities we have of making every conversation count, be aware of the signs and know where to seek support for ourselves or our friends or family members.

Throughout the year Grapevine delivers a free session for workplaces and individuals under its Safe Talk program. I have attended the training and recommend that everyone should do it. I also recommend that members make time for their staff to be trained as well. The training gives people the tools and the confidence to ask the difficult question, 'Are you thinking about suicide?' and be aware and alert to the 16 signs of suicide.

So far Grapevine has trained 5,502 locals in suicide prevention. It wants every conversation to count in our community. Grapevine has also produced a card about the size of a credit card with all the important services listed in the region. The Help-a-Mate card contains simple information that people

can keep in their wallets. Grapevine has launched Heart to Heart Hairdressers in partnership with the Mackay Women's Centre to provide life-saving suicide prevention and domestic violence awareness for the Mackay region. Grapevine is in consultation with TAFE to include this training in its course for apprentices. Eventually every hair salon and barber shop will have someone trained. This program should be rolled out into all of our communities. It is another opportunity to make every conversation count.

*(Time expired)*

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson