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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

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## THURSDAY, 28 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.

### PRIVILEGE

#### Alleged Failure to Register an Interest, Apology



**Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (9.31 am): Mr Speaker, I make no apologies for who I am and the blood that runs through my veins, but I do rise to speak on a matter of privilege that has arisen. I was made aware that, on our recent trip to Vanuatu to reaffirm our twinning and historical and cultural connections, one of the legs of the journey was paid for by the Vanuatu government. This was covered by them as they value the return of one of their blackbirded ancestors. I have corrected the Register of Members' Interests, and I apologise to the House for this oversight unreservedly.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mirani.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

#### School Group Tours



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

### MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

#### Tenni, Hon. MJ OAM



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.32 am): I move—

1. That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the services rendered to this state by the late Hon. Martin James Tenni, a former member of the Parliament of Queensland and minister of the state.
2. That Mr Speaker be requested to convey to the family of the deceased gentleman the above resolution, together with an expression of the sympathy and sorrow of the Members of the Parliament of Queensland, in the loss they have sustained.

Mr Speaker, the Hon. Martin James Tenni was a product and a champion of Far North Queensland. Born in Cairns on 4 April 1934, he was educated at Freshwater State School, Cairns North State School and Cairns Intermediate State School. Following his schooling Mr Tenni undertook national service training with the RAAF in 1952 and began working in the hardware industry. In the 1960s he established his own hardware supply business, with one shop in Mareeba and two in Cairns. Mr Tenni also became active in his local community, for instance, serving as president of the Mareeba Chamber of Commerce. He also served on the Mareeba branch of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Board. In 1970 he took his involvement in community affairs to the next level when he successfully stood for election to the Mareeba Shire Council. He served as a councillor until 1976 and was chairman of the council from 1973 to 1976.

In 1974 Mr Tenni was selected by the National Party to contest the seat of Barron River at the state election held in December of that year. Barron River was a relatively new seat, having been created at an electoral redistribution in 1971. At the time of the 1974 election Barron River was held by Bill Wood of the ALP, but Mr Tenni prevailed in that election contest. Among the 32 new members elected to the 41st Parliament that year—45 years ago—were the first Indigenous member of this House, Eric Deeral; a swag of future cabinet ministers; no fewer than three future Speakers—John

Warner, Lin Powell and Neil Turner; and the fathers of two members of this parliament, the member for Maroochydore's father, Gordon Simpson, and the member for Traegar's father, a 29-year-old Bob Katter. Mr Tenni went on to represent the seat of Barron River for 15 years, being re-elected on four occasions.

During his time in the parliament Mr Tenni served in many roles. From 1975 to 1983 he served on a number of government party committees across many ministerial portfolios. In 1978 he represented the parliament on a parliamentary delegation to Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and the South Pacific. In August 1983 the coalition between the National Party and Liberal Party in this state ended, and at that point the then premier, Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, elevated Mr Tenni to his cabinet. Mr Tenni then went on to serve Queensland as a cabinet minister for just over six years, firstly under Premier Bjelke-Petersen until December 1987 and then under Premier Mike Ahern until September 1989. During this time Mr Tenni served as Minister for Environment, Valuation and Administrative Services from 1983 to 1986; Minister for Water Resources and Maritime Services from 1986 to 1987; and Minister for Mines and Energy from 1987 to 1989, and also during 1989 as Minister for Northern Development. He retired from this House shortly before the state election of December 1989.

After leaving the parliament in November 1989 Mr Tenni remained active in his community through many organisations. In recognition of this, in June this year he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the parliament of Queensland and the community. The Hon. Martin James Tenni passed away on 20 October, aged 85 years, and a service to commemorate his life was held in Gordonvale on 31 October. He has been remembered for the lasting nature of his efforts on behalf of Cairns and the Far North, including his leading role in founding the Cairns campus of James Cook University, developing the Cairns Airport's international status, and securing vital infrastructure for the region, in particular through projects in the areas of health, education and transport.

I place on record the government's thanks for the years of service Mr Tenni gave to the institutions of our democracy and to the Queensland community, and on behalf of the government I take this opportunity to extend my sympathy and that of this House to Mr Tenni's wife, Dawn, his family, relatives and friends.



**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (9.36 am): It is an honour to stand today to pay tribute to the remarkable legacy of the Hon. Martin James Tenni. The contributions Martin made as the National Party member for Barron River will live on forever. Roads, universities, airports and schools all advanced under his conviction to deliver projects that would stand the test of time, and Martin's passion for life and commitment to service will live on in his family and friends. On behalf of the opposition, we would like to place on record our most sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Martin shaped the far north of this state, and life in the far north shaped Martin's values and ideals. He was born on 4 April 1934 in Cairns. He was educated at Freshwater State School, Cairns North State School and Cairns Intermediate State School. He began his working life at the age of 14 with Northern Builders' Services, a hardware store in Cairns. He worked his way up to store manager before he left to form his own business called Tenni's Hardware in Mareeba. His outlook was to provide service to people, and that brought him success. The business expanded and Martin opened three more stores in Cairns and one in Cooktown.

Martin married Marion Dawn Hickling on 3 March 1956 and they had a son, Wayne, and a daughter, Raelene. In 1969 he was living in Mareeba when some 'silly bugger', as Martin described them, said he should become a local councillor, so he put up his hand for Mareeba shire division 3 and successfully entered the Mareeba Shire Council. This marked the beginning of Martin's lifelong commitment to serve his community, and he got to work straightaway. By 1973 he was chair of several committees, running his hardware businesses and serving as the chairman of the Mareeba Shire Council. It was during this time that some 'silly clown' told him to go into state politics, and Martin decided to put his hat in the ring. In 1974 he won the seat of Barron River from Labor on a margin of 0.7 per cent. Martin was full of purpose, and his maiden speech to this House set out what he wanted to achieve. He said—

I am conscious of the honour bestowed on me as the elected representative for the Barron River electorate, which was held by the Labor Party for countless years. It is my intention to get things on the move in Barron River and to see the area developed into one of the most prosperous in Australia.

Martin remained the chairman of the Mareeba Shire Council throughout his first term in parliament. He survived on three hours sleep, such was his devotion to Mareeba and Barron River. The signs of his commitment to the community are all over the region today. Martin knew how to get things

built. His leadership saw roads constructed to connect Cairns to Mareeba, out to Walkamin and Bilwon and on to Mossman, Daintree, Cape Tribulation and Wujal Wujal. New primary schools were built across the region, including the Daintree and Mount Molloy. He delivered the new Smithfield high school and ensured other local schools received the extensions they required. Law and order was helped by the building of new police stations. The Mareeba Hospital and the Cairns Base Hospital were rebuilt and the Mossman Hospital was completely renovated.

Everyone who knew Martin knew he loved fishing, and he built facilities that local boaties could be proud of, including new ramps and jetties. Generations of Queenslanders will benefit from what the Hon. Martin Tenni delivered for the Far North. He was tenacious in ensuring the services and infrastructure in Barron River were as good as any electorate in Brisbane. He claimed his electorate received as many dollars per head of population compared to the south-east over a five-year period.


He not only delivered for Barron River but his ministerial service to Queensland was immense. When he was appointed to cabinet in 1983 as the minister for environment and administrative services, he had the distinction of being the Far North's first state ministerial representative in 26 years. He was also responsible for Queensland's water supply, ports, harbours and dams when he managed the portfolio of water resources and marine services. Martin's time as the state's minister for mines and energy came during difficult world commodity prices and fierce overseas competition. The mining industry turned in a very credible performance in 1987-88, with production valued at \$2.145 billion.

Mr Tenni also devoted his time to many organisations. He was a former chairman of the fundraising committee for the Mareeba Garden Settlement aged persons home, a founding member of Yorkeys Knob Boating Club and chairman of the Mareeba branch of the Queensland Ambulance Transport Board. He was also a member of the James Cook University Cairns Campus Committee which raised funds and purchased the land for the campus at no cost to the government.

Martin's long stint in public office ended when he retired from the Queensland parliament in November 1989. Every day across his 15 years as an MP, he rolled up his sleeves and committed to delivering more opportunity and prosperity to Far North Queensland. In his retirement, Martin spent two years on the National Party management committee and has been National Party campaign manager for Barron River, Cook, Mulgrave and Leichhardt. In his retirement, he grew vegetables in foam boxes as a hobby to give away to his many family and friends. Martin's lifetime commitment of service was recognised earlier this year in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. When awarded his Order of Australia medal in June, Mr Tenni told the *Cairns Post*—

My main aim in life was to do things that were going to last forever and create employment and that's exactly what's happened. Every police station, every hospital, including the Cairns hospital, every school, and every piece of road ... and every bridge across the Barron River, all of those things were done by my pressure on different ministers.

Today I thank the 'silly clown' who told Martin to enter politics because Far North Queensland would not be what it is today without him. On behalf of the state Liberal National Party, I extend sincere condolences to the friends and family of the Hon. Martin Tenni and our heartfelt gratitude for his contribution to Queensland. May he rest in peace.

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.44 am): As it has been said, Martin Tenni was born on 4 April 1934 in Cairns and so began a life of service to the people of Far North Queensland. When he was the owner of a hardware store in Mareeba, Martin decided to run for local council in 1970 to support other local businesses in the area. As it has been said, he served as chairman of Mareeba shire for three years before his election to parliament in 1974.


Martin was often described as a man who would not take no for an answer and would often defy backbenchers and other members of parliament when bills were not fit to represent the people of Cairns. He was later promoted to Joh Bjelke-Petersen's front bench as minister for environment, valuation and administrative services. During this time as minister, he was involved in pivotal decision-making around decentralisation of the environmental department, and this became one of the key issues he worked on during his time as minister.

Martin later became minister for water resources and maritime services in 1986 and then minister for mines and energy in 1987. Finally, he added northern development to his portfolios in 1989. During this time, Martin championed state ownership and lowering power prices for Queenslanders—something that members of this House to this day are still committed to. He was perhaps most notable for his continued lobbying for development of major infrastructure projects in the Far North. Indeed, you

can see Martin Tenni's fingerprints all over the region—on projects like the Cairns Airport and James Cook University. He helped get electricity to islands in the Torres Strait, he got Smithfield high school built, and in 1987 he saved the Cairns courthouse building from demolition.

His retirement from parliament on 10 November 1989 did not end his advocacy for the town that he loved. He remained active within the National Party and continued to lobby for Cairns's fair share. In 2019 he was awarded an OAM for his work within the community and his long service to the Far North. Martin Tenni is a name synonymous with Far North Queensland. His important work in growing the region will be remembered for a long time. I personally want to thank Martin for helping shape the city that I now call home. He was the first state minister from the Far North—a legacy I am proud to carry and one that you, Mr Speaker, have also carried.

I extend my condolences to Mr Tenni's family, his wife, Dawn, and children, Wayne and Raelene. May his tenacity, drive and determination to make Far North Queensland a better place never be forgotten.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (9.46 am): It is a sad honour to rise to speak to this condolence motion to acknowledge Hon. Martin Tenni, but it is an honour because this was a man who not only served the state well but was a true son of Far North Queensland. I think it is appropriate to quote from his inaugural speech to this parliament on 11 March 1975, when Martin Tenni said—

I am conscious of the honour bestowed on me as the elected representative for the Barron River electorate, which was held by the Labor Party for countless years. It is my intention to get things on the move in Barron River and to see the area developed into one of the most prosperous in Australia.

My whole outlook in business has been service to people, and that brought success. My business activities, which covered an area north from Babinda and west on the Cape York Peninsula, were successful and were built from the ground up by my personal efforts. It is my intention in my term of office to give service to my electors and at all times to consider the welfare of my fellow man. On my election I, honouring an electoral promise, resigned from my business as managing director.

He went on in his inaugural speech to outline his service as chairman of the Mareeba Shire Council, an area which covered 20,000 square miles as it was at that time, and chairman of the local ambulance committee, his business interests and his passionate work in the community. We have heard a number of his achievements inside and outside of parliament. His concluding remark in his inaugural speech was—

I will at all times uphold the dignity of this Parliament and strive to be a valuable representative of my electorate in the tradition of the great statesmen who have adorned this House and made their contributions to the glowing panorama of Queensland's progress.

Martin Tenni certainly achieved what was required in the development of Far North Queensland. He had a legacy of roads, infrastructure and health. As we have heard, he was fundamental in the early roles with respect to the establishment of James Cook University and the establishment of Cairns Airport as an international airport.

In trying to hear the voices of not only Martin but those who served alongside him in this place, sadly I cannot ask my father for his comments as dad, like many in that vintage, has passed away. I do know that my father and many others saw Martin Tenni as a great champion of this state and someone who was passionate about his electorate. Tom Gilmore, who served in the parliament with him but not in the cabinet, said that he was a vigorous man, he had great energy and he was decisive in all that he did.

I think we saw that from the long list of things that Martin Tenni achieved in this parliament. To call on the voices of those who knew him best, I thought I would quote his daughter, Raelene Bruce, as reported in the local papers. The article states—

"He was Dad and he was always there. Even before the days of mobile phones, we had a number we could get him on," she said.


"He took me and my brother camping. That was his passion—camping and fishing. And when I had boys, he took them camping and fishing.

"And he loved the great grandchildren in recent years."

I think it is worth talking about that legacy. For all that we do in this place in terms of the infrastructure and the services that we fight for in our individual areas, it is the legacy of what we invest in the next generation that is the most powerful, and Martin never lost sight of that. The tributes from those who knew him best—family and friends—certainly attest to the fact that he was consistent as a man in his values and the actions he took. His actions were consistent in his love for his family and his community.



We remember him as a man who served honourably, as a man who served with passion and as a man who served with energy. In this House today we particularly remember those who are left behind. To his wife, Dawn, and the extended family, we express our condolences and say this is a legacy that is invested in not just the physical infrastructure of this state but the next generation. For that we say thank you.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (9.51 am): I, too, rise to support the condolence motion in memory of the Hon. Martin Tenni, the former member for Barron River. I had the privilege of getting to know Martin as one environment minister to another. He came to my attention when I was appointed shadow minister for environment in the lead-up to the 2012 state election, but I will come to that in a moment. Other speakers have outlined Martin's considerable roles and the positions he held in local council, within parliament itself and within the broader community he represented. I reached out to another former colleague the former member for Barron River, Michael Trout, and good friend of mine for a couple of stories that might embellish a bit of what we have heard this morning.

As the Leader of the Opposition mentioned, one of his responsibilities when minister was to build dams. In fact, the story goes that when the then premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen, appointed his ministers he was very clear that if they went over budget he would be finding someone who could manage the portfolio more appropriately. He made Martin the water minister. During his term he was responsible for building the dam we now know as Bjelke-Petersen Dam. In those days there were no mobile phones and the contractor who was building the dam urgently tried to get in touch with Martin, the then minister. When he finally made contact with Martin, the contractor said he had hit a lot of unexpected rock and that he would go over budget. Martin was very concerned but was thinking the figure might be around \$100,000 over budget when, in fact, it was \$1 million over budget. In true Martin Tenni fashion, he was trying to determine whether he would be sacked for going over budget or sacked for not building the dam that would bear the then premier's name. To ensure neither happened he found cuts in his budgets elsewhere, built the dam and stayed under budget and kept his ministerial role.

We have also heard how he took no prisoners in ensuring Far North Queensland was developed, and many of the infrastructure projects have been mentioned. Michael Trout shared this story at Martin Tenni's funeral recently. Land was identified in Port Douglas for the Sheraton Mirage project, which was spearheaded by John Morris. It was up to Martin as the local member to convince the ministers that Crown land along Four Mile Beach should be made 'special purpose' for a world-class resort. Martin Tenni had lined up all the ministers with the exception of Russ Hinze, so he found out when Russ was next in Cairns and had a helicopter waiting to whizz him up to Port Douglas. As honourable members can imagine, Russ Hinze was not built for helicopters; they actually scared the living daylights out of that former minister.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** No, it was not a Chinook; I take that interjection. To make matters worse, on that day it was extremely windy. After hovering over Port Douglas, Russ Hinze just wanted to get out of the chopper. Martin being Martin asked Russ whether he would give his approval. Russ said, 'Yes. Just get this chopper on the ground.' Martin got his approval and Sheraton Mirage got its approval and ultimately put Port Douglas on the map.

As others have said, Martin was not afraid to share his opinion. My personal contribution that I want to finish on is that as minister for environment I spent a lot of time in Cairns and a lot of time dealing with crocodiles in particular. Every trip to Cairns involved a visit to John MacKenzie and 4CA. Whilst Martin and I spoke a lot on the phone and through various other means, it would always occur—every single time—that after talking to John he would throw open the phones, 'First caller, Martin Tenni.' Martin would then proceed in front of the broadcast audience on 4CA to tell me what I was doing wrong and how I could do it better. That approach—you just had to cop it on the chin—as others have said, is what made him such an excellent councillor and such a superb local member and minister. It is for that reason that Far North Queensland has become what it is today.

We pay our respects to Martin Tenni and pass on our sympathies to Dawn and the extended family. Rest in peace, Hon. Martin Tenni.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, will you indicate your agreement by standing in silence for one minute.

*Whereupon honourable members stood in silence.*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, the revised commencement time for question time will be approximately 10.42 am.

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Electoral System, Reforms



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.57 am): Next week marks 30 years since Wayne Goss was elected premier. Wayne and his government dismantled the gerrymander, established the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission to redraw electoral boundaries more fairly, implemented the Fitzgerald inquiry reforms, established the Crime and Misconduct Commission, saved Fraser Island, appointed the first women judges and the first women directors-general and left us the Gallery of Modern Art just to name a few. However, it was the implementation of the Fitzgerald inquiry and reforms and making elections fairer for which Wayne's government will be best known. Thirty years on we continue the work that Wayne started.

Today my government introduces legislation that cleans up once and for all the links between big donors and political parties. Under this legislation there will be expenditure caps for registered political parties and associated entities, candidates and third parties involved in election campaigning. To put it simply, voters will not have to worry about whether money talks. So-called cash for access will be gone.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The arms race of political advertising will end. Elections—at least in this state—will not be influenced by the highest bidder. Candidates already receive public funding based on their election results.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members to my left, there may be a different point of view. The Premier is not being provocative as I hear it. I would like to hear the ministerial statement.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Raising public funding opens up our democracy to more people, giving Independents and minor parties the same access as big parties. These measures have been welcomed by the Centre for Public Integrity, a group of respected former judges including Tony Fitzgerald. As the group says—

Public trust in our democracy is low. The Commonwealth has the weakest integrity laws in the country.

We intend addressing this problem and providing leadership. Today, I also fulfil my promise to create offences to capture deliberate and intentional dishonesty by ministers for failing to disclose a conflict to the appropriate body and register an interest in the register of interests where they intend to gain a benefit for themselves or others. My position on this issue has been unwavering. Members must live up to their responsibilities.

The first piece of legislation my government introduced was to force political parties to reveal the identities of more of their donors by reducing thresholds. We introduced real-time disclosure so that everyone knows from where the money is coming. The LNP fought our laws all the way to the High Court and lost. When previous governments introduced laws similar to the ones we introduced today, Campbell Newman overturned them. His apprentices are no doubt hoping to do the same thing.

Thirty years ago Wayne Goss said that the people of Queensland want a government able to guarantee the highest standards of accountability and integrity. It was true then and it is true now. Once again, it has taken a Labor government to do it.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Election Commitments



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.01 am): My government prides itself on making realistic and honest commitments to benefit the lives of Queenslanders. Our election commitments focused on our key priority areas of creating jobs and a strong economy, keeping Queenslanders healthy, giving all Queensland children a great start, keeping communities safe, protecting the Great Barrier Reef and being a responsive government. Today I table updates of the progress made on implementing election commitments: *Progress report on 2015 government election commitments* and *Progress report on 2017 election commitments*.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Progress report on 2015 government election commitments, November 2019 [\[2162\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Progress report on 2017 government election commitments, November 2019 [\[2163\]](#).


These documents show that my government is a government that delivers on its promises. Since re-election in 2017, my government has delivered almost 75 per cent of the commitments made to Queenslanders. We have delivered on 371 of our 498 commitments. The *Progress report on 2015 election commitments* shows that 521 commitments have now been completed.

Both reports show that we are achieving real results for the people of this great state. Some of the highlights include that we have delivered on our commitment to extend the Works for Queensland program until 2020-21, bringing the total commitment to \$600 million and creating jobs across regional Queensland. We delivered on our commitment of \$808 million for the Building Future Schools Fund and further bolstered the investment to a total of \$1.3 billion to 2024-25—for example, \$12.1 million for new infrastructure for Maryborough State High School and \$2.75 million for North Rockhampton High School to upgrade key school facilities.

We have delivered on Pathways to Training, Skills and Jobs by investing \$35 million in the Pimlico TAFE and \$12 million in the Toowoomba TAFE; we delivered a \$4 million grant to assist in the development of a state-of-the-art training facility at Beenleigh; and we delivered other free TAFE initiatives. We have tackled congestion on the roads—for example, investing in the Logan M1 with an eight-kilometre upgrade, increasing the number of lanes from six to eight and providing a new on-ramp at Loganlea and Paradise roads. We are committed to the wellbeing of Queensland, which is why we delivered the Health and Wellbeing Queensland agency, to help our community make positive lifestyle choices and assist in the prevention of chronic disease.

We know that energy prices are important. That is why I am proud to say that our state owned renewable energy company, CleanCo, is up and running. It will help to increase competition in the industry and contribute to easing prices for households. That also helps protect our environment by increasing our renewable energy supply and supporting our goal to reach 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. These are just some of the many achievements evidenced in the election commitment reports, demonstrating the success of my government in delivering our promises and improving the lives of Queenslanders.

### Screen Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.04 am): It is a boom time for Queensland's screen industry, with an unprecedented pipeline of productions choosing Queensland as their location of choice. My government backs the screen industry because we back jobs. In fact, we just had the best result in Screen Queensland's history, demonstrating the growth of the industry in our state.

In 2018-19 Screen Queensland funded 32 film and TV productions and games, injecting an estimated \$262 million into the economy and creating more than 2,600 jobs across cast and crew. This includes domestic productions such as ABC TV series *Total Control*, filmed on location in Winton; the second series of children's animation *Bluey* by Brisbane's Ludo Studio—and who does not love Bluey; my nieces know all the words—and *Strait to the Plate*, a factual TV series filmed in the Torres Strait and produced by the Lonestar Co. in Cairns. We have also continued to attract high-end film and TV projects such as *Godzilla vs Kong* and the TV series *Reef Break*.

Mr Speaker, put on your blue suede shoes: 'the king' is coming to Queensland. Very shortly Baz Luhrmann will start a production on the life of the one and only Elvis Presley.

**Mr Bleijie:** He was at the Alliance on Monday night!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This production, which starts next year, is expected to employ 900 Queenslanders and inject more than \$105 million into the local economy. If the member for Kawana is nice, we might even get him to go on set!

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Only if he is nice.

**Mr Bleijie:** You don't know: I could be at a roll call!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Let me assure you: no-one is on the phone to you!

Some of our other achievements this year include: we provided more than \$950,000 to 30 film festivals and events in locations across the state; we announced the first four projects attracted to Queensland through the enhanced post, digital and visual effects incentive that will spend \$15.2 million

in the state and create an estimated 110 local jobs; and we have attracted Screen Forever to Queensland in 2020, Australia's premier event for 850 screen industry professionals, giving us a unique opportunity to showcase our state's world-class capability.

Mr Speaker, I know something that you personally are interested in: we have released the Far North Queensland Screen Production Strategic Plan, which aims to boost the capability of the region's screen sector in the Far North of our state. Only my government is committed to backing the screen industry in Queensland and to backing Queensland jobs.

### Smith Family



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (10.06 am): It is less than one month until Christmas. While it is a wonderful time of year for many families, it can also be a tough time for many others. It is long-running charities like the Smith Family that try to make this time of year a little easier for those disadvantaged—helping them by providing toys, sweets and, importantly, educational sponsorship to try to break the cycle of poverty. This afternoon I will be launching the Smith Family's Christmas Appeal here under the Parliament House Christmas tree. I will be kicking off their fundraising efforts with a \$100,000 donation from the Queensland government.

The Smith Family is hoping to raise \$600,000 with the generous support of Queenslanders through this year's appeal. Funds raised will help give 1,400 disadvantaged children access to essential learning support and mentoring programs. These programs help them to catch up and keep up at school. The best start we can give our kids in life is an education, so please dig deep to help those who are less fortunate. Your generosity can change the course of a child's life and let them enjoy a very merry Christmas.

### Electoral System, Reforms



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (10.08 am): The Palaszczuk government is ensuring the integrity of our democracy for all Queenslanders. On 29 October I stood with the Premier and announced our game-changing electoral reforms. These reforms will cap donations to curb the corrosive influence of big money in politics and limit electoral expenditure to ensure that all voices can be properly heard in our political discourse. These changes will significantly enhance the fairness, integrity and transparency of Queensland's electoral system. As promised, I extended an invitation to registered political parties to attend a briefing so they could gain more clarity around the reforms. I also provided a briefing to a collection of peak bodies and third parties likely to be affected by the bill.

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the LNP for coming along to that briefing as well.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Everton will direct his comments through the chair.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Today I will proudly introduce our Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. The bill will be subject to an extensive committee process, building upon my consultation with groups like the Centre for Public Integrity. Today I will also be requesting a parliamentary committee to consider whether caps should be put in place for local government into the future. The review will see the Palaszczuk government delivering on the last outstanding recommendation of the CCC in the Belcarra report.

This bill builds on the comprehensive electoral reforms already achieved by the Palaszczuk government. We lowered the disclosure threshold so Queenslanders could know who is funding their candidates and political parties. We introduced a nation-leading real-time disclosure system and I am moving to ensure that in the last seven days of a campaign we have disclosure of a political donation within 24 hours of it being made. We acted on CCC recommendations to ban property developer donations, and we fought for our laws. We fought for them in the Supreme Court, we fought for them in the Court of Appeal and we fought for them in the High Court, and we won. We fought for these laws because we know Queenslanders want a democracy that they can be proud of. We will never stop fighting for them.

This bill will also reform the laws around signage for elections, and we welcome the community's views on these proposals. The Palaszczuk government is also delivering on the integrity recommendations of the CCC with two new criminal offences. This government will continue to ensure

that we have the strongest laws with the most transparency in this country. We welcome a national discussion on these reforms and call on the Commonwealth to introduce more transparency around donations and elections so that we can have fairer and more transparent electoral laws at all levels of government.

### Road Safety, Distracted Driving



**Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.11 am): Queensland drivers illegally using mobile phones, endangering their lives and other people's lives, have been put on notice. From 1 February next year they will face the toughest penalties in Australia to make Queensland roads safer. Under the changes the Palaszczuk government is announcing today, drivers caught illegally on their mobile phones will be fined \$1,000 for their first offence. Demerit points for this offence will increase from three to four. If drivers are caught a second time within 12 months, double demerit points will still apply, rising from six demerit points to eight demerit points, and they could lose their licence for a second offence. These are tough penalties but they are necessary to reduce fatalities and tragedies caused by crashes involving distracted drivers.

In 2018, 33 people died on Queensland roads in crashes involving distracted drivers. Another 1,358 people were hospitalised in distracted driving crashes in 2018. This is totally unacceptable. The terrible truth is that the real numbers of deaths and severe injury are certainly much higher. Due to difficulties investigators often face in determining driver distraction as the cause of a crash in the aftermath of a crash, the true number of people being killed or injured is under-reported. Reaching for the phone to send a quick text or check social media when your eyes should be on the road is as dangerous as driving drunk. A driver's slower response time while texting is comparable to that of a drunk driver with a blood alcohol level of between .07 and .10. It is a deadly habit that has been escalating and now is the time for it to stop.

Queenslanders want action, and they are getting it. More than 1,250 Queenslanders responded to our online survey on this issue earlier this year and an overwhelming number of those commenting supported an increase in penalties for distracted driving. In July the Palaszczuk government hosted Australia's first ever Distracted Driving Summit to push this issue onto the national road safety agenda. The summit brought together vehicle manufacturers, tech companies, insurers, telco companies, road safety specialists and legal professionals to discuss solutions to distracted driving. With these road safety reforms announced today, Queensland is leading the way nationally.

Now is the time to send the strongest possible message on distracted driving. Road safety campaigns on distracted driving will run early next year ahead of the 1 February changes and we are giving people two months notice of this kicking in. Most of us will spend time in the car with family and friends over the summer holiday break, so with Christmas approaching I say to anyone out there who is still using their mobile illegally while driving: now is the time to once and for all deal with the phone before every single drive. I urge all Queenslanders to have that conversation about distracted driving with their family, with their friends and with their workmates. Give the phone to your passenger, put it in the glove box or set it to the 'do not disturb' setting so that you are not distracted while you are driving and so your eyes are on the road—where they need to be. Let us make this the safest Christmas on Queensland roads that we have ever had. Distracted driving needs to become as socially unacceptable as drink-driving because it is the same risk to other drivers and other people on our roads. This is actually a small but crucial change to our driving routine but it is one that could save your life or the life of someone else.

### Building and Construction Industry, Security of Payment



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport) (10.14 am): I have excellent news for Queensland tradies and for job creation in the Queensland construction industry. Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has been rebuilding confidence in the construction industry so tradies know they can be paid in full on time every time, because we on this side of the House know that when a family business has the confidence that they will get paid they can plan to grow that business. They can plan to employ more Queenslanders. A bricklayer named John from Townsville who runs his own business hit the nail on the head when he said to me, 'If only I got paid on time, I'd buy a new truck and I'd put on an apprentice tomorrow.'

The Palaszczuk government committed to introducing project bank accounts, and we delivered while those opposite sat silent—not willing to back our reforms, not willing to back in Queensland tradies because the LNP in Queensland stands for nothing. We committed to an independent review before

expanding reforms to the remainder of the industry and we also committed to tackling the issue of fraud in the industry through the Special Joint Taskforce, and today we are delivering on those commitments. In accordance with section 200A of the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017, I table the Building Industry Fairness Reforms Implementation and Evaluation Panel report.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 29 March 2019, from Building Industry Fairness Reforms Implementation and Evaluation Panel, Ms Bronwyn Weir, to the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport, Hon. Mick de Brenni, regarding report to Parliament titled 'Building Fairness: An Evaluation of Queensland's Building Industry Fairness Reforms' [2164].

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Building Fairness: An Evaluation of Queensland's Building Industry Fairness Reforms' [2165].

I also table the government response, which indicates support for every single one of the 20 recommendations.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Building Industry Fairness Reforms Implementation and Evaluation Panel report 2019, government response' [2166].

The Palaszczuk government will now progress this historic reform right across the industry despite those opposite and their defiance of the rights of Queensland tradies—

**Mr Hart** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh.

**Mr de BRENNI:**—and I again call on those opposite to back our nation-leading reforms.

**Mr Hart** interjected.

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

**Mr de BRENNI:** The Palaszczuk government also supports all 10 of the recommendations of the Special Joint Taskforce report, and I table the Special Joint Taskforce report and the government response.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Special Joint Taskforce: Investigating subcontractor non-payment in the Queensland building industry' [2167].

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Report titled 'Special Joint Taskforce: Investigating subcontractor non-payment in the Queensland building industry, government response' [2168].

Progressing the recommendations of the Special Joint Taskforce—

**Mr Hart** interjected.

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

**Mr de BRENNI:**—will deal with the historic failings of statutory declarations as proof of payment by placing compliance and enforcement powers with the Queensland Building and Construction Commission. As a result of the referrals by the task force, two prosecutions are already before the courts and a further 73 matters are under investigation.

The Palaszczuk government is relentlessly backing Queensland job creation and this is what the introduction of project bank accounts will deliver—more jobs for Queensland tradies and more certainty and security for Queensland businesses. Independent economic analysis by Deloitte shows that our reforms will deliver a boost to the Queensland economy of \$12.6 billion over the next 20 years and create 2,373 new construction jobs. What is needed in the Australian economy right now is certainty for industry and confidence, and that is what only the Palaszczuk government will deliver for Queensland tradies.

### Watson Snr, Mr S



**Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.18 am): Queensland and Australia have lost a fearless, tireless fighter for the rights of Indigenous Australians. Sam Watson Snr was a proud member of the Munnenjarl and Biri Gubba Juru tribunal nations, with blood ties to the Yuggera, the Kalkadoon and the Noonuccal peoples. A lifelong activist, community leader, author, academic and filmmaker, Sam was a fearless, tireless, passionate advocate for his people. Across more than half a century he made an indelible contribution to the advancement of the rights of First Nations peoples. In the 1960s Mr Watson campaigned against the White Australia Policy. He was involved in both the 1967 referendum campaign and the Gurindji land rights claim in the Northern Territory. He served at the Aboriginal embassy in Canberra from 1972, the year it was founded.


Through the 1970s Mr Watson worked with elders to establish community organisations and peak bodies in health, housing, education, employment and legal aid. Through his work with the Brisbane Aboriginal legal service in the 1990s, Mr Watson played a vital role in implementing the findings of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

In 2009, Mr Watson was appointed deputy director at the University of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit where he taught courses in black Australian literature. As an author and screenwriter, Mr Watson was named national Indigenous writer of the year in 1991 for his novel, the *Kadaitcha Sung*. He wrote and co-produced the 1994 film *Black Man Down*, which was screened to global audiences as part of the Sand to Celluloid collection of Indigenous short films.

Sam famously tore down place names that were offensive to Indigenous Australians, but he also fought to preserve those that remind Queensland of the racial prejudice in our past, like Boundary Street in West End. Mr Watson is survived by his wife, Cathy, and his children Nicole Watson and Sam Wagan Watson. He is also survived by a legacy of impassioned activism and generations of Queenslanders who will carry on his fight against injustice. Vale Sam Watson.

**Mr SPEAKER:** May he rest in peace.

### **Watson Snr, Mr S; Biotechnology**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (10.20 am): Can I begin by associating myself with the comments of the Deputy Premier, as I know many members of this House wish to do, and express our collective condolence to Mr Sam Watson's family and the broader Indigenous and Queensland communities.


The Queensland bioeconomy means more jobs in more industries. That is why the Palaszczuk government is working hard to create a \$1 billion biofutures industry that boasts world-class innovation in bioenergy, biotechnology and bioproducts. The bioeconomy holds the promise of creating jobs by converting waste and unused products like bagasse and beef tallow into the fuels, chemicals and energy that our growing economy needs.

Our successes in biofutures were celebrated during Australia's first Bio Innovation Week, which was held in Queensland from 11 November to 15 November. As part of Bio Innovation Week, national and global bioinnovators, investors, businesses and researchers visited our state to participate in events focused on bioindustries. The week's activities included regional roadshows in Toowoomba, Gladstone and on the Sunshine Coast; a research summit; a topical agricultural conference; and a policy summit.

A key event was Australia's premier national bioenergy conference, BioEnergy STRONG, which was held at the State Library of Queensland. I was pleased to meet BioEnergy STRONG conference delegates and to announce the first recipients of grants from the Queensland government's \$5 million Waste to Biofutures Fund. Six new bioprojects, collectively valued at \$22 million, will soon be delivered in Queensland following a \$1.9 million investment from the state's Waste to Biofutures Fund. These projects will help convert waste streams into bioenergy that will power industry, charge electric vehicles and create useful products such as organo-mineral fertilisers.

These projects exemplify the innovation that is making Queensland a world leader in renewable fuels but, most importantly, they mean more jobs in more industries—85 new jobs from this initial investment alone. I look forward to providing further updates to the House on Queensland's bioinnovation projects and this government's plans to develop a more sustainable, low-carbon economy.

### **Tourism Industry, European Advertising Campaign**

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail) (10.23 am): Under the Palaszczuk government Queensland's tourism industry is booming, because we understand that you cannot have a strong Queensland economy without a strong Queensland tourism industry. Today I am proud to announce a brand-new marketing blitz to sell our Great Barrier Reef to the European market.

With temperatures soon set to drop to below zero in many parts of the Northern Hemisphere, there could be no better time to remind European tourists that they can fly to Queensland and enjoy our beautiful sunshine, 30-degree temperatures and a state where life is beautiful one day and perfect the next.

With our regional tourism organisations, today I can announce that we are spending more than half a million dollars on these new marketing campaigns that will reach tens of millions of Europeans. The Great Barrier Reef will be central to these campaigns, because we know that it generates around \$6 billion a year for Queensland and supports more than 59,000 full-time jobs across our state. This is a great win for the regions right along our coastline—from Cairns and Townsville in the north to Gladstone, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Mackay and, of course, the Whitsundays.

The year 2019 has been a massive year for tourism, with record growth in tourism spend and more people employed in the industry than ever before in Queensland. We promise not to cut funding like the LNP did when it was in government. We look forward to working with tourism operators and partners to create even more jobs in 2020.

### **Cairns Hospital, Cardiac Catheter Laboratory**



**Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (10.24 am): Heart disease is responsible for one in three deaths in Queensland. Last year, we saw a 10 per cent increase in the number of patients arriving at Queensland hospitals with a cardiac condition. Mr Speaker, last month I joined you and the member for Cairns to officially open the second cardiac catheter laboratory at Cairns Hospital. That is right: the second cardiac catheter laboratory for Cairns. This means that people in Cairns now have even more cardiac care services.

The \$2.8 million project, jointly funded by the Palaszczuk government and the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation, will allow more than 600 cardiac patients to be seen next year. This new facility will make a big difference for patients who will now be able to receive treatment closer to home. It will mean that a lot more patients are seen quicker and, in lots of cases, it will mean that they can avoid travelling to Townsville or Brisbane for treatment.

These additional services are not just life changing for patients; they also mean more health jobs in the region. During construction, 25 staff and three apprentices were employed. Now that the catheter laboratory is operational, additional health staff have been hired, including a dedicated nurse unit manager and a new specialist. Thanks to the new catheter laboratory and new frontline staff, Cairns Hospital can now deliver electrophysiology—a specialised treatment for patients with heart rhythm problems. When I visited the hospital I was told that the hardworking team had already been able to double the number of patients receiving implantable devices with the addition of the electrophysiology specialist.

Not only is this cardiac catheter laboratory a boost for Cairns but also it is a boost for other rural areas. The Cairns Hospital cardiac team has also recently started providing outreach services to patients across the Cairns and hinterland and Torres and Cape HHS regions as part of the Palaszczuk government's \$12.4 million cardiac care commitment. This is a significant step in helping to close the gap in Indigenous health outcomes. I would like to thank the Cairns community. Their \$1.4 million in donations is a testament to the support and love the people of Far North Queensland have for the Cairns Hospital.

### **Watson Snr, Mr S; School Infrastructure**



**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.26 am): I add my condolences to the family and friends of Sam Watson. I worked with him for many years and what a strong advocate for his peoples he was.

On this final day of the parliamentary year it is a good time to not only look back at the previous 12 months but also to look forward at the 12 months ahead. Over the past year, we have invested more than \$1.5 billion to build, maintain and improve Queensland state schools, because we know that our state schools are great schools. By the time this House convenes again in 2020, the Palaszczuk government would have opened eight new schools—new secondary schools at Calliope, Coomera, Fortitude Valley, Mango Hill, Ripley Valley and Yarrabilba as well as a new primary school in Ripley and a new special school in Caboolture. They will all be ready for day 1 of term 1 next year. These new schools will not only cater for greater student numbers in rapidly growing parts of our state but also provide a great boost to our economy by supporting local jobs. Construction will also be well underway at five new schools ready for the first day of school in 2021, including the Inner City South State Secondary College, a secondary school at Baringa, primary schools in Pimpama and Palmview and a special school in Palmview as well.




By the time this House sits again, 61 high schools throughout the state—from Cairns to Cleveland and from Proserpine to Pimpama—would have benefited from the \$250 million 2020 Ready Program, which has created more than 700 jobs across Queensland. This construction program has built classroom blocks, science laboratories, design studios, dance studios, staffrooms and various other learning spaces just to name a few, all to accommodate the additional 17,000 students expected in secondary schools in 2020 as we move to six full cohorts.

By the time we are back in this place again, we would have also continued our \$235 million investment to renew our existing school infrastructure, delivered 30 new school halls under our \$200 million Advancing Queensland State Schools program, implemented our fast-tracked \$50 million priority air-conditioning program this financial year, and put more than 17,000 solar panels on school roofs.

We are undertaking the largest education building program Queensland has ever seen, which means better outcomes for students, better outcomes for teachers, teacher aides and staff and more jobs for Queensland, all delivered on time and on budget. Education is one of the Palaszczuk government's top priorities and we will always ensure that children get the best start in life through a world-class education.


### Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.29 am): I table a media statement just issued by the director-general of the Department of Education to correct the record about the appointment of the executive principal at the Inner City South State Secondary College.

*Tabled paper:* Media statement, dated 28 November 2019, from the Director-General, Department of Education titled 'Executive Principal appointment: Inner City South State Secondary College (ICSSSC) [[2169](#)]'.

The appointment of any school principal is an operational matter. As the minister, I am not involved in any of those decisions. Selection processes are undertaken by independent panels who are responsible for determining the manner in which the process is carried out. I table the statement for the benefit of the House.

### Police Resources

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (10.30 am): Yesterday a member in this House asked a question in relation to a police incident. I can advise the House that the officer involved has returned to work and is reported to be in good spirits and the good news is that the offenders have been arrested.


I also take this opportunity on the last parliamentary sitting day of the year to commend all members of the Police Service, the Corrective Services and the Public Safety Business Agency for the work that they do, day in day out, to keep communities safe. Their job is not 9 to 5 and it can often be dangerous, and for that we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Our government backs our first responders 100 per cent. This government backs our first responders by giving them the resources and laws they need to do what they do best and that is to keep us all safe. That is why this year we announced the rollout of body worn video cameras to all uniformed first responding police officers across Queensland; we delivered two new helicopters for North Queensland; we made Taskforce Orion a permanent fixture so it can continue to save more children from the clutches of the dark net; we introduced stronger laws to keep ahead of technologies used by child sex offenders; we passed historic laws to dramatically improve the police discipline system for the community and for police; we embarked on a statewide recruitment drive to employ hundreds more Corrective Services personnel; we commenced the detailed work to build stage 2 of the Southern Queensland Correctional Precinct that is expected to deliver around 1,000 extra beds and generate more than 400 jobs during construction and more than 500 operational jobs; we continued to spearhead the drive for regional jobs with the construction of 348 new cells and 396 beds at the Capricornia Correctional Centre; we launched a huge body of work to steer the state's two private prisons towards publicly run state operations; and we delivered a record police budget.

Our achievements reflect our priorities of keeping the community safe while we are creating jobs and building the infrastructure for the future. As we reflect on this year and look to the year ahead I take this opportunity to wish all personnel in police, Corrective Services and the Public Safety Business

Agency all the very best for the festive season. Given the impending festive season, and safe in the knowledge of our shared love for dad jokes, may I say that with a wife called Holly and a new commissioner called Carroll every day is like Christmas to me. Merry Christmas, Mr Speaker.

### Renewable Energy


 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (10.33 am): Queensland continues to lead the nation in renewable energy as a direct result of the positive policies of this government. It is not just in our towns and cities that renewables are saving emissions, creating jobs and putting downward pressure on electricity prices, renewable energy is also reaching our remote Indigenous communities because the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering on its election commitment to make that happen. At Doomadgee construction is now complete on the 304 kilowatt extension to Ergon Energy's existing 250 kilowatt solar farm. This complements more than 105 kilowatts of solar installed on Doomadgee's council buildings. This is estimated to save the community up to \$40,000 on power costs annually. Bamaga, Mapoon and Pormpuraaw will follow because that is our commitment.

Further to this, since December 2016 we have seen 35 large-scale renewable energy projects commence operations, becoming financially committed or begin construction. This represents more than \$5 billion in investment, more than 4,700 construction jobs and a combined 2,370 megawatts of clean energy. Queensland has also proven itself to be a world leader in small-scale solar power with more than 2,000 megawatts now provided by rooftop installations. In fact, the Climate Council's latest states renewable energy report shows that Queensland is once again leading the nation in rooftop solar with more than one-third of Queensland households having solar rooftops.

Meanwhile, the government is maintaining this momentum with the new electricity generator CleanCo. CleanCo is completing the Renewables 400 reverse auction and will bring another 1,000 megawatts of renewable energy into production by 2025. This will contribute to us meeting our commitment to 50 per cent renewables by 2030. This is delivering not just clean energy, but also cheaper energy for Queensland families. We continue to have the lowest average wholesale price in the national energy market. Prices for a typical regional Queensland household have fallen two years in a row. The independent Queensland Competition Authority itself has acknowledged that this is due, in part, to renewable energy investment. CleanCo has generated over 30,000 megawatts of electricity since commencement and this is electricity that is produced mostly during the evening peak when prices are high, again putting downward pressure on power prices. This is the Palaszczuk government working hard, delivering for Queensland families.

## INNOVATION, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Report


 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (10.37 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 23 of the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee titled *Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August 2019 and 3 September 2019*.

*Tabled paper:* Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee: Report No. 23, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 21 August 2019 and 3 September 2019 [[2170](#)].

I commend the report to the House.

## TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

### Report

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (10.37 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 31 of the Transport and Public Works Committee.

*Tabled paper:* Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 31, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Inquiry into the Queensland Tennis Centre [[2171](#)].

The report presents the committee's findings in relation to its public works inquiry into the Queensland Tennis Centre. I would like to take this opportunity to thank representatives from the Department of Housing and Public Works, Stadiums Queensland and Tennis Queensland for their assistance throughout the committee's inquiry. I commend the report to the House.

**EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE****Report**

**Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (10.38 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 26 of the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee titled *Matter involving committee proceedings—potential breach of standing order 117*.

*Tabled paper:* Education, Employment and Small Business Committee: Report No. 26, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Matter Involving Committee Proceedings—Potential Breach of Standing Order 117 [[2172](#)].

This report concerns an alleged breach of standing order 117 by the member for Kawana during the committee's estimates hearing on 1 August this year. The committee received a complaint about the alleged breach of standing order 117 from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations on 26 August. Standing order 268 empowers a committee of the House to report that a matter involving its proceedings has arisen and recommend that the matter be referred to the Ethics Committee. This report is made under standing order 268.

During the committee's estimates hearing on 1 August this year the member for Kawana initiated a line of questioning of the director-general of the Department of Education and the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations which had the potential to lead to identification of a child subject to the Child Protection Act. While the member for Kawana did not name the child, he referred to the child's sex and age and named the school at which an alleged rape had occurred. The committee did not have information to ascertain whether or not the child was subject to the Child Protection Act, however, the context suggests that it was indeed possible that was the case.

The committee gave careful consideration to the complaint from the Minister for Education. We invited a response from the member for Kawana and sought information from the Minister for Education and from the Minister for Child Safety.

As the report outlines, the committee reached the view that the member for Kawana's question did contain identifying information that it was conceivable could lead to the identification of the child to whom the member referred. A critical issue in the committee's consideration of whether standing order 117 had been breached, however, was whether the child was in fact subject to the Child Protection Act.

During the committee's consideration of the alleged breach of standing order 117, the committee received advice from the Minister for Child Safety that the confidentiality provisions of the Child Protection Act limit the information the minister could provide to the committee. After seeking clarification from the minister, the committee concluded that it could not determine whether or not the child referred to by the member for Kawana was subject to the act and, thus, whether the member for Kawana breached standing order 117. On that basis, the committee did not recommend, under standing order 268, that the matter be referred to the Ethics Committee.

The committee's report does, however, recommend that the Committee of the Legislative Assembly consider two issues that arise from the consideration of the potential breach of standing order 117: firstly, whether there would be merit in providing further advice to all members about compliance with standing order 117, with particular reference to the definition in standing order 117(5); and secondly, whether the standing orders or the code of ethical standards and its associated guide could provide additional guidance for members' questions in protecting the identity and privacy of all children as a vulnerable population group. I commend the committee's report to the House.

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

**Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (10.40 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 30 of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee titled *Investigation of the closure of the Earle Haven residential aged care facility at Nerang*.

*Tabled paper:* Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee: Report No. 30, 56th Parliament, November 2019—Investigation of the closure of the Earle Haven residential aged care facility at Nerang (Inquiry into aged care, end-of-life and palliative care and voluntary assisted dying) [[2173](#)].

This report looks at what happens when nursing home providers walk away from their responsibilities.

On 11 July 2019, after a litany and, in fact, a decade of failures, the management at the Hibiscus House and Orchid House nursing homes within the Earle Haven Retirement Village ceased caring for the 69 residents entrusted to their care. The management of the company running the facility at the time, HelpStreet, caused the removal of essential equipment from the facility, told staff they were out of a job and simply called the triple 0 service to do a bulk evacuation. At one of its hearings, the committee heard the recording of that triple 0 call and it will remain with us forever.

HelpStreet was not the approved provider of the nursing home, but a subcontractor to the provider, People Care, through an unsigned commercial arrangement between two entities that would ultimately unravel. The catastrophe that unfolded on 11 July triggered a code brown alert, a disaster-scale response by Queensland Health and Queensland Ambulance Service workers, involving hundreds of people. In our report, we commend the men and women of the QAS and Queensland Health for their professional, compassionate and caring response to those vulnerable, frail, elderly residents.

Events at Earle Haven were also investigated by the federal government in an inquiry led by Kate Carnell AO. As chair, I find it quite perplexing that the recent federal report into the closure of Earle Haven did not agree with the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Health decision to conduct the evacuation of the residents and suggested that the residents should somehow have remained at Earle Haven, despite authorities' concerns that it was not safe for residents.

Our investigation identified that HelpStreet was not the only problem at Earle Haven. Significant problems with the approved provider, People Care, were documented by the federal government regulators for over a decade, right up until the home's closure in July. Those same authorities gave People Care a string of second chances to correct those problems. In the course of our investigation, the federal Aged Care and Quality Safety Commission finally acted to rescind People Care's accreditation as an aged-care provider. People Care staff employed by owner and director, Mr Arthur Miller, also documented problems at Earle Haven and attempted to bring them to his attention, but he failed to listen or act. Mr Miller told the committee that he will not provide aged-care services any longer.

Put bluntly, the events at Earle Haven should never have happened. The committee calls on the federal government to take action. The federal government is primarily responsible and accountable for deciding aged-care funding arrangements, the standards of care, how complaints are dealt with and the accreditation of providers, which are all issues that we saw at Earle Haven.

We are also cognisant of the fact that the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety looked at the regulatory issues surrounding the closure of Earle Haven as part of its work. Their report is due in November 2020. The royal commission's interim report leaves no doubt that the aged-care system 'lacks transparency in communication, reporting accountability' and it must change.

The federal government can and should act now. The funding model for aged care simply must change if the underlying problems afflicting the industry are to be fixed. Aged-care workers should not be treated as the poor cousins of the health sector. Until pay rates are improved, providers will continue to struggle to attract and retain good staff who want to make a career in the aged-care sector. If the federal government is serious—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I believe that the chair is debating the committee report, rather than tabling the report for a later debate time to give all members the opportunity to debate the report. He is making political statements that indicate debating the report, which is not due for debate this morning.

**Mr SPEAKER:** As the member is currently tabling the document, I am not privy to the contents of the report. I am taking it at face value that the report contains many of the statements that the member is making. If that is not the case, there may be merit to the point of order. I cannot ascertain that and I do not think you can either, member for Kawana. As the chair of the committee, the member is the spokesperson for that committee. Please continue, member for Thuringowa.

**Mr HARPER:** If the federal government is serious about ensuring quality aged-care services in nursing homes, it should enshrine in legislation minimum staffing levels and minimum staff contact hours for the care provided to residents. Sadly, the reality is that this may not occur at a federal level. The Commonwealth Department of Health has made it clear that it does not support the same features of the Health Transparency Bill currently before the House. The federal government needs to pay closer attention to the operating conditions in the nursing homes it has accredited. Reporting arrangements for the industry also need—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. Members to my left, I have given clear guidance about the member on his feet and the tabling of this report. Interjections will cease or I will start naming members.

**Mr HARPER:** Reporting arrangements for the industry also need to be more transparent. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the committee has recommended that the federal government establish an independent aged-care commissioner to provide oversight of the aged-care system. I would like to acknowledge the former staff of the facility who worked unpaid to ensure that former residents were properly cared for on the day. I also thank—

*(Time expired)*

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, today question time will conclude at 11.47 am.

### Government Ministers, Declarations of Interest



**Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.47 am): My first question without notice is to the Premier. This morning the Premier said that the government is planning to only criminalise when a minister intentionally fails to declare a conflict of interest to cabinet. However, the CCC's recommendation did not include a finding of intent. It recommended—

Parliament create a criminal offence for occasions when a member of Cabinet does not declare a conflict that does, or may conflict, with their ability to discharge their responsibilities.

Will the Premier guarantee that the CCC's recommendations will be fully implemented and not watered down?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The answer is yes.

**Mrs D'Ath** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Attorney-General, you will put your comments through the chair.

### Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My second question is also to the Premier. In light of the Deputy Premier's extraordinary admission yesterday that she actually met with the candidates during the process to select the Inner City South State Secondary College principal, has the Premier sought a briefing about this matter to investigate whether any inappropriate conflict occurred during what should have been an independent process?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My understanding is that the Minister for Education tabled a statement from the Director-General of Education, which states very clearly, for the information of the Leader of the Opposition—

I have been advised that at no time did the Deputy Premier seek to involve herself in the selection decision making.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The House was called to order, members. I expect the House to come to order.

### Exports

**Mr HEALY:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier please update the House on how Queensland's incredible export achievements are helping to support and create jobs in regions like Cairns?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Cairns for the question. We know how important exports are for Queensland because exports also mean jobs for Queenslanders. As Premier and Minister for Trade, it is great for me to hear the news that our export figures keep climbing. I am very happy to report to the House that our most recent figures show very clearly that in the 12 months to September Queensland merchandise exports totalled \$87.6 billion. This is great news for Queensland. Members will always hear that we on this side of the House back Queenslanders, jobs and the

economy. That is a \$10 billion, or 13 per cent, increase on the same period the previous year. That means that the combined value of Queensland's goods exports is greater than not just New South Wales and Victoria combined; we need to add in Tasmania as well. It means revenue and jobs.

I am also very pleased that we decided to have not just one export hub in Queensland but two. My government has announced that we will have an export hub in not just Toowoomba but also Cairns. I know how much the member for Cairns has been advocating for that. The government has delivered—\$20 million in total. We know that Queensland has especially what the Asian middle class requires—that is good, fresh produce. We will continue to grow Queensland's economy by ensuring we have strategic exports.

We know that just recently there has been an import into this House: none other than Tony Abbott has graced the halls of this parliament. The Leader of the Opposition is happy to have a photo taken with the former prime minister but not with the current Prime Minister when he was up here announcing \$1.9 billion. Perhaps Tony Abbott was giving the Leader of the Opposition some advice about being in opposition. It might have involved some advice about having a strategy, maybe sticking to a strategy, maybe about getting out and about talking to people.

As we end this year, we know that the opposition is absolutely hopeless. All we have heard is whinge, whinge, whinge. The member for Pumicestone is going. The member for Currumbin is going. The number of women continues to decline. Are there going to be any women—

*(Time expired)*

### **Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal**

**Mr MANDER:** My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier. The Deputy Premier admitted yesterday that she met with the independent selection panel's recommended candidate for the role of Inner City South State Secondary College principal during that appointment process. Following this meeting, the recommended candidate was dumped from the role. The Deputy Premier also admitted meeting with the subsequent successful candidate. If these meetings were not about interfering in the selection process, what on earth were they for?

**Ms TRAD:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Broadwater, the member has barely risen to her feet. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the Member for Everton for his question. I represent a community that has the largest high school in this country: Brisbane State High School, which has more than 3,100 students. The numbers continue to grow because of the rapidly increasing density within the area. I have always been a very strong advocate and fighter for a new school as part of the solution to the massive overcrowding that is occurring at Brisbane State High School. I am incredibly proud that I have been able to deliver that for my community. I am very proud. I want to thank the former education minister—

**Mr Hunt** interjected.

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

**Ms TRAD:** I thank both the former and current education ministers for recognising that we do better when we invest in education, not sell school sites, as those opposite did.

As has been detailed in the statement that was issued by the director-general of the Department of Education and tabled in this place, a selection and recruitment process occurred earlier this year for the position of foundation principal for the new Inner City South State Secondary College. The department initiated a meeting with me and one of the candidates for principal. This meeting lasted 15 minutes, as is detailed in the director-general's statement. As is also detailed in the director-general's statement, the department reclassified the principal position to an executive principal based on modelling that indicated that the school would exceed 1,600 students. The position was then readvertised.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. You have had your opportunity to ask a question. The member is being responsive to the question asked.

**Ms TRAD:** Following the second recruitment and selection process, the department contacted me again to meet another candidate.

**Opposition members** interjected.



**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, this may be the last sitting day the year, but I will not tolerate the standards slipping today. I have just given clear guidance to the House. The Deputy Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I ask that you hear the response.

**Ms TRAD:** I was unable to do so, but I did have a telephone conversation after her appointment and before her announcement as the successful candidate. At no time, as is stated in the director-general's statement, did I seek to involve myself in the selection decision-making process.

### Job Creation

**Ms McMILLAN:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the Deputy Premier please outline some of the Palaszczuk government's job-creating opportunities implemented in 2019 and if she is aware of any alternatives?

**Mr Stevens** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mermaid Beach, you are warned under the standing orders. Please restate your question, member.

**Ms McMILLAN:** My question is of the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the Deputy Premier please outline some of the Palaszczuk government's job-creating initiatives implemented in 2019 and if she is aware of any alternatives?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the member for the question. I recognise that she is a great advocate for jobs in her community and jobs right across the state—particularly, as she is a former principal, jobs in education. The Palaszczuk government has been focused on growing our economy and growing jobs within our economy. We have created more than a thousand jobs per week over the last year. In contrast, 50 jobs per week were lost under those opposite, impacting our economy. That was the economy that we inherited—an economy that was growing more slowly than it is under the Labor Party. Our economy is growing three times faster now than when we inherited it from those opposite.

We have also delivered a record payroll tax relief package, the biggest in more than a decade—an \$885 million payroll tax relief package. This is about promoting jobs in small and medium sized businesses and promoting economic opportunity in the regions by relieving the payroll tax burden on those regional businesses that have at least 85 per cent of their taxable wages in the regions.

I am very proud of the fact that we are delivering almost \$50 billion in terrific infrastructure—infrastructure that addresses our economic growth and productivity, infrastructure that delivers schools and hospitals. These projects will deliver jobs but they will also attract investment by the private sector. I am very pleased to report that new construction figures out today see that Queensland is leading the pack. While there has been a drop of 0.2 per cent in private capex right across the nation in the last quarter, here in Queensland it has grown by 2.3 per cent. That is a 2.3 per cent growth in Queensland, while for the rest of the nation there has been a drop of more than 0.2 per cent. This is primarily due to an increase in the number of buildings and structural dwellings investment, as well as a 2.4 per cent rise in equipment, plant and machinery. That means industry is coming to Queensland. Industry is setting up in Queensland, and that is because we are getting the policies right.

If we contrast that with those opposite, their biggest achievement—their only achievement when it came to infrastructure—was 1 William Street. There was no business case and no cost-benefit analysis—absolutely nothing. It was 1 William Street. We build the schools, the hospitals and the roads; they build towers for Campbell Newman.

*(Time expired)*

### Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal

**Mr BLEIJIE:** My question without notice is to the Premier. On 2 September the Deputy Premier and education minister announced the new principal of the Inner City South State Secondary College in a video. The video was filmed with the new principal and was posted on the Deputy Premier's Facebook page. At the end of the video, the Labor Party logo appears. I table copies of the screenshots of the video showing the Labor Party logo.

*Tabled paper:* Extract of Facebook video, undated, depicting the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Jackie Trad, and the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations, Hon. Grace Grace [2174].

*Tabled paper:* Extract of Facebook video, undated, depicting the Queensland Labor Party's logo [2175].

How can Queenslanders have confidence in the independent selection of school principals when the government is applying Labor Party branding to principal announcements?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have not seen the video. I am happy to look at the video and get—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I am not sure what the interjections are about. The Premier had barely risen to her feet.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I have not seen the video. I will have a look at the video and I will get back to the House. I have two words for the member for Kawana: Tim Carmody.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask whether the Premier has taken that under standing order 113.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, you have taken that on notice under standing order 113?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Yes.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Ms Bates** interjected.

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

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

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

### **Manufacturing Industry, Jobs**

**Mr STEWART:** My question is of the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plans for local manufacturing jobs and better infrastructure, and is he is aware of any other approaches?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Townsville for his question. I am very pleased to report to the House that the Palaszczuk Labor government will help create more manufacturing jobs in Townsville. Two very fine Townsville companies—Rapid Pacific Group and Australian Professional Galvanizing—will share in nearly \$500,000 in our signature manufacturing growth fund program Made in Queensland. They will get high-tech equipment to grow their businesses. All members in Townsville and in the north of our state will be delighted that that will help create 11 new local jobs.

I am asked about alternative approaches. Yesterday I saw a tweet from someone talking about growing jobs, health and education. I was very interested in that because the photo and the tweet was by the Leader of the Opposition. What a golden way to end a two-week magnificent run by the Leader of the Opposition by posting a photo with Tony Abbott.

**Mr SPEAKER:** You will table that.

**Mr DICK:** I will table that photo for the benefit of members.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, dated 27 November 2019, from the Twitter account of the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP [\[2176\]](#).

It is like Sideshow Bob from *The Simpsons*—keeps standing on rakes, keeps getting hit in the head but keeps walking ahead. Remember when the Leader of the Opposition confused Brisbane with Ipswich? Remember when she managed to mix up Stanthorpe with Warwick? Now she has taken a photo with the wrong prime minister. She should go back to school: Redbank is not Brisbane; Warwick is not Stanthorpe; Tony Abbott is not Scott Morrison.

Tony Abbott is not the prime minister; he is a retired pensioner from the North Shore in Sydney. This is the guy whose view on infrastructure started with the statement, 'What housewives of Australia need to know.' That is what he said about infrastructure.

More importantly, what plans for manufacturing jobs and infrastructure did the Leader of the Opposition discuss with the weird uncle of the LNP? Did she discuss health and education with the bloke who in his first budget cut \$80 billion from health and education? Consulting Tony Abbott on your health plan is like consulting the federal energy minister, Angus Taylor, on document integrity! Imagine thinking it is a good idea with the fire still burning to get a happy snap with the bloke who said about climate change it is 'probably doing good' and likened policies to address climate change as 'primitive people killing goats to appease the volcano gods'—weird uncle of the LNP indeed.

As I have said in this House before, the distinguishing feature of the Leader of the Opposition is her willingness to whinge but her distinct lack of judgement. That is true—no judgement and no leadership.

*(Time expired)*



### **Inner City South State Secondary College, Principal**

**Mr LANGBROEK:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Did the Deputy Premier have any communications with the Department of Education's director-general, minister or regional director before the independent selection panel's recommended candidate for the role of Inner City South SSC principal was changed?

**Ms TRAD:** I thank the member for the question. I refer him to the statement that was issued by the director-general of the department.

### **Central Queensland, Tourism**

**Mrs GILBERT:** My question is of the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail. Will the minister please update the House on the government's strategy to create jobs in Central Queensland by investing in a new tourism product?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for her question. As everyone in this House knows, she is a very passionate member for the Mackay region. Indeed, I know I can always count on her when it comes to promoting the importance of tourism to every single Queensland. I have already said that I think one of the greatest achievements of the Palaszczuk government in this term is increasing the number of people working directly in tourism from one in 12 Queenslanders to one in 10. That is because, unlike those opposite when they were in government who slashed \$188 million from the tourism portfolio, we have backed that up with an extra \$180 million to build 30 brand-new tourism experiences right across Queensland.

In the Whitsundays from 1 December you can book a world first, which is to sleep under the water in the Great Barrier Reef in the very first Great Barrier Reef hotel where you will wake up with Nemo. It is such a wonderful experience. We expect that this one attraction in which the state government, through the leadership of the Premier, has injected \$2.75 million in matching funds will attract \$23 million more into the Whitsunday region and support 60,000 additional tourists from around the world coming and spending money in our local economy in the Mackay and Whitsunday region.

We look at report cards at the end of the year: I give an A in tourism to all of you. Congratulations, Palaszczuk government. Mr Speaker, I know that you lament that sometimes you might have the naughtiest students in a classroom during the year. I will take the burden of having to do the report card work from you and I will do that in regard to those opposite. Of course, the person who flunked the class was the member for Whitsunday, whose bad behaviour meant he was sent home and has been homeschooled for the rest of the term.

The member for Everton, the teacher's pet, is doing all he can by crawling to stay in the vice-captain's role, very loyally, next to his leader. The member for Currumbin is the student who has picked up her bat and ball and is going home and wants to bring down the teacher with her. She gets a D. The member for Burleigh is in trouble. He is going to be kept down because he did not come to class enough this year.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Ms JONES:** I take the interjection.

**Mr Dick:** But he loves school holidays.

**Ms JONES:** He does love the holidays, that is true, but he will not spend money in Queensland. Last but not least, the member for Broadwater: the kid who so wanted to be school captain, but he just could not get enough votes to get there. Who will be the school captain for the LNP in 2020? We know that when it comes to whingeing the Leader of the Opposition gets an A plus. If it is based on who can whinge the most, then she has this in the bag! We will continue to work while they continue to whinge. Let's just see who will be the captain for the LNP in the class of 2020.

### **State School Principals, Appointment Process**

**Ms SIMPSON:** My question without notice is to the Premier. The members for Caloundra and Coomera have recently had new schools opened in their electorates. Why did the Department of Education not offer those members the same opportunity to meet the candidates for principal during the independent selection process as was offered to the Deputy Premier?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As the Minister for Education outlined, that is a matter for their particular processes.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr Molhoek** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Southport, you are warned under the standing orders. I had called the House to order. I had risen to my feet.

### **Electoral System**

**Ms RICHARDS:** My question is of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Will the Attorney-General inform the House of the government's efforts to create a fairer and more open and transparent electoral system in Queensland?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am always proud to stand up in this chamber and talk about the Palaszczuk government's legacy when it comes to electoral reform. One of the first things we did in government was bring in the \$1,000 threshold. It is not linked to CPI. It was \$1,000 when we introduced it in 2015 and it is \$1,000 today—unlike the Commonwealth's legislation, which is now \$14,000 when it comes to disclosure. Quite predictably, throughout this week we have had a number of questions in relation to disclosure by the Australian Labor Party relating to a venue booked for a fundraiser of mine. I would say that the magic word there is 'disclosure'. How did they know about this? Because we disclosed it because of our laws.

There has been more disclosure happening recently. As a result of a High Court decision, a Supreme Court decision and a Court of Appeal decision, we finally received some disclosure from the other side. Those recent disclosures by the LNP, as reported, amount to around \$3.2 million. Some of those are very interesting, including: from the Victorian division of the Liberal Party, Kooyong 200 Club, they received \$10,000 on 7 November 2018; 24 April there was another donation of \$10,000 from the Kooyong 200 Club, Victorian division of the Liberal Party; 9 May, Liberal Party of Australia, Victorian division, Kooyong 200 Club, another \$10,000; on the same day, from the same body, another \$10,000 donation; and another \$10,000 on 28 June 2019. Why is it that the Victorian branch of the Liberal Party, Kooyong 200 Club, is donating to the Queensland LNP? Why? Where did this money come from? Who donated to the Kooyong 200 Club? That is what those opposite need to answer.

The Premier was asked about the new offences today, and I am happy to educate those on the other side. I taught them how to google to search legislation; now I am going to help them understand the definition of corrupt conduct. Recommendation No. 3 states, 'Failure to do so could, in certain circumstances, be considered as corrupt conduct as defined by the Crime and Corruption Act 2001', which requires intent—

*(Time expired)*

### **Parliamentary Precinct, Fire Safety**

**Mr MINNIKIN:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Has the Treasurer considered funding the recommended upgrade of fire detection and suppression equipment in the parliamentary precinct in light of recent reports of a heavily intoxicated person removing a candelabrum with many lit candles from the Strangers' Dining Room and taking it up into the Annexe?

**Ms TRAD:** I can report to the House that all requests for funding in order to maintain the security of this precinct have been provided by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

### **Far North Queensland, Health Services**

**Ms LUI:** My question is of the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister outline what the Palaszczuk government is doing to improve health care in Far North Queensland and if he is aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Cook for her question. Everywhere I go in the cape and Torres Strait you can see on the faces of the people working in our hospitals and health clinics how much they love the member for Cook and how much they appreciate her support. Can I say how sorry I am that

we will not be travelling to Pormpuraaw next week as we planned. The community there is mourning the sad passing of Councillor Bert Edwards, and I am sure that I speak for the member for Cook when I express my sympathies to his wife, Heather, their family and the entire Pormpuraaw community,

However, just recently we were together at the Mareeba Hospital, where we inspected and officially launched their new endoscopy service. I am really pleased to inform the House that that service saw its first patient on Tuesday. The service would not be possible if it were not for a \$1 million investment by the Palaszczuk government in an upgrade to the operating theatre at the Mareeba Hospital thanks to the passionate advocacy of the member for Cook. In the past, patients would have had to travel to Atherton or Cairns. In fact, 30 per cent of the patients who receive their treatment at Atherton live closer to Mareeba, and now they will be able to get those services closer to home. It is really good news for Mareeba but also the communities of Atherton and Cairns, which will have additional capacity at their hospital. The new theatre also enhances the other services provided at Mareeba Hospital, including general surgery, dental and birthing services.

I am also pleased to advise the House that the new theatre has now welcomed its first newborn baby. On 11 November parents Danyelle and Brenton welcomed to the world their baby Behn. When their first baby was born they had to be rushed to the Cairns hospital, but thanks to the upgrade to the operating theatre at Mareeba they were able to have their second child closer to home. Mother Danyelle said, 'Mareeba midwives make it a very personal experience. In Mareeba they will bend over backwards for you. They really look after you.' On behalf of the member for Cook and all members on this side of the House, I would like to say thanks to our health workers in Mareeba and right across the cape. The services you deliver in remote areas of this state are truly valued and truly appreciated.

### **Mining Industry, Safety**

**Mr COSTIGAN:** My question is to the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. After seven fatalities in less than 16 months on the Bowen Basin coalfields, will the minister now finally adopt the recommendations of the parliament's CWP Select Committee, which included the key recommendation of establishing the Mine Safety and Health Authority in Mackay?

**Dr LYNHAM:** I thank the member for the question. We acknowledge the work that was done by the parliamentary select committee and also the Monash review, with 68 recommendations and 18 recommendations. I have 84 inspectors throughout this entire state. That is 84 inspectors in Mount Isa, Roma and the Surat gas fields, all over the state. We considered the recommendation to base 84 inspectors in Mackay—with the transit time and the commuting all around this state—would at least require some modification.

I support the inspectorate where they are at the present time. They are in the areas they are needed—Rockhampton, Mackay, Mount Isa, Roma. There are inspectors all around this state. To base the entire inspectorate in Mackay would be quite a difficult undertaking, and personally I think it would be a diminution of the inspectorate services around this state.

### **Queensland Rail, Train Crew**

**Ms PUGH:** My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Can the minister please update the House on the government's record train driver recruitment?

**Mr BAILEY:** I thank the honourable member for her question and her interest in our rail system. It has been more than a year since I have received a question from the member for Chatsworth. I am not sure whether he is out of favour or he is just lazy. I am glad to see the member for Mount Ommaney is interested in our rail system.

I am very happy to announce that last week our 200th driver graduated from training school to join our network. This contrasts with the LNP when they sacked 1,700 Queensland Rail workers when they were in government, they ordered trains from overseas that were not disability compliant and we saw the three worst years of rail patronage in the last decade. Compare that to our record—where we are running 700 more services than under the Newman government, we are fixing the noncompliant trains in Maryborough with Queensland workers, we have got a record 190 million trips across the network and we are investing in rail. We have duplicated the heavy rail line between Coomera and Helensvale.

We have been investing in 430 additional services since July. We converted 59 services from three carriages to six carriages, adding more than 200,000 extra seats. We returned to full timetable in July. Those opposite predicted in June this year that it would take 36 years to return to full timetable. The member for Chatsworth led the Leader of the Opposition to predict that it would be 36 years to go back to full timetable, yet we went back six weeks later.

I am very happy to announce that we are on track for the third straight year of record public transport patronage in South-East Queensland. From July to September this year, 50.9 million trips have been taken on buses, trains, trams and ferries, which was a 3.6 per cent increase over the same period last year. Train trips saw the biggest spike in patronage, with a 4.6 per cent jump in patronage on our heavy rail system.

This government's record in public transport keeps improving all the time. We are investing in smart ticketing with \$361 million in the world's best smart ticketing system, we are upgrading train stations in terms of accessibility, and of course Cross River Rail is coming, with \$5.4 billion worth of rail. I thank commuters for their support. They are enjoying four fare-free Mondays over this month or so. They deserve it and they are going forward with this government.

*(Time expired)*

### **Government Ministers, Alcohol**

**Ms LEAHY:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the media reports that the Premier has mandated a ministerial booze ban. Will the Premier tell the House what were the events that required the Premier to issue this ministerial booze ban?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Of course the member has it wrong. Let me make it very clear that I expect every single member of this House to act responsibly when it comes to the consumption of alcohol, and that goes for both sides of the House. Back when the LNP was in office, I can remember we were debating a very important piece of legislation in the parliament one night—I think it was to do with sex offenders, from memory—and there was a party being held out on the balcony here that was attended by LNP members. I can also recall very clearly when we were in opposition nearly once a week during a sitting week there was constant drinking in the members—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I can also remember very clearly the former deputy premier—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, please resume your seat. Member for Buderim, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—the former deputy premier coming over to me when I was sitting in the Leader of the Opposition's chair and leaning over and telling me that is where I would be sitting for many years to come, after consuming alcohol. The public expects high standards.

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Coomera will cease his interjecting.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I expect all members of this House to behave responsibly when it comes to the consumption of alcohol.

### **ATAR**

**Ms BOYD:** My question is to the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations. Will the minister update the House on the introduction of the ATAR system, the variety of curriculum offerings this will bring and any alternative approaches?

**Ms GRACE:** I thank the member for the question. I know how she values education in this state. We are determined to ensure that all Queensland kids get the best possible start through a world-class education, giving them the strong foundations upon which to build their futures. As part of this, we are investing more than \$192 million over four years in the new Queensland Certificate of Education system and its ongoing delivery. This is the biggest change to Queensland senior secondary schooling for 40 years. The most significant of this is a replacement of the Overall Position score, or the OP score, with the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank, the ATAR, from 2020.

The ATAR is a standard measure of achievement used in all other Australian jurisdictions which will recognise the strengths of our students in a range of subjects for the first time. It allows for vocational education and training subjects to be included in the calculation of ATAR as well. We are offering students the option so they can be ready for the jobs of the future.

The LNP want to take our education system back to prehistoric times. On Sunday the Leader of the Opposition told the LNP state council that she wants to cut subjects so that our education system can go back to basics. I do not really know, but I want to know, what she is going to cut. All they know over there is cut, cut, cut, as we know. Do they want to cut the arts subjects? Are they going to cut the important investment in STEM? Is she going to cut digital technology? The only insight the Leader of the Opposition gave into her education-cutting agenda was that she would cut the classes she called 'transgender studies'. That is what she said—'transgender studies'. I went through the Australian curriculum for junior and secondary schooling and could not find any classes called 'transgender studies' that have been offered in Queensland or in Australia.

What we want is our schools to be welcoming, inclusive and supporting. This disgusting slur under the opposition's reign is evident. We have already seen her standing up with the no campaigners—Tony Abbott and Lyle Shelton, who is on her staff now—promising to cut respectful relationships. Here she has the most conservative of the conservatives. Any children in this group would have been gut-wrenched when they heard what the Leader of the Opposition said.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Minister, use of that term is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

**Ms GRACE:** I withdraw. I reckon they would have been disgusted. We know that when it comes to the LNP they have no plans for education. We are part of a ministerial council looking at curriculum. She should withdraw those comments she made on the weekend.

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Southern Downs, you are warned for continual interjections.

### Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service

**Mr BENNETT:** My question is to the health minister. Given the ongoing uncertainty around the sacking of former Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service CEO, Adrian Pennington, which has now dragged on for two months, when will the minister finally make a decision and provide certainty in relation to the leadership of our \$644 million health service?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for Burnett for his question. I am sure he would appreciate that given the matters he refers to are the subject of legal proceedings and detailed legal advice to me, I am not able to comment on those matters. However, I assure the residents of Wide Bay that their health service continues to deliver fantastic health care. The acting chief executive is doing a stellar job in that role. I met with her recently to discuss how that was going. The entire team in Wide Bay continue to deliver world-class health care. I want to thank them for the work they do each and every day.

**Mr Watts:** A quick survey and a name change will fix it.

**Dr MILES:** No matter how many interjections there are from those opposite, I will not in my role breach the advice I have been provided, which is to not comment publicly on matters that are underway. It is pretty shameful of those opposite, who might aspire to one day—

**Mr Watts** interjected.

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

**Dr MILES:**—sit on these benches, to expect me to breach the advice that I have been provided. I am eager to ensure that all parties in any matter, including this one, are afforded all of the appropriate processes and entitlements. I will not in this place or elsewhere undermine their rights to those processes nor will I do anything to contradict or act against the advice that I have been provided. I am happy, though, to keep the member for Burnett and other Wide Bay members informed of those matters as they proceed through the proper process. I say to the member for Burnett that I have always been willing to do that and that commitment still stands.

### Local Government, Jobs

**Mr SAUNDERS:** My question is of the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Will the minister advise the House of the job-creating projects being facilitated through the local government portfolio?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Works for Queensland is the Palaszczuk government's signature program targeting job creation in regional Queensland. I know the member for Maryborough is a great advocate for the benefits that it is delivering to his community and right across the state. From new picnic shelters

to sewer mains, swimming pools and rail trails; from libraries to grandstands to skate parks, right across three rounds of Works for Queensland, almost 2,000 projects have been funded. That is almost 2,000 projects that never would have happened without this investment from the Palaszczuk government. That is 2,000 projects creating or supporting more than 21,000 jobs across regional Queensland.

I think it is important that we celebrate and enjoy the benefits that this program has delivered to regional Queensland and to communities right across the state of Queensland. That is why I wanted to make special note of an appearance of the member for Warrego in the *Western Star* last week. In that journal of record the member is quoted as saying, 'We need a state government that will improve job security.' Given the record of the Newman government, when 14,000 Queenslanders including frontline service providers like nurses and teachers lost their jobs, I am not actually sure what she means by 'job security'. She might have a very different understanding of what that might mean.

I can tell honourable members that through our \$600 million Works for Queensland program more than \$25 million has been invested in the member for Warrego's electorate alone. The member may have simply missed the signs. I know she keeps looking for the signs everywhere but she may have missed some of them. Maybe if she checked with the Balonne Shire Council she would have heard about the \$40,000 refurbishment of the Bollon Showgrounds kitchen shed, \$150,000 for major repairs of the Rowden Park grandstand, \$200,000 for works at the St George council works depot and \$750,000 for the St George thermal springs hot baths. That is \$1.2 million for jobs in that shire alone. She could also check with Bulloo Shire Council where there is more than a million dollars for projects, or again she could check with the Maranoa Regional Council where there is \$1.35 million for works that include upgrades to the water mains to the golf links and lighting for the netball courts, which I have had a chance to visit.

I could go on with Murweh, Paroo, Quilpie and Western Downs Regional councils: 21,000 jobs in remote areas across the state, but 15,000 in Warrego alone. It is something that we have to support and will continue to support. At the moment what do we see from those opposite? There is no commitment to Works for Queensland; there is no commitment to supporting our regional councils right across the state. That is why the Palaszczuk government is the friend of regional Queensland.

### Hanna, Mr D

**Mr KRAUSE:** My question without notice is to the Attorney-General. I refer to Dave Hanna, the former vice-president of the Queensland Labor Party and former head of the CFMEU, who is already serving prison time for rape and other offences and was recently sentenced to an additional two years jail for corruption. Has the Attorney-General sought advice on the adequacy of this sentence given it is well short of the maximum penalty of seven years?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. I am sure that the member, based on his legal qualifications, understands that when it comes to matters before the courts and any appeal processes, the appropriate course for me as the Attorney-General is to take advice from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to any of those matters. Either the DPP would contact me or I would request a briefing on any particular matters. I find it interesting because I am not aware of the member or the LNP raising that sentence in any way until today. It is so urgent that it has only just come up. We do know that those on the other side do like to play politics with these types of things.

I will always take on board the advice as to prospects of success of any appeals in relation to this matter. I am not progressing an appeal based on the facts of these particular circumstances. If any member ever feels there are issues in relation to sentencing, they are welcome to write to me, as occurs from time to time. However, I ask that they actually inform themselves of the facts, the circumstances and the reasoning of the courts. Often, I have to say, those on the other side write me letters talking about sentences they consider to be manifestly inadequate, yet they have not in any way informed themselves of the facts of those cases. They have picked up a newspaper, they have maybe listened to the radio, they have grabbed a headline and they do not bother to ensure they are properly informed of these matters. They are more interested in playing on people's fears in the community than actually—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b), relevance. The question was about whether the Attorney has herself requested a briefing, not whether the opposition had written to the Attorney. It was whether she had requested a briefing.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I have heard the answer provided and I believe it is relevant to the question asked.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I directly answered the question and I am talking more broadly about asking those on the other side to carefully consider their comments publicly. When it comes to matters before the courts and sentencing I am asking that those opposite ensure they are informed and do not mislead people or give them false hopes. They meet with people and give them false hopes that there are going to be appeals. They say that if they were in government they would appeal matters without actually looking at the circumstances of the case.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Sorry, Attorney-General, please resume your seat. Member for Buderim, you have been warned under the standing orders already. That means no interjections. You can leave the chamber for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 11.39 am.*

**Mrs D'ATH:** I have directly answered the member's question.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I have said that I am not appealing the matter. I do not know how I can be any clearer than that. Maybe those opposite should try listening as well as talking.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I am frustrated about this issue, because they mislead the public and they mislead victims and victims' families in making claims about the ability to appeal matters and the strength of appeals without informing themselves of the facts. It is unfair, it is cruel and they should stop doing it.

*(Time expired)*

### **Bushfires, Firefighting Resources**

**Mrs LAUGA:** My question is of the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister update the House about air resources available to firefighters during the recent bushfires?

**Mr CRAWFORD:** I thank the member for the question. It is a timely question to ask, because our air crews have been working tirelessly since September to protect communities from fire threat. As we approach Christmas, their work is unlikely to decrease. In fact, on Christmas Day itself, while we are tucking into Christmas lunch, they are likely to be in the sky above a fire somewhere.

Queensland is the first jurisdiction in Australia to contract an ex-military UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter for disaster relief and fire bombing. It is an unprecedented move—it is an incredibly large helicopter—but these are unprecedented times. Since joining the QFES fleet on 8 November, the Black Hawk has been in constant operation, initially up at the Cooroibah fires before heading north to Cobraball in the member for Keppel's patch. The Black Hawk is faster and delivers more payload than the current water-bombing aircraft. It has a bucket capacity of 3,400 litres and a range of 630 kilometres. It is far superior to anything we have had in the fleet previously. The Black Hawk's additional capacity for water bombing will help QFES manage the increased threat of fires throughout the rest of the season. It has been central to firefighting efforts since the very day it landed in Toowoomba from the US. It was in the hangar for barely hours before it was despatched for the first time.

The Queensland community can be reassured that QFES is doing all it can to equip our personnel with world-class resources. QFES has a fleet of around 40 aircraft, ranging from Eurocopter Twin Squirrels to water-bombing air tractors. It is a dangerous task, highlighted by the loss on 13 November of Helitak 404, an aircraft from McDermott Aviation of Maroochydore. Thankfully, the pilot walked away. It was replaced with a Helitak 335 for the rest of season. I acknowledge John and Simon McDermott and their company's outstanding contribution to firefighting.

We can also request support from interstate through the National Resource Sharing Centre. There are great arrangements between states for sharing resources around. I also acknowledge the cooperation of New South Wales in sending up their large air tanker at times. I know that it has been very challenging for them: they have not been able to release it all the time.

I also acknowledge our SES crews. We have retrained a huge number of SES crews to reload water bombers. It is a new task for SES. It is something they are very proud of and it is something on which we are happy to keep moving. Finally, I acknowledge the Premier for her commitment to replacing water for drought-affected areas. I know of one property in the Beechmont area from which we took 665,000 litres of water. That is being replaced by QFES as we speak.

### Cross River Rail, Asbestos

**Mr HUNT:** My question is to the Minister for Cross River Rail. ETU organisers have distributed warning flyers to pedestrians on Albert Street about Cross River Rail workers not properly handling asbestos and possibly exposing passers-by to serious health risks. Will the minister detail the full asbestos risk management plan and guarantee that there is no risk to pedestrians from asbestos while the Albert Street station is under construction?

**Ms JONES:** I thank the honourable member for the question. I take public safety very seriously. We as a government have a very proud track record when it comes to managing asbestos on all building sites, including the demolition site in Albert Street to make way for the \$5.4 billion investment in Cross River Rail.

In relation to asbestos at the Albert Street site, I can advise that Workplace Health and Safety officers have been onsite. They are working very closely with the authority. I am advised that there have been no breaches and that there has been full compliance. I will continue to monitor that to ensure we uphold public safety on this site.

While I am on my feet, can I say how proud the government is to be delivering this amazing, massive transformation of public transport in Queensland that is long overdue. We know that one of the first decisions those opposite made in government was to defund Cross River Rail. This meant that addressing the bottleneck of crossing Brisbane's river was put back. I am very proud that our government has decided to deliver this transformational project for the whole of South-East Queensland. Indeed, one could argue that such important public transport infrastructure like this is transformational for our whole state.

I am very proud that at the moment we are in public consultation on the three brand-new train stations for the Gold Coast. I thank the member for Gaven for her strong advocacy in ensuring that her local community also benefits from this additional support to boost public transport right across our state.

Our government will continue to get on with the job of delivering this project. We know that it will provide around 10 kilometres of new track and six kilometres of underground tunnel and there will be four brand-new train stations here in Brisbane city. In fact, for the first time we will have a train station closer to this end of town. I take this opportunity to thank all of the workers already employed by the Cross River Rail authority. As members heard yesterday, we now have 20 apprentices onsite working to deliver the project. We will continue to work with everyone who is a party to this to deliver this project for Queenslanders.

### International Day of People with Disability

**Mr KELLY:** My question is of the Minister for Communities and the Minister for Disability Services and Seniors. Will the minister update the House on plans for International Day of People with Disability?

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, you have one minute to respond.

**Mrs O'ROURKE:** I thank the member for the question. We want to celebrate the contributions of Queenslanders with disability every day. That is why we are working hard to make sure that our communities are accessible and inclusive of all people.

On Tuesday, 3 December, Queenslanders of all abilities will come together to celebrate the achievements and contributions of people with disability as part of International Day of People with Disability. There will be a range of events and activities right across the state to celebrate Queenslanders with disability—things like a disability day for kids in Inala on Saturday, a silent disco in the library of Rockhampton, a Let's Celebrate Ability Expo in Boonah, and Day in the Bay at Pinalba. I am really looking forward to taking part in these events. I will be attending the Beyond Bayside event in Wynnum on Tuesday next week. I encourage all members to be a part of this. They can find out where events are being held by visiting [www.idpwd.com.au/events](http://www.idpwd.com.au/events).

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

## ELECTORAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION (ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Message from Governor



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.47 am): I present a message from His Excellency the Governor.



**Mr SPEAKER:** The message from His Excellency recommends the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. The contents of the message will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the message for the information of members.

MESSAGE

ELECTORAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION (ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT 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 amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Electoral Act 1992, the Electoral Regulation 2013, the Integrity Act 2009, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 in relation to electoral funding and expenditure, and for other particular purposes

GOVERNOR

Date: 28 November 2019

*Tabled paper:* Message, dated 28 November 2019, from His Excellency the Governor recommending the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2177\]](#).

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.47 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Electoral Act 1992, the Electoral Regulation 2013, the Integrity Act 2009, the Local Government Act 2009, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 in relation to electoral funding and expenditure, and for other particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Economics and Governance Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2178\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[2179\]](#).

I am exceptionally proud to introduce the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019. Before commencing my speech, I would like to thank my hardworking department for all their work on this bill. This bill contains fundamental reforms to the financing of electoral campaigning in Queensland. These reforms will enhance the actual and perceived integrity and public accountability for state elections and support public confidence in state electoral processes and public institutions.

Queenslanders must be able to have confidence in our electoral system as a key feature of our democracy. The actual and perceived integrity of this system is significantly enhanced by no single person or entity being able to improperly influence those involved in electoral campaigning for state elections whether they be political parties, MPs, candidates or others engaged in campaigning to influence voting. Public confidence is also supported where those who do campaign in an election have a reasonable opportunity to communicate with voters but are precluded from drowning out the communication of others.

The bill will introduce caps on political donations and electoral expenditure by registered political parties and their associated entities, candidates and third parties that campaign. In addition, the dollar amount of public election funding per first preference vote will be increased and the threshold for entitlement will be decreased as part of this package of reforms which will reduce the reliance on private political donations to fund electoral expenditure. These changes will in turn reduce the scope for undue influence through private donations. The policy development funding pool will also be increased from \$3 million to \$6 million per annum and be made available to elected Independent members, making this funding more fair and equitable.

The bill imposes caps on donations to limit potential for improper influence by political donors. Registered political parties will only be permitted to accept \$4,000 of political donations from a single donor over an entire parliamentary term. A single person or entity is permitted to donate up to \$6,000 per parliamentary term to a candidate. Donations made to candidates of the same political party will of course be aggregated to prevent circumvention. That means that should a donor choose to donate to several candidates of the same party these collective donations cannot exceed the \$6,000 cap. A donor is also permitted to donate \$4,000 to third parties. Donors will not be permitted to make donations to

more than six third-party campaigners. The donations caps will be indexed after each general election. The caps will apply to those political donations intended by donors to be used for state electoral purposes.

Electoral expenditure caps for state elections will also be introduced by the bill in order to level the playing field for electoral campaigning so that alternative voices are not drowned out. Electoral expenditure for the purposes of these caps are specific kinds of expenditure for the purpose of influencing voting at an election. Designing, producing, printing, broadcasting or publishing an advertisement or other election material, direct distribution costs for an advertisement and carrying out opinion polls or research will be captured. In respect of third parties engaged in electoral campaigning, relevant electoral expenditure will be captured where influencing voting in the election is the dominant purpose.

For an ordinary general election, the caps on electoral expenditure will apply for the 12 months to close of polls on polling day. For the 2020 ordinary general election, the expenditure caps will apply from 30 March 2020 to the end of polling. Registered political parties will be subject to a general electoral expenditure cap of \$92,000 multiplied by the number of districts for which they have endorsed a candidate. They will also be subject to a cap of \$92,000 within the general cap per electorate. Endorsed candidates will be subject to a cap of \$58,000. Independent candidates will be subject to a cap of \$87,000. Registered third parties will be subject to a general electoral expenditure cap of \$1 million, with a cap of \$87,000 applying to electoral expenditure per electorate. A third party who does not register with the Electoral Commission will be permitted to incur electoral expenditure of up to \$1,000 within the capped expenditure period. The electoral expenditure caps will be indexed following each general election. These caps will place limits on the electoral campaign expenditure and therefore impact on the seeking, receiving and imparting of information related to an election. The limits imposed strike an appropriate balance and serve genuine public interests in levelling the playing field for elections and preventing undue influence, whether actual or perceived, of those seeking election, endorsing candidates for election or communicating to influence voting at an election.

The bill introduces a requirement for a dedicated state campaign account to be kept with a financial institution for registered political parties, candidates and those third parties registered with the ECQ. Political donations must be paid into these accounts and electoral expenditure must be paid out of them. Requirements about what can be paid into state campaign accounts for registered political parties and candidates will support the integrity of the donations caps. New registration requirements for third parties who incur electoral expenditure of \$1,000 or more within the capped expenditure period for an election will enhance transparency for voters and assist the Electoral Commission's compliance activities. Voluntary registration with the Electoral Commission by third parties will also be available. Agents appointed pursuant to the provisions of the bill for an election participant will have an obligation to take all reasonable steps, as far as reasonably practicable, to ensure the election participant does not breach a cap or fail to comply with disclosure requirements.

The bill creates offences for knowingly breaching a cap or where a participant ought to have reasonably known that a cap would be exceeded. The Electoral Commission will also be empowered to recover amounts unlawfully received or twice the amount unlawfully expended as debts payable to the state. In addition, the meaning of 'gifts' under the Electoral Act which are relevant for disclosure, political donations and the prohibited donor ban relating to property developers will be expanded. Gifts will include sponsorship arrangements offered by registered political parties and transfers from federal and interstate branches or divisions of a political party. The treatment of loans will also be clarified to remove opportunities for circumvention of the relevant obligations under the act.

To complement the significant donations and expenditure cap reforms, the bill will increase the election funding rate provided per first preference vote received and the threshold for entitlement to election funding payments will also be lowered from six per cent of formal first preference votes received to four per cent. These increases to election funding will reduce the reliance on private funding sources, including to finance electoral campaigning, while ensuring that the public can continue to receive information communicated in election campaigns. These increases will apply from the general state election in October 2020. In addition, the policy development funding pool will be increased from \$3 million to \$6 million per financial year.

The bill will allow Independent members of the Legislative Assembly elected at a general election to receive part of this policy development funding pool in addition to registered political parties. Accordingly, the formulas to determine the entitlement of eligible registered political parties and Independent members will be adjusted to reflect this position. The new entitlements to and formulas for

policy development payments will apply from the January 2021 payments. In addition, entitlement to policy development payments will be adjusted to take into account a registered political party's or independent member's combined vote and seat ratio and be based on the most recent general election at the time of making the payment.

Our electoral laws will lead the country, but one area where we have lagged behind is in relation to signage on election day. Queenslanders are fed up with the arms race political parties and candidates engage in to set up the most signs and wrap every possible surface with bunting. The Palaszczuk government wants election day to be a more neutral environment and ensure that those seeking election are not crowded out from having voters aware of electoral choices when voting. On that basis, we will be adopting electoral signage laws similar to those currently in place in Victoria. A candidate or registered political party will be permitted to display no more than two signs that are no more than 600 millimetres by 900 millimetres within 100 metres of a polling centre entry. A necessary consequence of this amendment will be the removal of plastic wrap bunting in a restricted zone close to polling booths. Not only does plastic wrap bunting have the capacity to crowd out alternative political voices; it is also incredibly wasteful and environmentally damaging.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Unfortunately given what I am hearing from those opposite, already those on the opposite side would rather see all of that plastic bunting retained.

The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to the maintenance of integrity at both the state and local government level in Queensland. That is why when the Crime and Corruption Commission made recommendations about areas for improvement to ensure conflicts of interest are declared and to reduce the risks of intentional misconduct the Premier made an immediate public statement committing the government to accepting those recommendations. The amendments in this bill seek to address issues that were identified by the Crime and Corruption Commission in recommendations 3 and 4 of its media release dated 6 September 2019.

The bill will introduce two new offences applicable to cabinet ministers who behave dishonestly and with an intention to obtain a benefit for themselves or others or cause a detriment to others. These new offences will apply to ministers, reflecting the decision-making nature of cabinet and the higher obligations on ministers to uphold standards of integrity and to ensure there is public confidence in government. The bill amends the Integrity Act 2009 to create a criminal offence for a minister who, with intent to dishonestly gain a benefit for themselves or another person or cause detriment to another person, fails to disclose an interest that conflicts or may conflict with the minister's responsibilities. The bill also amends the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 to create a new offence where a minister intentionally fails to comply with section 69B(1), (2) or (4) of that act with the intent to obtain a benefit for themselves or another person or cause detriment to another person.

The proposed new offences in the Integrity Act 2009 and the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001 seek to capture deliberate and intentional dishonesty by ministers where they intend to gain a benefit for themselves or another person or cause a detriment to another person. Each of the proposed new offences will have a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment, or 200 penalty units, and charges for both new offences will not be able to be laid without the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The bill also amends the City of Brisbane Act 2010, the Local Government Act 2009 and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 for particular purposes. These amendments are a continuation of the Palaszczuk government's rolling reform agenda for the local government sector to improve transparency, integrity and consistency in the local government system and local government elections. They also build on the reforms already implemented by the Palaszczuk government.

In relation to the local government system and decision-making, the bill will amend the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and the Local Government Act 2009 in a number of key areas. We have listened to councils and the Local Government Association of Queensland and a key part of this bill is to further clarify and strengthen how councillors' conflicts of interest are managed. In particular, in response to feedback from councillors, the bill introduces a concept of a prescribed conflict of interest and a declarable conflict of interest outlining necessary procedures that apply when each is declared. These provisions will provide greater clarity to councillors to assist them in understanding what is a conflict of interest and what must then occur once such a conflict is identified. Similarly, the bill proposes amendments to address concerns about the number of local governments losing quorum on key issues where a majority of councillors declare a conflict of interest.

Crucially, the bill amends the acts to increase alignment with requirements at state government level so that Queenslanders have greater consistency in relation to the conflict of interest obligations of their elected representatives. As this government has previously made clear, where we can align requirements for state and local governments we will. This includes the introduction of a new offence that applies when a councillor dishonestly contravenes particular conflict of interest or register of interest requirements. If the contravention is done with intent to dishonestly obtain a benefit for the councillor or another person, or to dishonestly cause a detriment to another person, a maximum penalty of 200 penalty units, or two years imprisonment, will apply. This is consistent with the maximum penalties proposed for the similar dishonesty offence applying to cabinet ministers.

Further, this offence will be a serious integrity offence, meaning that, if a councillor is charged with the offence, they will be immediately suspended from office. On conviction they will automatically stop being a councillor and will be disqualified from holding that office for seven years. Similarly, for consistency the bill amends these acts to introduce new requirements relating to councillors' registers of interest to better align with the requirements applying to state members of parliament for statements of interest.

The bill amends the Local Government Act and the City of Brisbane Act to provide that the Brisbane City Council and other local governments to be prescribed by regulation may contract persons as councillor advisers to assist councillors in performing responsibilities under the respective acts. This amendment reflects a growing trend, particularly in larger local governments, for the appointment of political staff predominantly to assist mayors and to undertake a range of duties, including the management of the mayor's office, policy development, administrative support, media activities, event management and, in some cases, political activities.

It is understood that the appointment of such staff varies from local government to local government, with some engaged as local government employees and others as contractors. The bill will provide consistency and outlines a range of requirements regarding employment arrangements, functions and responsibilities, offences relating to misuse of information by advisers, and a code of conduct for advisers. Further, the bill provides that political staff be required to complete registers of interest consistent with the requirements for councillors.

The bill also amends these acts to provide that a councillor may direct local government employees who provide administrative support to the councillor in accordance with guidelines made by the chief executive officer. It is current practice for many local governments to provide administrative support to mayors and councillors which, in most cases, is provided by employees of the local government. The proposed guidelines must specify when a councillor may be provided with administrative support, how and when a councillor may give a direction to a local government employee providing administrative support to the councillor, and a requirement that a councillor may give a direction only if the direction relates directly to administrative support to be provided under the guidelines.

The bill amends the Local Government Act to provide further administrative arrangements in relation to the dissolution of a local government. The bill also provides that the minister may recommend that an interim administrator be appointed until the conclusion of the earlier of a fresh election of councillors or the next quadrennial elections, therefore negating the possibility of having to hold two elections in a short period of time if a local government is dissolved.

To limit the involvement of Brisbane City Council councillors in the appointment of employees and to provide for better alignment with the Local Government Act, the bill makes a number of amendments to the City of Brisbane Act. Currently, the councillors of Brisbane City Council are responsible for appointing all contract employees classified as senior executive service, which may include second or third tier managers. The bill provides that councillors will only appoint senior executive employees who report directly to the chief executive officer. The chief executive officer of the Brisbane City Council will be responsible for appointing all other employees, including managers who do not report directly to the chief executive officer.

Further, the bill ensures that the mayor may give a direction to only the chief executive officer or senior executive employees, as opposed to senior contract employees. Consistent with the Local Government Act, a direction by the mayor must not be inconsistent with a resolution or a document adopted by resolution of the council.

In relation to local government elections, this bill amends the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 to provide that, if a political party does not have an agent for a period, the executive committee of the party is responsible for the obligations of the agent under the act. The bill also includes minor technical amendments to the act.


This bill continues the government's rolling reform to increase transparency, integrity and accountability in the local government sector. The next quadrennial local government elections are only four months away and it is vitally important that all Queenslanders not only have councillors who truly reflect the diversity of the communities they represent but that those communities have complete faith in those they elect to represent them.

The Palaszczuk government is serious about electoral reform. That is why we have defended our electoral reform agenda in the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and the High Court. That is why we are introducing this bill. While the Fitzgerald reforms commenced 30 years ago—

Interruption.

## PRIVILEGE

### Process for Introduction of Bills

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.06 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. Copies of this bill have not been circulated in the House. We have not seen a copy. I think there are only one or two. If the minister is about to move further into the introduction of the bill, there really should be a full distribution of this bill before the House and some explanation of why we do not have it.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Member for Maroochydore, I believe there are something like 10 copies being distributed.

**Ms SIMPSON:** With respect, I do not know who has them. I see one on our side of the House. I do not know where the government has distributed them, because we do not have copies. This legislation should have been available for all members of parliament.

### Deputy Speaker's Ruling, Process for Introduction of Bills

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): I am going to rule to allow the Attorney-General to continue on the basis that these copies will be made available very soon. They should be in the House. I am not sure I have received an acceptable explanation as to why they are not. I am going to allow the Attorney-General to continue on the basis that they are being circulated.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I appreciate your ruling in relation to that matter. As far as providing a reasonable explanation, I am aware that copies are available. I can only rely on others to distribute them.

**Ms SIMPSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I think I need to correct the record on the matter suddenly arising. I asked 15 minutes ago and I was told that they did not have additional copies—

**Mr Power:** That's not a point of order.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Logan, I will determine whether it is a point of order.

**Ms SIMPSON:** They were not available. I put that on the record.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I suggest to the member for Maroochydore that, if she has any further concerns about that, she writes to the Speaker about it. That would help the House.

**Mrs D'ATH:** For the benefit of the member for Maroochydore, I was advised before I got on my feet to introduce this bill that there were a number of copies ready to be circulated. I can only state what I was advised at the time, but I would not have been getting to my feet if there were not copies to supply to those on the other side.

### Process for Introduction of Bills

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.09 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. We have now received the bill, but not the explanatory notes, which should be tabled at the same time. Could I seek your advice as to when that will be tabled or do we have to wait for some undetermined process for when that should be here before the House?

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Have you not already ruled that the Attorney-General can proceed?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Member for Logan, I ruled on the basis of the copies of the bill being made available. An additional point of order has been raised in relation to the explanatory notes and I am receiving advice on that matter, but thank you for trying to help.

I am advised that copies of the explanatory notes are on their way. Clearly that process is unacceptable to the House; however, I will allow the Attorney-General to proceed.


**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not need additional advice from other members, thank you.

## ELECTORAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION (ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY AND OTHER MATTERS) AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

Resumed from p. 3947.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.11 pm), continuing: As I was stating, the Palaszczuk government is serious about electoral reform. That is why we have defended our electoral reform agenda in the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and the High Court. That is why we are introducing this bill. While the Fitzgerald reforms commenced 30 years ago, the project of ensuring the integrity of our democracy is an ongoing task and the Palaszczuk government proudly believes we are up to that task.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** In 2007, 85.6 per cent of Australians were satisfied—maybe the member on the other side may want to listen to this—with the way democracy worked in Australia. In 2018 that figure was 40.5 per cent.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): The member for Toowoomba North will cease interjecting.

**Mrs D'ATH:** The 2019 Edelman Global Trust Index, which assesses the trust communities have in NGOs, business, government and the media, places Australians' trust in their institutions below the global average. In a score out of 100, Australia sits at a 48 per cent trust score. All of us in this parliament are not only politicians but custodians of a precious democracy. We cannot take it for granted. Instead, we need to progress reforms that strengthen our democracy and nurture our ability to participate in it. Our electoral reforms will create a more level playing field, stop the electoral arms race and ensure that everyone has the ability to have their say.

**Mr Janetzki** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Toowoomba South will cease interjecting.

**Mrs D'ATH:** These changes lay down a challenge to all of us in this place. Undoubtedly the donation and expenditure caps will require behavioural change in the way that fundraising and campaigning activities are undertaken. We need to embrace that, rise to that challenge and opportunity, to ensure the integrity of our democracy. This legislation also lays down a challenge for members of the opposition. Queenslanders are sick and tired of the relentless negativity that often defines our politics.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Those on my left will cease interjecting. The member for Toowoomba South is now warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs D'ATH:** This legislation serves as a significant opportunity to restore trust in our democracy. I do not expect that those opposite will agree with all the elements of this bill.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Toowoomba North is now warned under the standing orders.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I hope they decide to engage constructively with the Palaszczuk government and try to find some common ground rather than shout from the sidelines. I would like to thank the Premier for her strong leadership in this area. Indeed, going back to her days as leader of the opposition the Premier made it clear she would lead the country on issues of openness and transparency and that is exactly what the Premier has done. I also want to thank my colleague the Minister for Local Government for his cooperation in this very important reform and all of my caucus colleagues for backing significant reforms that need to occur and helping us lead the way nationally.

I also thank the many stakeholders and experts who have already engaged in discussion and consultation and I look forward to the work of the committee. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.15 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 Economics and Governance Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

### MOTION

### Referral to Economics and Governance Committee

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (12.15 pm): by leave, without notice: I move—


That the Economics and Governance Committee, when considering the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill 2019, also consider recommendation 1 from the Crime and Corruption Commission's Operation Belcarra report regarding the feasibility of introducing expenditure caps for Queensland local government elections with a view to the model commencing after the 2020 local government elections.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.15 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Acts Interpretation Act 1954, the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991, the Appeal Costs Fund Act 1973, the Civil Proceedings Act 2011, the Commercial Arbitration Act 2013, the Coroners Act 2003, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Crime and Corruption Act 2001, the Criminal Code, the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986, the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002, the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, the District Court of Queensland Act 1967, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Evidence Act 1977, the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000, the Introduction Agents Act 2001, the Judges (Pensions and Long Leave) Act 1957, the Land Court Act 2000, the Legal Profession Act 2007, the Legal Profession Regulation 2017, the Magistrates Courts Act 1921, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Ombudsman Act 2001, the Peace and Good Behaviour Act 1982, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Penalties and Sentences Regulation 2015, the Personal Injuries Proceedings Act 2002, the Personal Injuries Proceedings Regulation 2014, the Property Law Act 1974, the Property Law Regulation 2013, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009, the Retail Shop Leases Act 1994, the Second-hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Act 2003, the Succession Act 1981, the Surrogacy Act 2010, the Tourism Services Act 2003 and the legislation 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:* Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2180\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[2181\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill proposes miscellaneous amendments to over 30 criminal and civil law acts within the justice portfolio and across a diverse range of subject matter. The overarching focus of the bill is on providing for fairness, legislative clarity and operational efficiency in court and government processes.

The bill makes important amendments to the Coroners Act 2003 to extend the act's operation to all inquests regardless of when a death occurred, and otherwise to support the operation and efficiency of the coronial system in response to issues identified by the State Coroner and highlighted in the 2018-19 Queensland Auditor-General's report *Delivering coronial services* and coronial findings.

I will first address the amendments which extend the operation of the Coroners Act 2003 to all inquests regardless of when a death occurred. The Coroners Act 2003 established a modern coronial regime for Queensland. This modern regime is focused on establishing the true facts surrounding a cause of death so as to ensure against another preventable death happening in similar circumstances.

The modern coronial regime established under the current act includes a power for the coroner to require a witness to give potentially self-incriminating evidence at an inquest if the coroner is satisfied that it is in the public interest to do so. However, those powers are not currently available to a coroner with respect to deaths that were reported prior to the commencement of the Coroners Act 2003. In respect of those deaths, a coroner is constrained to the powers available under the now repealed Coroners Act 1958.

For 16 years, the Coroners Court has operated under different legislative schemes depending on when a particular death was reported. The effect of that is that there is a hard core of remaining cases that have not received the benefit of our modern coronial regime. Those cases remain unresolved, not just to the detriment of truth and justice in this state but also to the detriment of the family and friends of deceased persons who desire and deserve the truth in order to obtain closure.

This issue was the subject of coronial findings following the inquest into the death of Bryan Hodgkinson. In removing provisions preserving the application of the repealed Coroners Act 1958 to pre-commencement deaths, the amendments in the bill will allow inquests previously heard under the now repealed Coroners Act 1958 to be reopened under existing provisions of the Coroners Act 2003, subject to the requirements of those provisions. This includes in circumstances where new evidence casts doubts on the original finding.

The bill provides a discretionary power for a coroner to stop an inquest that is currently being heard under the repealed Coroners Act 1958 without concluding that inquest or making any findings, and to reopen the inquest under the current act. This means that the current act, including the power to require a witness to give evidence at an inquest that would tend to incriminate the witness, will apply to inquests into deaths that were reported before the commencement of the act. To be clear, this will apply even if the person has claimed the privilege against self-incrimination at a previous inquest under the repealed Coroners Act 1958.

I acknowledge that this amendment may affect rights retrospectively. However, this is justified to support coroners in finding the truth and potentially provide answers to loved ones. I note that there are significant existing protections in the Coroners Act 2003 for witnesses who are compelled to give such evidence. These existing protections will mean that any compelled evidence will not be admissible against a witness in a criminal proceeding, other than in a proceeding for perjury.

The bill also amends the Coroners Act 2003 to allow approved doctors, or a suitably qualified person under the supervision of an approved doctor, to perform certain specific preliminary examinations when a death is reported to a coroner to assist a coroner in performing his or her functions under the act. The types of preliminary examinations that are able to be performed are exhaustively listed in the bill, are based on the Victorian model and include, for example, taking and testing samples of bodily fluid, including blood, urine, saliva and mucus. The amendment responds in part to a recommendation by the Queensland Auditor-General and draws from the model in place in Victoria so as to allow those deaths that do not require coronial intervention to be quickly identified. The bill provides safeguards including, for example, requiring consideration of potential distress for the person's family members because of cultural traditions or spiritual beliefs.

The bill also amends the Coroners Act to: provide a coroner with the discretion to order an autopsy, where reasonably necessary for an investigation; allow a coroner to stop investigating a death after an autopsy is completed, if the coroner has determined the death is due to natural causes, the death is not reportable under any other criteria and an autopsy certificate has been issued; allow for the appointment of a second registrar; allow the State Coroner to delegate power to a registrar to, in an investigation, require a person to give information, a document or anything else that is relevant to the investigation in certain circumstances; and allow a coroner to delegate the power to provide consent to the removal of tissue under the Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979.

The bill also amends the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003, DPSOA, to confirm its application to two classes of prisoners. The amendments will: correct an anomaly in the DPSOA's operation with respect to prisoners returned to custody on parole suspensions; and clarify its application to those serving terms of detention while being held in custody in a corrective services facility. These amendments will ensure that the Dangerous Prisoners (Sexual Offenders) Act 2003 remains responsive and achieves its object of ensuring the adequate protection of the community.



I will now briefly outline some of the key amendments to the Criminal Code, which simplify and clarify the operation of existing provisions and make procedural enhancements to increase efficiency in the criminal justice system. Firstly, the bill makes amendments to allow more property related offences involving a value of up to \$80,000, instead of the current \$30,000 limit, to be dealt with in the Magistrates Courts rather than on indictment in the District Court. This reform will reduce pressure on the District Court.

An amendment is also made to section 652 of the Criminal Code to make the transfer of summary charges to a higher court registry more efficient by allowing lawyers to make an application under section 651 on behalf of their client and to remove the outdated requirement for the application to be signed in the form of a sworn declaration. This amendment aligns with recommendations recently made by the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council in its report *Community-based sentencing orders, imprisonment and parole options*. The council noted in this report that the current impediments for section 651 applications have resource implications for the defence, often Legal Aid Queensland, and prison management staff given that these provisions are of most importance when the offender is in custody or has served pre-sentence custody.

The bill also amends the offence in section 463 of the Criminal Code of setting fire to crops and growing plants, which carries a maximum penalty of 14 years imprisonment, to clarify that it applies to naturally growing grass and any other vegetation. The amendment provides certainty in the operation of this section, which is critical as bushfires continue to impact the state.

The bill amends the Peace and Good Behaviour Act 1982 to ensure the intended operation of the restricted premises order scheme by including criminal activity at the premises that is likely to pose a risk to the safety of a member of the public in the definition of 'disorderly activity'. This amendment responds to a decision of the Magistrates Court.

The more significant civil law amendments contained in the bill clarify jurisdiction, and improve the administration, of the courts. In particular, the bill amends the Land Court Act 2000, with related consequential amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989, to clarify and improve the administration of the Land Court and its procedures and processes, including for the recommendatory jurisdiction.

Other amendments in the bill relating to the administration of the courts include: corresponding amendments to the District Court of Queensland Act 1967, the Magistrates Courts Act 1921 and the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009 to clarify that interest payable on any basis is not to be considered in applying the jurisdictional monetary limits for the District and Magistrates Courts and for QCAT; amendments to the Magistrates Courts Act to clarify that the jurisdiction of those courts includes personal actions for the recovery of chattels; and amendments to the Civil Proceedings Act 2011 to provide an assessor, appointed under chapter 13 part 7 of the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999, with the same protection and immunity as a witness attending before the Supreme Court of Queensland.

With regard to the administration of justice, the bill also amends: the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 to streamline processes for the acceptance of out-of-time complaints in specified circumstances; the Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986 to remove the requirement for the minister to authorise the prosecution of offences under that act; the Criminal Proceeds Confiscation Act 2002 to clarify that section 237 of that act is only activated where both an interstate restraining order and a pecuniary penalty order have been filed; the Evidence Act 1977 to enable the court to exclude the public from a courtroom while a statement made under section 93A given by an affected child or special witness is being played—this amendment will help further protect these vulnerable witnesses and addresses an anomaly with existing provisions which provides for the closing of the court during the playing of prerecorded cross-examination of such witnesses; the Ombudsman Act 2001 to allow the Ombudsman to delegate the making of a decision about a human rights complaint under section 66 of the Human Rights Act 2019 to an appropriately qualified officer; and section 159A of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 to enhance judicial discretion and reduce complexity in relation to pre-sentence custody calculations, particularly where there are multiple offences that are not all before the sentencing court.

The bill also includes amendments directed to clarifying and streamlining aspects of Queensland's succession and property legislation. The bill amends: the Succession Act 1981 to remove the requirement to obtain the court's leave to apply for an order authorising a will to be made, altered or revoked on behalf of a person without testamentary capacity together with the requirement for the proposed testator be alive when the registrar signs and stamps with the court's seal a will or other instrument made pursuant to court order; and the Property Law Act 1974 to clarify that a mortgagee

may exercise a power of sale following the disclaimer of freehold land by a trustee in bankruptcy or liquidator without the need to apply for court orders under the Commonwealth Bankruptcy Act 1966 or the Corporations Act 2001.

The bill also includes amendments to the Legal Profession Act 2007, in particular to: further strengthen provisions relating to directors of insolvent incorporated legal practices and corporations; and clarify that the Queensland Law Society's power to conduct a trust account investigation of the affairs of a law practice may be exercised routinely, not just in relation to a particular allegation or suspicion.

To improve administrative efficiencies for QCAT, the bill amends the QCAT Act to simplify the processes for changing a tribunal member's entitlements to remuneration and allowances, and the Retail Shop Leases Act 1994 to remove the minister's power to appoint mediators and generally align the appointment process with that under the Dispute Resolution Centres Act 1990.

I understand there are currently 116 members of QCAT including full- and part-time senior and ordinary members and sessional members. QCAT needs the ability to quickly respond to resource demands as they arise by allowing for appointment of further amendments on an as-needs basis. To further improve administrative efficiencies for QCAT and to give QCAT the ability to respond quickly to resource demands, this bill will remove the requirement to advertise for appropriately qualified persons to be appointed as senior or ordinary members. This will not mean that QCAT will not continue to have public processes for appointment of members; however, this amendment will allow for flexibility in the way this is done. It is important that the appointment processes are fully transparent and that Queenslanders' confidence in those processes is maintained.

Finally, the bill otherwise amends a range of justice portfolio statutes to streamline administrative processes, clarify and update various provisions and make amendments of a technical or drafting nature. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.30 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** (Dr Robinson): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

## HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.31 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Ambulance Service Act 1991, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 [\[2182\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes [\[2183\]](#).

The Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 will make significant reforms to health legislation to protect and improve the health of Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government is committed to strengthening the governance framework of Queensland's public health system to ensure it is a connected and networked system that delivers the best of care to Queenslanders, regardless of where they live. We are also embedding the right of our First Nations peoples to receive culturally appropriate health care. This bill will introduce the first law in Australia to ensure that LGBTIQ Queenslanders are protected from the harmful and unnecessary practice of conversion therapy.

A strong public health system has always been a priority for this government. Since 2015 the government has made record investments in health to address ever-growing demand for health services across the state and deliver on its commitments to provide more frontline health workers and improve health infrastructure. Since being established in 2012, our hospital and health services have delivered over 40 million episodes of care to Queenslanders and ensured that the Queensland public health system is one of the best in the world. While our health system is world class, we will always look for ways to do better for Queenslanders. That is why earlier this year an expert panel comprising Mr Jim McGowan, Professor Anne Tiernan and Dr Pradeep Philip examined Queensland Health's governance framework and provided advice on ways we can make our health system work better and more sustainably.

The bill will amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act and the Ambulance Service Act to give effect to three of the panel's recommendations. Overall, the panel found that Queensland Health's current devolved governance model is working well. It has enabled responsive, localised decision-making and allowed communities to have a greater say on how their healthcare needs are delivered. However, the panel found there was an opportunity to strengthen the system by the Department of Health, Queensland Ambulance Service and hospital and health services working together more effectively in the best interests of the system and the Queenslanders they serve.

To give effect to these recommendations, the bill will amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act to require hospital and health services and their governing boards to have regard to the effective and efficient use of resources for the public sector health system as a whole, and the best interests of patients and other users of public sector health services throughout Queensland. The bill will also amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act and the Ambulance Service Act to recognise that the Queensland Ambulance Service and the hospital and health services must collaborate to manage the interaction between the services they provide.

This government is committed to making sustainable changes in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and ensuring they have a seat at the table at the highest levels of governance. As a priority, I have created the new role of Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer. It is vital that we also ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a seat at the table of our 16 hospital and health boards. While many of our boards have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander members, there is currently no requirement for them to do so. The bill will make representation a requirement for each hospital and health service.

It is also important to ensure that the legislation that establishes our public health system—the Hospital and Health Boards Act—gives visibility to First Nations people and acknowledges the ongoing importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health as a government priority. The bill includes as guiding principles of the act commitments to achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders through the delivery of responsive, capable and culturally appropriate health care. The bill also requires each hospital and health service to have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equity strategy.

Finally, this bill will ban the highly destructive practice of gay conversion therapy by health service providers in Queensland. Practices that try to change or suppress a person's sexual orientation or their gender identity have always been immoral and unethical. Now they will be illegal. Gay conversion therapy is based on the belief that being LGBTIQ is a disorder that requires correction. The Palaszczuk government utterly rejects the notion that LGBTIQ people are broken or sick. These ideas have long been discredited by the medical community and are not evidence based. However, there is overwhelming evidence that conversion therapy is harmful and that it correlates with high rates of suicide and self-harm.

To young people out there who might hear this who are still figuring out who they are: there is nothing wrong with you. If one day you fall in love with someone the same gender as you, there is nothing wrong with you. You cannot be fixed because you are not broken. Anyone who tells you otherwise is wrong. Your government supports you. I am proud that Queensland is leading the way to ensure the protection of our LGBTIQ community. Last year I convened a round table of stakeholders including LGBTIQ leaders, doctors, healthcare workers and gay conversion therapy survivors. The amendments in this bill are based on the recommendations of that round table.

This new offence will apply to health service providers, which includes anyone who provides services for maintaining a person's health or wellbeing. It captures registered health practitioners such as doctors, nurses and psychologists, and unregistered health practitioners such as counsellors,

naturopaths and social workers. The bill is limited to health service providers because, as health professionals, they have ethical obligations not to engage in practices that are harmful and not evidence based.

The bill also amends a number of health portfolio acts and regulations to support the implementation of policy initiatives to protect and improve the health of Queenslanders and to clarify the operation of legislation. It will amend the Public Health Act to allow the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Service within Queensland Health to disclose root-cause analysis reports to quality assurance committees. These reports are used by hospital and health services as a quality improvement technique to assess and respond to clinical events that unexpectedly result in death or permanent harm.

The bill will amend the Private Health Facilities Act and regulation to remove certain licensing conditions for private health facilities and replace them with a requirement to comply with the nationally adopted Australian Health Service Safety and Quality Accreditation Scheme. Currently the act is out of step with the requirements under the national scheme.

The bill will amend the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act to give effect to the recommendations of the 2018 review into the effectiveness of the act. The bill will clarify that the Mental Health Commissioner has the power to employ staff and will allow the commissioner to be appointed for a term of up to five years. Extending the maximum tenure of the commissioner will provide greater continuity in the role and is generally consistent with other commissioner appointments made under Queensland legislation. The bill will also make minor amendments to health portfolio legislation to correct drafting errors and make technical amendments and repeal redundant provisions.

The Palaszczuk government is strengthening our health system and protecting our LGBTIQ Queenslanders. We are leading the way in recognising the harms of conversion therapy and ensuring that health service providers have a legal and ethical obligation to refrain from these harmful treatments. This government is committed to serving the health needs of all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (12.39 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

### Referral to Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee.

## PRIVILEGE

### Ethics Committee Report, Apology

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (12.40 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege. I wish to apologise if any member of the Ethics Committee or any member of the House feels I have brought the Ethics Committee into disrepute. As directed by the Ethics Committee report No. 193 in conclusion No. 34, I take this opportunity to provide some context around the comments that have been identified.

I was attempting to bring to light issues of public perception around deliberations of the committee. One of the main statements under scrutiny here was: 'It would be completely understandable if some of us were sceptical of the ethics committee's independence and objectivity.' The operative word here is 'sceptical'. The intent was not to offend but to highlight an element of public sentiment. Nothing I have said or can say will have much impact on the perception people in the

community have of the parliament and committees. We are collectively responsible for the attitudes people have towards our political institutions and processes, and those impressions are far more influenced by our actions rather than our words.

As far as my comments about the Ethics Committee's approach to the inquiry into the Premier's alleged breaches of the Criminal Code are concerned, I was primarily trying to highlight that I felt that the approach was lacking and that it did not meet the community's expectations, nor did it reflect the important role that the Ethics Committee plays in the parliament.

It took more than 12 months to reach a conclusion on a very serious matter requiring the most pressing time frame. However, the committee did not provide the public with any information around the process of the inquiry or the reason for the unprecedented length of drawing a conclusion. Through this period I was repeatedly questioned in the media as to why this was taking so long, casting suspicion over the process, and I felt required to respond to that constant questioning.

Furthermore, I received feedback from members of the public that, in their opinion, the ability of the Ethics Committee to effectively circumvent the criminal justice system is questionable. That is an opinion of the public, not mine. It was an opinion put to me by the public. The fact that two Queen's Counsel said in writing and publicly that there is a prima facie case against the Premier would, to many, justify an investigation by independent authorities. That was the feedback I received from people on the street, and my comments reflected their opinions.

At the time of my comments in relation to the Ethics Committee's process and the blinding inconsistency between the LNP's initial comments and the way they voted, people expressed a lot of scepticism to me about the process. By way of example, I wish to table some comments that were made online in response to media articles covering the issue.

Tabled paper: Bundle of media and social media posts relating to Ethics Committee Report No. 193 [\[2184\]](#).

I do not dispute in any way that the Ethics Committee has an important role to play. However, my impression from the discussions I have had with people outside of politics on this matter clearly identified questions being raised of either politicians or parliamentary processes.

My views are that the chances of the perception of conflict and self-interest could be minimised by using independent, non-politicians on the Ethics Committee and ensuring that the public is informed so they feel that the Ethics Committee process has some accountability through public scrutiny.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member for Traeger rose on a matter of privilege and is now, in fact, debating the contents of a report of the Ethics Committee. I seek your ruling on whether it is appropriate, in the circumstances that the member for Traeger has risen, that he then prosecute an argument which was the subject indeed of the Ethics Committee report.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): I will seek advice. Member for Traeger, you did begin and your purpose was to offer an apology. I think you are straying into debating beyond the nature of that. I would ask you to quickly return to that.

**Mr KATTER:** Thank you for your advice, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was just about to conclude. To respond to the member for Clayfield—

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I again rise to a point of order. It is not a matter of responding to me; it is a matter of complying with the standing orders of the House.

**Mr KATTER:** It was an order of the Ethics Committee.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I would submit that the member is not doing so.

**Mr KATTER:** I was given an opportunity to explain myself. Read the report first.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Thank you, member for Clayfield. I do not need your further advice. Member for Traeger, if you could continue and wrap it up please.

**Mr KATTER:** I will finish what I was saying. Again, I apologise if any member of the Ethics Committee or any member of the House feels that I have brought the Ethics Committee of the House into disrepute.

### **Correction to Answer to Question, Local Government, Jobs; Apology**



**Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (12.44 pm): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. During my response to a question without notice from the member for Maryborough during question time this morning I stated that the number of jobs created or supported in the Warrego electorate was 15,000. I misspoke. Of course, it was in fact 1,500. I apologise to the House for this error.

**Honourable members** interjected.


**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! Members, it is not an opportunity for debate.

## HEALTH TRANSPARENCY BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from 27 November (see p. 3908), on motion of Dr Miles—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (12.45 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Transparency Bill 2019. When I was in primary school my grandmother was diagnosed with dementia. Her three sons and daughter tried to provide additional care. However, this became increasingly difficult as her capacity started to diminish. My family, like many other families across this country, trusted and relied on aged-care facilities to be there when we could not be. That trust has eroded over many years resulting in what the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety so appropriately titled in their interim report ‘a shocking tale of neglect’.

This will be the fourth time I have spoken in this House about the need to ensure a safe level of staffing in our aged-care facilities, so I am proud to stand here today supporting a bill that does just that. This bill establishes minimum standards of staffing and care for public residential aged-care facilities. It does this by introducing a minimum nurse and registered nurse skill mix ratio, as well as by setting minimum hours of care that must be provided to each resident each day. Evidence shows increased staff and nurse-to-patient ratios lead to improved quality of care and ultimately better patient outcomes.

We can make a difference in the 16 residential aged-care facilities run by Queensland Health which care for over 1,000 older Queenslanders but, ultimately, the federal government is responsible for regulating and funding residential aged-care facilities in all states and territories. Unfortunately, our government cannot fix the dangerously low staffing levels in private facilities. That is something that the Morrison government could do, but at the moment is refusing to do. The royal commission interim report said—

The aged care system lacks fundamental transparency. Witnesses from the Australian Department of Health told us that there is very little information available to the public about the performance of service providers.

We think that Queenslanders deserve to be able to access information about the health facilities they use, whether that is public or private hospitals or aged-care facilities. This bill creates a framework to collect and publish the average hours of daily care nurses and support workers provide to each resident at aged-care facilities. Private aged-care facilities can opt out of reporting this information, but their decision to do so will be published online for families to see.

Unfortunately, not only is the federal government refusing to follow these nation-leading reforms but they have actually opposed this measure, arguing that quarterly reporting would ‘create a reporting burden on providers, with no clear benefit to consumers’. I table the *Courier-Mail* article titled ‘Feds resist plan to show aged-care staff ratios’.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, undated, titled ‘Feds resist plan to show aged-care staff ratios’ [\[2185\]](#).

I have had the opportunity to hear from a number of aged-care staff over the last two years, many of whom go above and beyond because they love their job and the people they care for, but they are tired, overworked and unappreciated. Many said that the staffing levels are unsafe, forcing residents to wait longer than they should for help. They also talked about the insufficient time they have to properly clean and feed residents and that essential items like incontinence pads are being rationed. Lisa, a volunteer in Nerang, shared the story of her grandmother who keeps getting UTIs in a for-profit aged-care facility because there are not enough staff to take her to the toilet. It does not stop there.

The *Courier-Mail* recently published an article about Mr John Callaghan, who was found with maggots crawling in his ear at the for-profit Commonwealth subsidised Tugun Bupa facility on the Gold Coast. I table a copy of that article for the House.

*Tabled paper:* Media article, undated, titled ‘Maggots in subsidised nursing home’ [\[2186\]](#).

It goes on to say that, despite increasing the number of beds last year, Australia’s largest for-profit provider slashed spending on suppliers and employees by \$24 million.



The QNMU also did a statewide audit of aged-care facilities which found that the federal electorate of Moncrief, which takes in Nerang and Carrara in my community, had the worst hours of care provided to residents in the state. Despite all of these horrifying stories, what do the Gold Coast LNP members do—even the QNP members who were in this chamber during the debate? When concerns were raised by the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union about chronic understaffing, the member for Mudgeeraba said, 'This will be another scare campaign from the QNU during the federal election'. When I called for action in this chamber earlier this year the member for Southern Downs yelled at me, saying 'stop pandering to the unions'.

**Ms Bates** interjected.


**Ms SCANLON:** So rude! Members of parliament should be listening to our hardworking nurses, personal care workers and residents in the aged-care sector, not tearing them down. I will conclude by reading the words of an aged care staff member posted on a Gold Coast community Facebook page recently, who said—

I have just completed my course in aged care, i am currently on work experience and this is terrible. These residents are not getting showered, fed, changed etc on time or sometimes at all. There is 1 staff member per 40 residents.

I table a copy of that post for the House.

*Tabled paper:* Extract of social media post, undated, in relation to aged care [2187].

There have been at least 18 reports into Australian aged care since 1997. It should not take over 20 years to fix this problem. It takes political courage. That is what this side of the chamber is doing. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMELTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (12.51 pm) I rise to contribute to the debate on the Health Transparency Bill 2019. One of the most difficult things anyone in this House or out in the community will ever do is decide when it is time to put their parent into an aged-care facility. It is one of the hardest times for a family as they have to go through how they are going to pay for it, sorting out their parent's affairs and choosing a healthcare facility. I think this bill goes a long way to help add transparency insofar as which healthcare or aged-care facilities provide better services compared to others.

For years there has been a misconception that the more you pay, the better your service will be. Once we have collected the data and we have the ability to share it with the community, then we will be able to figure out the best place to send our loved ones. It is a very difficult time, but the most important thing for people is ensuring that the facility will provide them with a level of service and a level of care. Knowing that nurse-to-patient ratios will be met and the level of care provided will be very important when making those decisions. As stated in the explanatory notes, the policy objectives of the bill state—

The Bill:

- establishes a legislative framework for collecting and publishing information about public and private hospitals and residential aged care facilities;
- amends the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* to introduce a minimum nurse and support worker skill mix ratio and minimum average daily resident care hours in public RACFs ...

What that means is we will make sure that aged-care patients get the services they need, and that is almost going to be guaranteed. We acknowledge that private aged-care facilities will be able to opt in or opt out of reporting, and I can see there being problems with that. Of course, there is no way that we can make private facilities report because they come under the federal jurisdiction, but knowing there are private enterprises out there willing to provide those details will probably put them under the spotlight. As stated in the explanatory notes, public reporting of the information can—

- improve healthcare outcomes and reduce unwanted variation in care due to the competitive nature of providers;
- inform system learning and improvement through better understanding of variation;

...

- help foster a spirit of openness and trust with the public ...

That is very important. Whether our aged parents are suffering from dementia or they are just incapable of looking after themselves, when they go into these facilities we want to make sure they are looked after to the best of their ability.


I would like to mention a couple of the aged-care facilities in my electorate: Palms Aged Care Service; Blue Care; Bluehaven; Canossa, run by the Catholic Church; Rockingham Home in Cardwell; and Arcare North Shore nursing home in the Burdell area of the northern beaches. I believe those aged-care facilities are doing the right thing. I hope that the reporting, which will be overseen by the

chief executive officer, will be a good way of showing the people in my electorate that these places are providing the right level of care. We hope that everyone in this House will support the bill. The KAP will be supporting the bill.

In conclusion, there is only one more thing, and it has previously been brought up with the member for Traeger and me. The problem with having nurse ratios, especially in some places in rural and regional Queensland, is that it is hard to attract nurses and people who have the required training. When there is a private facility set up down the road paying the wage that is dictated but then you have a Queensland Health facility up the road paying \$60 an hour in comparison to \$40 an hour, for example, it becomes very difficult—

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr DAMETTO:** Yes, there may be an issue with that in places like Mount Isa when you are trying to attract the right people to take on these roles. As I said, we will support this bill and I commend it to the House.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.56 pm): I support this bill. Like all Australians who watched the *Four Corners* report, words fail me—I am not sure whether it is shock or disgust—but to see professional colleagues behaving in the way they behaved during that program was utterly shocking to my wife, who is also a nurse, and me when we watched that program. We both felt that our profession needed to have a good, long, hard look at itself and think about what we can do to make sure these things never happen again.

To a certain extent I have seen nurses left in very difficult situations with poor training, poor support and poor pay. While there is no excuse for behaving in the way those nurses behaved, there is an understandable reaction that some people have to being treated like that at work. I hope that the royal commission gets to the bottom of some of that. We just heard the member for Hinchinbrook talk about the problem in regional areas and the disparity between various health sectors. The Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union has a solution: pay everybody a decent wage and you will get decent people who want to work in all of those facilities.

I noted the calls yesterday by the member for Caloundra for a holistic response and to take the politics out of this issue. I deeply respect the member for Caloundra when he says those things, because I have worked with him on many difficult issues when I was on the health committee. He did take the politics out of things and tried to look at good policy, so I respect it when he makes that call. I agree that ultimately what we want is a royal commission that gives us an holistic solution to this problem and one that we can all commit to as a nation, but it should not preclude our state government from taking actions that we can take now in the immediacy to try and resolve some of these problems. If the royal commission then finds those are on the wrong track or we need to adjust those, then they can be adjusted. But there is no excuse, just as the nurses and management in those places should not step away from trying to improve their practices right now.


The member for Nicklin was correct yesterday in pointing out that every single situation is unique, and he tried to suggest that that would somehow lead to ratios not being applicable or useful in an aged-care facility. I agree that every situation is unique and managers need to adjust staffing in relation to each unique situation, but the reality is that in aged-care facilities in this day and age the people who are being referred to aged-care facilities all have extremely high and complex needs. They are people who require very complex nursing care. To be honest, to deliver that will be made much, much easier by having defined ratios.

Debate, on motion of Mr Kelly, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

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

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.00 pm): The Deputy Premier thinks she is above the rules. She thinks she is above the law. She treats the Queensland government and her electorate of South Brisbane like her own fiefdom. This is yet another integrity scandal by the Deputy Premier. The Premier is too weak to act on the Deputy Premier. We know the Deputy Premier is in charge every day of the




week. Never before has a member of parliament interfered in the process of the appointment of a school principal—never before—and never should it ever happen again. It is an unprecedented corruption of the process of the selection of a school principal.

Today I have written to the Crime and Corruption Commission and I say to the Deputy Premier, 'Let's do this properly this time. Don't ring the Crime and Corruption Commission chair. Keep your phone at home. Do not ring the chair. Do not ring the Crime and Corruption Commission.' The Deputy Premier has become a frequent flyer at the Crime and Corruption Commission. She is a gold card member and on a first name basis with the chair, I might add. The Crime and Corruption Commission need to fully investigate this matter. The allegations would amount to official misconduct under the Criminal Code.

I am also calling on the Crime and Corruption Commission not to devolve the investigation back to the Department of Education. The director-general and the senior departmental officials have allowed the Deputy Premier to become part of what should be an independent selection process. Members of parliament have no right to veto local principals who have been independently selected by selection panels, but the Deputy Premier thinks she has that right. The Deputy Premier thinks she is above everybody in this House. I have had Labor members on the other side of the chamber in the last 24 hours tell me they have never, ever had any communication with the Department of Education about the selection of their local principals. They would not do that because it is inappropriate for members of parliament to be involved in the selection of local principals. It corrupts the process and the system.

Agreeing to the meeting shows how arrogant the Deputy Premier is. It shows she continually misjudges integrity issues in this state. Why was the Department of Education offering the Deputy Premier an exclusive look at the successful candidate to see what the Deputy Premier thought about the successful candidate? There are so many questions unanswered here. The director-general issued a statement this morning. He failed to mention in the statement the second meeting, the second phone call, the Deputy Premier had with ultimately the successful candidate. There are so many more questions to answer. The Deputy Premier thinks she is above the law. She thinks she is above everybody in this place and she should not be.

### **Pine Rivers Electorate, Achievements**

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (2.03 pm): What a tremendous year it has been in the electorate of Pine Rivers, and I want to highlight a couple of astounding achievements, some of which have been achieved in the last week. Some really big milestones and projects have been happening in the Pine Rivers electorate. We have been undergoing the removal of a roundabout and two signalised pedestrian crossings on Gympie Road and Dixon Street. On Monday morning, the green lights for go were turned on at that intersection. Those lights are now operational at Dixon Street. It is a wonderful transformative project that is happening on Gympie Road in Strathpine just outside the Strathpine centre, which we now know throughout 2020 will be undergoing a major renovation itself. The strip, as we fondly call it, at Strathpine is entirely lifted through this project, and it is so wonderful to see that happening. We received zero complaints from commuters through this process this year of taking out the roundabout, so I want to say thank you to my community for their patience and thank you to TMR for the delivery of the project.

We have also had Canberra come to the party on the north side of Brisbane. Along with the member for Aspley, we have been lobbying for Linkfield Road to be duplicated. The federal members went to the last election promising they would do this. They never said that the money would be available in 2026. We have been pushing very hard to see that funding brought forward. We have already locked in funding for a northbound slip lane but we wanted to ensure that we had some long-term solutions there, and that comes in a duplication for the overpass. That is good news that the federal government has listened. I say thank you to Minister Bailey, the member for Miller; I say thank you to the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk; and I say thank you to Scott Morrison as well for—


**Mr Boothman:** What?

**Ms BOYD:** Thank you to Scott Morrison for listening to our community and bringing that project forward. We had so many people sign on through our campaign and it was fantastic to see cooperation at last from Scott Morrison because we do not see it in federal members Peter Dutton or Luke Howarth.

Finally, there was a fantastic announcement on Monday for my school communities which will see every state school in the Pine Rivers electorate have air conditioning in every learning space. We know cooler schools are going to result in better learning outcomes. The LNP members have an eight-year plan that is completely unfunded. We know they cannot be trusted with the budget. We know they cannot be trusted with our kids' futures. It is fantastic to have this project delivered.

Lastly, I would like to thank my colleagues here, my family and friends and the community of Pine Rivers for supporting me this year. It has been a big year with the birth of my daughter. I will definitely enjoy spending Christmas with her this year.

### Drought

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.06 pm): As noted on my register of interest, I declare I have an individually droughted property declaration. It is a disgrace that the Premier and agriculture minister will not own up to the government's drought cuts. Yesterday I asked the Premier to intervene and reverse the cuts to fodder freight subsidies that come into effect from 1 July next year. Labor is cutting subsidies to drought affected farmers from 1 July next year. The request was treated with denial and arrogance. It shows indifference and contempt for those in drought.

Minister Furner came into the House and accused the LNP and me of making this up for political gain. The minister referred to the drought review, which he has accepted. Recommendation 4 of that review states—

The DRAS livestock freight subsidy cease on the revocation of current declarations, including area declarations and IDPs. Restocking and returning from agistment subsidies would be available for two years, as per existing guidelines, after current declarations are revoked.


The government accepted this recommendation and to commence arrangements from 1 July 2020. It means farmers who are drought declared from 1 July next year are no longer eligible for animal welfare freight subsidies. The scheme for remaining farmers will be completely phased out by 2021 or before, at the end of the current drought declarations. What happens if the drought continues past 2021? Labor has already banked the savings. The answer to question on notice No. 1314, which I will table, shows the government has budgeted a \$50 million saving in the forward estimates for DRAS from 1 July 2020 to 2023.

*Tabled paper:* Answer to Question on Notice No. 1314 asked on 4 September 2019 [\[2188\]](#).

That \$50 million should be in the forward estimates. Refusing to have it in the forward estimates is as good as a cut. It is a cut to drought support when farmers need it. Minister Furner received the drought report in January, did not reveal it until the end of June and has accepted the recommendations. He cannot weasel out of this. As farmers continue to struggle, the minister refuses to make clear what future drought support will look like. Cutting drought support is reckless. It is reckless to not build and deliver water infrastructure that will futureproof the state from disastrous droughts.

This anti-dams and anti-farmers government is tearing down the walls of Bundaberg's Paradise Dam and rapidly shrinking Rockhampton's Rookwood Weir project. Millions of litres of water are poured into the ocean while towns like Stanthorpe and farms on the Downs are drying up. In the Gympie region, farmers are struggling. I again call on the minister to have the local drought committee meet to reconsider the region's drought status. Seasonal conditions are deteriorating rapidly. A Deb Frecklington LNP government will not abandon farmers. We will build the droughtproofing water infrastructure Queensland needs and provide the support farmers and their communities need to survive this drought.

### Cairns Convention Centre

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.09 pm): Members of this House may remember that the \$176 million Cairns Convention Centre upgrade was an election promise. I am pleased to report that we are delivering on that and many other promises. Last month I attended a pre-tender briefing for the convention centre expansion and refurbishment project at which approximately 40 industry representatives, project team members, architects and tenderers who will be involved in the process also attended. On the Friday after that meeting the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Mick de Brenni, announced that tenders for the project were now open.


The Cairns Convention Centre generates \$80 million annually for our local business community. It forms a key part of the engine room for the Cairns economy, and as far as I am concerned the bigger the engine, the better. This expansion and refurbishment will enable concurrent and larger events and conventions to be held in our city—conventions and events that fill hotels, restaurants, reef vessels and ground-touring products, which in turn will also provide jobs and strong economic activity. The Cairns Convention Centre expansion will support 570 jobs and that is not even counting the local businesses that will be supported in the extended supply chain. The successful tenderer for the Cairns Convention Centre refurbishment will have to show how they will deliver benefits to Far North Queensland, including how they propose to engage a local workforce.

The Palaszczuk government's Buy Queensland approach shows that we are serious about ensuring this significant investment delivers real value for the people of North Queensland. The first phase of convention centre works will be lift upgrades, which will take place progressively from November so that the facility can remain open and operational until May 2020. That is when the planned closure of five months will take place so that the roof can be replaced, air conditioning can be upgraded and amenities upgrades and general refurbishment work can take place. This will be a challenging time for our community because it is such an economic driver that the hotels recognise that over this period it will be noticeably quieter, so ensuring we are on time is absolutely essential.

The existing centre will reopen in November next year. We will see a new tropical themed entrance and sky terrace offering world-beating views of Trinity Inlet with banqueting space for 410 people. Our aim is to ensure the expansion works cause as little disruption to the centre's operations as possible. Early in 2022 the Cairns Convention Centre will officially reopen bigger and better than ever.

In summary, the Palaszczuk Labor government has provided a big shot in the arm for our region by expanding this economic driver whilst generating jobs and further training and skilling the workforce. This benefits our entire community and fulfils one of our many election commitments.

### **Mooloolaba Spit**

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (2.12 pm): I am calling on the state Labor government to rule out more high-rises on Mooloolaba Spit and to come clean about plans to redevelop the Crown land at the end of Mooloolaba Spit. Revelations in a government tender document show that this Labor government has been actively investigating high-rise redevelopment and increased heights above what is set out in the existing town plan at the end of Mooloolaba Spit. This would be abhorrent to the majority of Sunshine Coast residents, who love this area and who want more open space, better support for marine services and respect for this fragile natural area.


There is a place for high-rises in the middle of cities and in accordance with town plans but certainly not in this area on Crown land on Mooloolaba Spit. The traffic congestion on Parkyn Parade is already significant and residents also raised concerns about safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists, which must be addressed as part of any plan to redevelop Crown land or other leases.

I put questions on notice to the transport and main roads minister in parliament this week following the revelations of this consultancy tender document, which quite expressly talks about investigating increased height limits in this area and acknowledging that this would be controversial. This government precinct area at the end of Mooloolaba Spit is vitally important. It services the maritime industry and the Water Police and the harbours and marine pilot station base are located there. It is a vitally important government service area.

A Mooloolaba Spit Futures Plan was undertaken in 2009 and it was quite clear that this area needs to be consolidated. There are some old buildings that need to be removed, but it was never, ever envisaged in the Mooloolaba Spit Futures Plan that high-rises or densification, possibly with accommodation, would go into that area which would potentially be in conflict with existing use. The Boating and Fisheries Patrol building needs to be relocated and consolidated in this area, as was flagged in the future plan in 2009.

I want there to be openness and transparency from this government about their plans. Most of all I want them to respect this area and not put high-rises in there. I urge them to not abuse the town plan but to listen to the people. We want to see more open space made available where appropriate with some of those old buildings being removed. However, we also want to make sure that the vital fishing industry and the related maritime industries are supported. We do not want to see incompatible uses. We want this area that we love and cherish to be respected and looked after.

### **Beenleigh State High School**

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.15 pm): I rise to update the House on the ongoing commitment to the community of Beenleigh by the Palaszczuk Labor government. As some honourable members would be aware, Beenleigh State High School hosts the annual Paddock to Plate event, the highlight of the Beenleigh calendar, showcasing the talent of our state school students. Members may have heard me speak about it previously.

When I last spoke about the Paddock to Plate it was to inform the House that the event had been short-listed as a state finalist in the Showcase Awards for Excellence in Education. Alas, Beenleigh State High School did not win on the night, but we did represent strongly with a number of tables and we were still able to cheer on Beenleigh Special School, which took out the win in the early and primary years category. At least Beenleigh did have a win on the night.


This year at the Paddock to Plate event the Premier and Minister for Education were special guests. The event also provided the opportunity to open Beenleigh State High School's 2020 Get Ready program's new building, the \$7.6 million Bookinburra building featuring 10 classrooms and other learning spaces as well as the best appointed chook shed in the department. Beenleigh State High School's growing student population and award-winning show birds are well catered for. It is what happened next that has the student population of Beenleigh State High School still talking.

After opening the building, the Premier toured the trade training centre where students were busily preparing the three-course meal under the expert tutelage of chef Matt Golinski before heading into the Beenleigh State High School hall. The Beenleigh State High School hall was built in 1988 as an open-air hall and it was enclosed a few years later. It is over 30 years old and has a concrete floor. While it has a fixed stage, it has no side or backstage area or audiovisual or lighting equipment. It is primarily a sports hall, replete with balls still stuck in the rafters, and does not afford the school an appropriate place to showcase its creative performance talent, particularly its cultural performance groups. To top it off, it is not even large enough to fit the current or growing school population.

Within five minutes of stepping foot into the hall, the Premier had decided that Beenleigh deserved better facilities. At the lunch, the Premier announced to the hundreds of locals gathered that the government would investigate the potential for a new facility that was more appropriate for the events and functions that the school conducted. Beenleigh was abuzz.

The next week I followed up on the Premier's commitment, writing to her to seek confirmation and details about what the process would be for Beenleigh State High School. I can report to the House that Education Queensland has allocated \$50,000 to conduct an options analysis for the provision of an appropriate school hall for Beenleigh State High School. The principal, Matt O'Hanlon, also reports that he has had a number of meetings with Education Queensland staff to discuss the infrastructure and curriculum needs of Beenleigh State High School now and into the future. The options analysis is due to be finalised in February. I look forward to updating the House in the new year on what is in store for Beenleigh State High School. I am backing Beenleigh.

### Public Transport

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.18 pm): I would like to know what parallel universe the member for Miller, the transport and main roads minister, lives in. Earlier this morning in answer to a Dorothy Dixier asked by one of the backbenchers he wanted to spruik about how wonderful the public transport system is, particularly as it pertained to rail. Rail fail—you have to be pretty special if you are a minister and you have your own hashtag denoted to it—is still continuing.

I will give some facts. In terms of skipped stations, commuters were left stranded 277 times between July and September. In the first quarter of this financial year—July to September—on 277 occasions people have had trains simply go right by them. This is an increase from 232 over the same period last year. It does not really equate. We are told that everything is tickety-boo, yet it is actually going backwards.


The minister also asserted that things are now wonderful, with of all these new restored services. They are not new services; they are merely trying to replicate the disaster from a few years ago—trying to replicate the 472 services removed from the South-East Queensland passenger rail network. That is another fail. It just continues.

Then the minister made the absurd assertion in relation to New Generation Rollingstock that they were bought overseas because we were hopeless. There was a compelling reason: Downer EDI pulled out of the tender bid. They were not interested. There was no other option. That has been documented time and again. For this man, foolish behaviour knows no bounds. He was not called 'foolish' by the CCC for no reason; he is the walking embodiment of that term.

It gets better. Congestion in South-East Queensland is absolutely rampant. It does not matter whether one travels on Gympie Road or Old Cleveland Road—north, south, east or west. Congestion is out of control. Is it any wonder? We know that public transport is another fail, because it is not keeping up with per capita growth. The minister has selective vision—'lies, damned lies and statistics'. He likes

to harp on about the fact that a recent report showed a total figure of 189 million passengers in 2018-19; however, that figure does not take account of the fact that during that same period it did not keep pace with per capita growth—another fail. Sadly, it continues.

### Springfield, Regional Jobs Committee

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.22 pm): I was so pleased to hear the recent news from the Minister for Training and Skills Development that Springfield is one of the regions that has been selected for a new regional jobs committee. This new committee is being created to support Springfield's job market and to grow the local industries and skilled workforce our region needs now and into the future. This is my greatest priority and a priority of our government. As a recognised principal regional activity centre under the SEQ Regional Plan 2017, our government recognises that the possibilities for Springfield are strong, with education, health and technology identified as the priority industries to help support the city's predicted population growth of 115,000 over the next two decades.

Skills are also needed for Greater Springfield's existing major industries including retail, manufacturing, construction, administration and transport logistics. We also know that small business is our state's biggest employer, with the new regional jobs committee firmly focused on how we create a strong employment base for these thriving businesses. The Palaszczuk government is committed to more jobs in more industries and we are doing just that, with 226,800 jobs created for Queenslanders since this government came to office in 2015.


With funding support from the Queensland government, the new Springfield jobs committee will engage with government, local schools as well as local industry and training organisations to ensure we plan for jobs and skills suited to the strengths of our region. We know that our largest challenge will not be jobs but ensuring we have a local workforce ready and trained with the skills to attract and fill employment opportunities.

The committee will benefit from research and industry engagement from Jobs Queensland, collaborate with the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, and advocate for our region's unique workforce training and investment needs. I am pleased that the committee will utilise the existing framework established by the Springfield Skills Alliance project. I was fortunate to receive an early briefing on this proposal when I was still a candidate and I was strongly supportive of its intent. I was also pleased to recently meet with representatives from Regional Development Australia Ipswich & West Moreton to discuss the Springfield Skills Alliance proposal in more detail and to offer my support as the local state member.

The regional jobs committee will have a strong focus that includes ensuring training resources are aligned with the future skilling and employment needs of Springfield and surrounds, and undertaking an assessment of the Springfield labour market and emerging skills requirement. The need for a focus on future workforce skills and growth leading to real-world solutions will require continued attention on innovation, improvements in productivity, training and the need for industry to collaborate with the community and training providers.

We live in a world where change is constant. Economic shifts and global trends are leading the demand for new skills and different employment opportunities in our state. Through its work, the Springfield regional jobs committee will support our region to be better prepared for the broader forces driving change in the region's labour market and create an innovative and entrepreneurial, self-sustaining Springfield economy.

### Bushfire Prevention and Preparedness, Parliamentary Inquiry

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.25 pm): Yesterday during debate on the Leader of the Opposition's motion for a full parliamentary inquiry into the Queensland bushfires, the member for Keppel opposed the right of locals in her electorate to have their say. The member for Keppel sweepingly stated that the people of Central Queensland do not want an inquiry. Yesterday, while the member for Keppel was on her feet speaking and voting against a bushfire inquiry, Mr Clothier and other Keppel constituents were at a community meeting organised by council to discuss the impact of the Yeppoon and Cobraball bushfires. At about the same time the member for Keppel was putting herself and Mr Clothier into *Hansard*, Mr Clothier was putting forward two motions to the local meeting calling for a full public inquiry. I table this for the House.


*Tabled paper:* Motions, dated 27 November 2019, presented by Mr Leon Clothier in relation to the Cobraball bushfire disaster [2189].

At about the same time the member for Keppel was voting against her constituents' right to answers, her constituents were unanimously passing Mr Clothier's two motions calling for a full public inquiry. Mr Clothier and many of his neighbours and fellow ratepayers are asking for exactly the same thing the LNP motion proposed: a full public inquiry. Did the member for Keppel actually speak to Mr Clothier after he was ravaged by bushfires? I am sure she did. If the member did, was she listening to him and others in the electorate?

Members of the Labor Party would have known that locals in Central Queensland are demanding a public inquiry into these bushfires. They want the truth and the opportunity to improve that it brings. What a disgrace that the Labor Party has sold out local communities in favour of green political cover-ups being run by the Labor government. The people of Keppel and the rest of Queensland are demanding and deserve answers. They need answers on the 83 per cent reduction in overall completed fire prevention activities, the 75 per cent reduction in completed hazard reduction burns, the 82 per cent reduction in completed firebreaks and the 88 per cent reduction in community education activities.

Queenslanders deserve a full and public parliamentary inquiry, but Labor members are once again denying Queenslanders the right to some answers. In doing that, they are denying Queenslanders the chance to improve bushfire preparedness. I call on the Labor Party to support a full parliamentary inquiry into the bushfires. It will be made up of three members of the Labor Party, two members of the LNP and a member of the crossbench. It will have a parliamentary opportunity to find out what is actually happening with these bushfires. There is nothing to hide. Members opposite have nothing to hide in regard to a parliamentary inquiry. We have parliamentary inquiries all the time. Why not have a full parliamentary inquiry into the Queensland bushfires? From what we learn we can ensure we do not repeat the mistakes we have made again and again. I call on Labor members to back a full parliamentary inquiry into the bushfires.

### **Ipswich, Road Infrastructure**

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.27 pm): On 20 November I received the wonderful news that the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and the Minister for Main Roads and Transport, Mark Bailey, had secured 80 per cent federal government funding for the \$22 million upgrade of the very busy Mount Crosby Road-Warrego Highway interchange in Ipswich. A few months earlier, in June, I joined the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, Jackie Trad, and Minister Bailey at the interchange to announce that the state government had committed 20 per cent funding to the project. This allowed the Premier and Minister Bailey to begin negotiations with the federal government to secure 80 per cent funding from the \$400 million Warrego Highway Upgrade Program. I had previously sponsored a petition by local residents seeking an upgrade and am also aware that the member for Moggill, Christian Rowan, had advocated for funding via his federal colleagues. It was a great team effort by all concerned to achieve state government and federal government funding for this project.

As this interchange forms part of the national land transport network, pursuant to the National Land Transport Act 2014 the proposed roadworks must be jointly funded by the state and federal governments. In May 2016, at my request Minister Bailey visited the interchange. Soon after, in response to a petition by Councillor Wayne Wendt, the minister agreed to provide \$120,000 for design work. When this was completed, the estimated cost of the roadworks was \$22 million.

In January 2019 I was pleased to sponsor a petition by Sandra Clarke seeking an upgrade of the interchange. In the minister's response he indicated that the roadworks required joint funding from the state and federal governments. On 1 April I asked a question on notice in parliament seeking clarification of the funding arrangements. In his response the minister advised that the \$22 million project required an 80 per cent contribution from the federal government, being a contribution of \$17.6 million. This funding comes from the Warrego Highway Upgrade Program to which the federal government has already committed \$320 million—that is, 80 per cent.

Unfortunately, the federal government's existing time frame for federal projects on the Warrego Highway would have meant that the project could not have commenced before 2022-23, but the agreement made by the Premier and the Minister for Main Roads and Transport, Mark Bailey, means that the funding for the project can be brought forward. This is great news for those long-suffering road users who use the interchange. They come from suburbs like Tivoli, Karalee, Barellan Point, Chuwar, Mount Crosby and Karana Downs as well as those residents of Brassall and North Ipswich who use this interchange to get from the Warrego Highway to their residences in Ipswich. This is great news for the residents of Ipswich and I am very pleased with the support that I received from the Premier and Minister Bailey.

### Palaszczuk Labor Government, Health System



**Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (2.30 pm): Unfortunately for Queenslanders, 2019 has been another year of Labor health failures and once again the embattled health minister has been completely missing in action. Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk promised better local health services at the last state election, but the health system is in crisis. Our hardworking nurses, doctors, midwives and paramedics work tirelessly each and every day to save lives, and they do a fantastic job. No-one is criticising them for the tough job that they have to do and as a nurse I certainly appreciate what life is like on the front line for our frontline warriors.

Following on from the Lady Cilento name change debacle last year, we have seen more wasteful spending on Labor's health IT disasters and patient outcomes going backwards. Ambulance ramping data is the worst on record. Elective surgery waiting lists have blown out by 26,000 Queenslanders since the Palaszczuk Labor government was elected. Violence in our hospitals is out of control, with nurses being treated like punching bags given the latest statistics revealed late last week. In response to that, the health minister actually welcomed more people reporting their assaults. Talk about out of touch! What a complete fraud, and there was no mention of the staff who do not ever report their assaults because this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Earlier this week the Auditor-General tabled another scathing report into the financial management of Queensland's health services. The report found that Queensland Health entities should strengthen their controls and processes. The Auditor-General undertook a limited review of the preproduction environment prior to go-live. It did not focus on program governance, including change management. Prior to go-live the Audit Office informed the department about issues that were identified in relation to role mapping and process mapping—important processes for the rollout of any new IT system. These issues were not resolved prior to go-live on 1 August this year.

What is clear is that Labor has not learnt a thing since its Health payroll debacle almost a decade ago. When issues first arose, the health minister actually blamed user error—in other words, our hardworking nurses trying to manage with another Labor health failure. Labor's latest digital disaster was six months late, \$30 million over budget and is causing chaos in hospitals for nurses and patients. In light of the reference in this report, I have written to the Auditor-General today asking that a performance audit be undertaken into the failed rollout of the S/4HANA medical ordering system which has seen nurses having to order band-aids on the bankcard and small business suppliers being treated like cash cows. The Auditor-General could get to the bottom of what went wrong with yet another failed Labor IT project rollout and provide recommendations to fix the problem.

This is yet another example of Labor's failed health priorities and wasting taxpayers' money that could be spent helping nurses and doctors with patient care. Queenslanders deserve a world-class public health system that the Palaszczuk Labor government is not delivering. The only way to fix Queensland's ailing health system is to vote for the LNP in October 2020. The Minister for Health is a fraud, a phoney and a failure. If the Premier was not the weakest Premier Queensland has ever seen, she would sack her incompetent, embattled Minister for Health today.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Mudgeeraba, during your speech you have used unparliamentary language. I ask you to withdraw.

**Ms BATES:** I withdraw.

### Redlands Electorate



**Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (2.33 pm): In my maiden speech I said that economic diversity was the key to prosperity in the Redlands and it is fantastic to see one of the new regional jobs committees established in my area. I had the pleasure of listening to Debra Baxter, who is heading it up from the Queensland government side, present to our chamber of commerce two weeks ago. At the same time she is working with our new chamber of commerce president Rebecca Young, and I congratulate her. I attended the business and retail awards on Saturday night—a fantastic night for all—with an Indigenous theme around Quandamooka country. It was just wonderful. They are certainly working hard with me and with the new jobs committee to make sure that we position our community for a prosperous future.

I also want to give a shout-out to the Southern Moreton Bay Islands Chamber of Commerce which has its AGM tomorrow night. It is really getting itself back up and running. Jasmine Person has done some great work in doing the rebranding to get some interest back into those islands in terms of creating opportunity for business on the islands.

Our Redlands research centre has been at the heart of opportunity, looking forward into the future as well as looking back into history on what the Redlands has been strong on. At the moment we have talked a lot about the hydrogen future in Townsville which you are well aware of, Mr Deputy Speaker Stewart, and Townsville had its meeting last week. We also had a round table in the Redlands. It was fantastic to hear from Professor Ian Mackinnon. Sumitomo was in attendance, as were a range of other stakeholders that are interested in hydrogen.

As members would know, Redlands has the proud position of being the first to export the first piece of hydrogen from Queensland to Japan. We had a great conversation and there are some real opportunities for the Redlands to kick some goals. We are a region of islands, and SeaLink was at the table. It has some new boats in design at the moment and is absolutely focused on looking at how we can use hydrogen to take forward that opportunity in what we do day to day in terms of getting in and off our ferries. That is fantastic. There were also discussions on how we could use our islands to trial potentially putting hydrogen into the grid, so this is all very interesting. We also need to work with our TAFE to look at the skills and training needed in the renewables future, particularly in hydrogen.

Last month RACQ established its new facility, RACQ Mobility Centre of Excellence, in my region. That involves research, innovation, driver training and testing of autonomous technologies. It is a living lab. It will test and commercialise smart mobility technology and its mainstream transition. We are a place that will help the transition in this regard into a very large scale. Earlier this week on Karragarra Island we had the first autonomous vehicle operating in Queensland. If members have not been to Karragarra Island—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Ms RICHARDS:** If members have not been to the southern Moreton Bay islands, I would strongly encourage members to come out and check out this new autonomous vehicle and everything that our beautiful Redlands coast has to offer.

### **Wesley Medical Research, 25th Anniversary**



**Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.36 pm): I rise to inform the House of the 25th anniversary of the establishment and launch of Queensland's second oldest medical research institute, known as Wesley Medical Research. For the past 25 years Wesley Medical Research has continued to push the frontiers of medicine, delivering real translational health benefits to patients whilst also contributing to medical and health knowledge across the world. As the official research organisation for UnitingCare, the research undertaken by Wesley Medical Research aims to span all UnitingCare hospitals including the Wesley Hospital, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital, the Buderim Private Hospital and St Stephen's Hospital located in Hervey Bay. In addition to its hospital remit, Wesley Medical Research is also focused on improving our health standards, particularly in rural and remote communities.

The majority of the research conducted will result in tangible medical advancements, better healthcare practices and lasting patient benefits. Wesley Medical Research has encouraged and supported research initiated by people who understand the value of clinical research. Doctors, nurses and allied health professionals across UnitingCare hospitals are all actively involved. These hardworking and dedicated professionals are driven by a desire to provide patients with better treatment options and improve quality of life outcomes for a range of health conditions. Wesley Medical Research also operates Queensland's largest tissue bank. This critical resource collects, stores and supplies tissue, blood and associated data for researchers in Australia and across the globe, collaborating with biomedical researchers to understand and ultimately find cures for many debilitating diseases including dementia.

As a previous member of the Wesley Medical Research Board for two years, I saw firsthand the positive impacts of Wesley Medical Research to patients across Queensland. This year alone Wesley Medical Research has enabled 781 patients to participate in research trials across a variety of areas including cancer, neurology, immunology and cardiology. Currently, research staff are working on several key projects including novel therapies to better treat Tourette syndrome, improving the early diagnosis of coeliac disease by attempting to validate a simple prick test that could potentially identify the disease within 10 minutes, and repurposing drugs to inhibit the development of malignant brain tumours.


As both a specialist physician and also past president of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland and the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland, I understand the importance of investing in medical research to improve health outcomes for all Queenslanders. I welcome the federal Morrison



LNP government's recent \$440 million investment in world-leading health and medical research projects across Australia. A total of 298 new projects will be receiving funding under this scheme distributed by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

It was an honour to join Associate Professor John Allan, Emeritus Professor John Pearn, Martin Albrecht AC, board chair Peter Allen and other current and former board members and Wesley Medical Research staff and supporters at Government House earlier this month where a formal reception was hosted by chief patron, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Wesley Medical Research. I wish Wesley Medical Research all the best of the future given its vital role in delivering translational health benefits to patients.

### Greenslopes Electorate

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.39 pm): I welcome the news that the state budget is being brought forward. It will bring certainty and stability to our communities as we move through a busy year. It means that I will start earlier in working with my community to identify and confirm the priorities for next year's budget. As always, I will be asking what we need to focus on to build community and to continue to make the day-to-day lives of the people of the Greenslopes electorate better. No doubt, people will tell me that I should continue to push for improved infrastructure to support our local sporting clubs, like the Brisbane Metropolitan Touch Association or the Metropolitan Districts Netball Association and the many teams with the names 'East's', 'Coorparoo' or 'Holland Park'. My community is thrilled to see the Annerley soccer field resurfaced and upgraded for the first time in 40 years and will want to see more clubs getting the support they need to get more people active in the community.

Supporting our local police and court officers to do their important work is another issue that people regularly raise with me. I will be pushing to make sure that they have the resources to keep our community safe. There is an army of paid staff and volunteers who work in local community organisations like Stepping Stone Clubhouse, the World Wellness Group, Zig Zag and the Holland Park meals on wheels. I will be listening carefully to what they have to say about what we need to do to make life better in our community.


I back my local schools. I am pleased that we have delivered halls, classrooms and sporting facilities at nearly every school in my electorate. I will be working with the principals and the P&Cs of the other schools to push for even more infrastructure to make our great schools even better.

My community understands the value of a job. I would like to see more Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs like those underway at Vision Australia and the Coorparoo School of Arts and Memorial Hall. I will push for infrastructure investment and that will also bring jobs. My community fought to save the Mount Gravatt TAFE, so ensuring good funding for TAFE services will be a high priority.

I am really proud of our achievements in public transport. Fairer Fares, the Veloway and the Eastern Transitway are all getting people out of their cars and on to buses, trains and bikes. Cross River Rail is well underway, creating jobs and getting people home faster. The success of Cross River Rail is going to mean that there will be trains going through the Coorparoo rail intersection every five or so minutes. That means that that busy intersection will be closed more and more often than it is open, creating traffic issues not just in Coorparoo but through the electorates of Chatsworth, Capalaba, Redlands and many other areas on the south side. My community is already telling me that they want action on this crossing. I will be pushing for that in the budget. I am pleased that the federal member for Griffith, Terri Butler, and Coorparoo council ward candidate, Matt Campbell, are both on board.

There is always much to do in the electorate of Greenslopes. I will be listening to my community over the coming months and I will continue to ask that key question, 'What do we need to do in the next budget to build community and to make life better?'

### Tourism

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (2.42 pm): Repeatedly saying something does not make it so. When the minister stands up and says, 'Queensland tourism is booming,' it is offensive to those businesses that are trying their best in very difficult circumstances but seeing their bottom line decrease. It is highly offensive to suggest, 'Queensland tourism is booming.' I understand the minister's desire to be a champion for the industry—as the minister, so she should be—but being a champion does not mean being a cheerleader. It means being a visionary. It means setting a direction and where there are areas that can be improved, she must improve them. When the minister says, 'Tourism is booming,' and in the last three years an operator in Cairns has had to experience a flat line in their performance,

a reduction against the national average of 21.5 per cent, that is offensive. When the minister says, 'Tourism is booming' and an operator in the Whitsundays has seen their share of the international market reduce by 39.5 per cent—and that was before the shark debacle—that is offensive.

By all means the minister should talk about the offering in Queensland, but we need to have an honest conversation about where we are at. Do members know what state has had an honest conversation? Tasmania. On the back of that that once sleepy state—

**Mrs Stuckey** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I take that interjection from a former tourism minister—the once sleepy state of Tasmania has stolen the march. They have done that by looking the noisy minority in the eye and not just talking about ecotourism, as we have in this state for too long, but delivering it. Tasmania has increased its share of ecotourism nationally by 45 per cent, or 67 per cent in real terms. That is what a booming tourism industry looks like.

When I hear the member for Cairns tell us about things being great in his city, it reminds me of a conversation that I had with a person in Cairns when I was there last who said, 'He's a pretty good guy, but he's pretty ineffective.' The city of Cairns needs somebody who advocates for them. We need to act on shark protection. We need to act on new industries. We need to be honest about the need to stop talking about ecotourism and delivering it. The Queensland tourism industry needs a leader, not a cheerleader.

### **Toohey Electorate, Schools; Correction to *Record of Proceedings*, Apology**



**Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (2.45 pm): I rise to inform the House of the great things that have been happening under the leadership of the Palaszczuk government in my electorate of Toohey. Next week the Premier will be coming out to my electorate to open the Sunnybank Special School. This project has gone on for quite some time. I would like to send a shout-out to the principal, Darren. The facilities that have been provided by the Palaszczuk government at that school are world class. The experience that the students will now have at that school places them in good stead to deal with the complexities that they face every day.

Many other great things have happened in my electorate. One is the drop and go zone at MacGregor State School. That would never have happened if it were not for the hard work of the former education minister, Kate Jones, and the current Minister for Education, Minister Grace, who has seen the conclusion of the construction of that great drop and go zone. The drop and go area was constructed jointly with the Brisbane City Council. The school, the students and the parents are very grateful that they now have the safety of being able to drop off children straight outside the school. Another success is the work undertaken at Eight Mile Plains. I must give a shout-out to Minister Bailey. With the upgrade of the M1 in that area of the school, the school also received a drop and go zone.

While I am on my feet, I wish to correct the record. On 15 October 2019 I stated—

Whilst I have performed Legal Aid work in the past, I have not represented any clients who qualify for Legal Aid funding since I became a member of parliament.

At the time of making that statement I believed it to be correct. However, recently, in the course of working through other matters I became aware that in late 2018, due to an unexpected and unforeseen staffing issue, I instructed in court for part of a day on a Legal Aid funded matter until one of the employed solicitors was able to attend. I unreservedly apologise to the House for this omission.

### **Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Integrity**



**Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (2.48 pm): Those opposite are high on sanctimony and taking the moral high ground, but when we scratch beneath the surface we really get to the truth. We have just heard from the member for Toohey about some of his dealings, but I want to turn to the Attorney-General. Sitting week after sitting week the Attorney-General walks into this House and assumes the moral high ground. We receive lecture after lecture after lecture.


Recently we have seen what the Attorney-General is really all about. Today we received a couple of lectures on the financial gerrymandering of the electoral system. A bill was introduced knowing everything we know about what the Labor Party has done. The Attorney-General came in here and lectured us about appeals, as though those on this side of the House have no valid right to write to her and seek for her to take advice to appeal decisions.

**Mr Krause:** Or ask questions.

**Mr JANETZKI:** Or ask questions. Decisions and questions that ought to be questioned. We are representing our communities and when there is a concern about crime we need to be able to ask the question. The Attorney-General has no moral high ground to stand on when it comes to this. The legacy of this Attorney-General will be getting rid of the post Fitzgerald era optional preferential voting on 18 minutes notice. This Attorney-General has no moral high ground to stand on and this side of the House is tiring of the constant hectoring and lectures.

What we really saw over the last week was the Attorney-General being outed. It was an enormous thud from the moral high ground to the real truth when we saw a \$125-a-head fundraiser hosted by Star which has a significant number of gaming and liquor interests that the Attorney-General regulates. Never forget that there are 144 mentions of the minister, namely the Attorney-General, in the Casino Control Act. This is an Attorney-General who has no authority when it comes to questions of integrity. Her lectures ring hollow after accepting these donations, this value to her personal account, after none of the five attorneys-general in the room considered it was a concern, except Rod Welford who, when questioned afterwards, said he would never have taken any gift in kind. I note that one other attorney-general who was not there remains in the House today. The Attorney-General has no moral high ground and her time is nearing an end.

### **Logan Electorate; State Schools, Air Conditioning**


 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (2.51 pm): We have extraordinary schools in the Logan electorate. One of the coolest things I have seen recently was the Park Ridge State High School band playing at their awards ceremony. We already know that we have the coolest students in Queensland. They are creative, intelligent and hardworking. Now we know we are going to get the coolest coolest children in Logan. Every single school in the electorate of Logan will get all their classrooms air-conditioned. It includes Jimboomba State School, Yarrabilba State School, the brand new Yarrabilba State High School, Logan Reserve State School, Regents Park State School, Park Ridge State High School, Park Ridge State School, Logan Village State School and Boronia Heights State School. We are building new buildings at Logan Reserve State School, Park Ridge State High School and all of the classrooms at the brand new Yarrabilba State Secondary College.

I would like to think this started when both the Premier and Minister Grace came out for the first day of school in the heat of summer and they got to see what it was like out in Yarrabilba. I said to them, 'This area needs air conditioning as much as some areas in the north.' Only Labor is committed to getting air conditioning done this quickly.

As a teacher I know what it is like to have young students in high school come in from playing in the playground who are hot and sweaty and difficult to teach. I remember putting a lot of effort into a lesson plan that was creative and thoughtful but the students were hot and sweaty and not up to following through with that plan and I had to scale it back and do something simpler. That will not be the case for Logan students any more. Teachers will be able to do those creative dynamic lesson plans for their students.

It is also about local jobs. This extra work to put in air conditioners in Logan schools is a special Christmas present for air-conditioning installers. It is local jobs for local people. That is a Christmas present that we can all share in Logan. When the LNP was in government it delivered zero air conditioning for any of the schools in Logan, there were no new classrooms and there were less teachers to develop creative lesson plans. Logan had the coolest students and now they have the coolest coolest students.

### **Charters Towers, Health Services; Hughenden Irrigation Project**


 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (2.54 pm): The provision of dialysis in Charters Towers has been a long running issue championed by my colleague, the former member for Charters Towers, and it now behoves me to chase it up as an issue. There are about 11 people in Charters Towers on dialysis. As many members would know, if a person lives in a remote area that means travelling three times a week to get to dialysis, with family often having to help. It is a massive impost on these people and causes a lot of heartache, tension and emotion. It remains one of the burning issues in Charters Towers. I acknowledge the great work being done by the local committee, Tracey Murphy, Bev Leo and Pam Jenkins who has been a long-time advocate, and also the chair of Townsville HHS, Tony Mooney, who has been very helpful. We also acknowledge the minister who has been listening to us on this subject.

Another issue in Charters Towers is the provision of a CT scanner. If a person has a stroke in a remote area and can get to a CT scanner fast, doctors can locate where the problem is and provide the right treatments. It can mean the difference between life and death. We do not have a CT scanner in

Charters Towers, which is a hub for outlying rural areas. That is a burning need in Charters Towers that we hope to get a solution to in the future. It is afforded to many other places in Queensland. It is a big gap which I hope will be remedied in the future.

Today in parliament we have representatives from the Hughenden Irrigation Project, which is just up the road from Charters Towers. It is a wonderful scheme that forms part of the Bradfield Scheme. It is a fairly modest development in the grand scheme of things compared to proposals such as Hell's Gates. It is a 190,000 megalitre dam and requires an allocation of 114,000 megalitres. To put some perspective on that, the average annual flow through the Flinders system, which it is on, is 3.8 million megalitres. We are looking at around 2.2 per cent of the average annual flow—120th of what flows past in the wet—to be taken out of the river. It is a small fraction, acceptable to most people, and it is desperately needed. It represents one of the only real beacons of hope that we have in the west to give us prosperity. It would be the first dam ever built on the Flinders, which gets 3.8 million megalitres of run-off.

### North West Minerals Province

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.57 pm): Earlier this year I had the opportunity to undertake some mine visits in the North West Minerals Province. I called in to Dugald River, Phosphate Hill, Cannington Mine and Ernest Henry, some of the great mines in that region that are producing some of our outstanding exports. We are seeing products like zinc, lead, phosphate, copper and gold going out from these particular mines. The North West Minerals Province is essential for Queensland's economy. In fact, up until September this year Queensland exports topped \$87.6 billion. What we see coming out of the North West Minerals Province is critical to the economy and our employment opportunities.

Last week the Premier took the cabinet to Mount Isa. There were some announcements while they were there, including \$13.8 million in funding for rare earth minerals. The announcement comprised of \$4.8 million to re-examine old mine tailings and core samples for new age minerals and \$9 million to unearth more and better geological information to help industry identify new projects.


It is important to know that those rare earth minerals are our future, particularly in the North West Minerals Province. While we are not going to stop mining zinc and copper throughout that area, this is another tranche of mining that will create more jobs for the people in the area. We have already seen some outstanding funding in the North West Minerals Province. In fact, Mr Deputy Speaker, as you would have heard, earlier this year around 300 kilometres of the rail line was decimated. The estimated time to repair that line was 11 months. In fact, within nine weeks the work done had the line functioning again at 100 per cent. That is an outstanding achievement by the rail workers. That work has also reduced travel time by 50 minutes. The budget contains \$39 million for the North West Queensland Economic Diversification Strategy, \$380 million in previous funding commitments for the north-west rail line and—a great one for me—an \$80 million funding commitment to reduce rail access charges, which is what the miners were telling me: reduce the costs, get the trucks off the roads, get the freight onto the rail line and create more opportunities for our kids and a real career path for their future.

## INNOVATION, TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note


Resumed from 24 October (see p. 3674), on motion of Mr Pegg—

That the House take note of the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee report No. 20 titled *Examination of Auditor-General Report No. 7 of 2018-19: Conserving threatened species* tabled on 19 September 2019.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (3.01 pm), continuing: Within updates from the department, it has been reassuring to see that most of the seven recommendations from the audit are being implemented, including an overriding biodiversity strategy. The audit also identified that of the 107 environmental offsets obtained since the legislation's inception in 2014, only three of the 10 land based direct offsets have been implemented. Of most concern is that none of the 97 financial settlement offsets have been acquitted. The value of those offsets is \$9.64 million. It is acknowledged that our legislation needs to be stronger in this area to ensure that offsets do not result in a net loss of habitat and that fines for breaching conditions of the offset contract need to be implemented. As it stands, offsets are an ineffectual and costly bureaucratic process for developers, lawyers and the government.

Currently, compared to other states, Queensland has the lowest proportion of protected land at just 8.2 per cent, which is unlikely to meet the original 17 per cent target by 2020. If we are able to provide threatened species with the best chance of recovery, we need to protect their habitat. Buying

back expired pastoral leases, protecting vulnerable parcels in the Great Barrier Reef and transferring state forests with high conservation value to national parks are options that warrant further consideration, as is being currently undertaken in Noosa with the expansion of the Tewantin National Park. The Community Sustainability Action grants of \$1.5 million that are available for initiatives that align with threatened species responses is a good start. However, it is vital that funding continues to be made available if there are to be solid ongoing outcomes. In closing, again I thank the Queensland Audit Office, my fellow committee members, the ministers, departments and agencies involved, and all who are committed to conserving our native flora and fauna.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (3.03 pm): I am pleased to speak on the Auditor-General's report No. 7 relating to conserving threatened species. As referenced in the report, Australia is home to between 600,000 and 700,000 native species, many of which are unique to Australia. The diversity and geographical range of Queensland's wildlife present challenges in conserving threatened species and we know that native flora and fauna are in decline. As the report indicates, addressing that decline is complex and requires a targeted and coordinated approach across multiple agencies to manage threats and conserve habitats.

The QAO's audit assessed whether Queensland public sector entities are effectively identifying, protecting and conserving threatened species, with the audit primarily focused on the Department of Environment and Science. The audit was certainly very thorough, as is expected of a QAO report, with the process involving interviews with staff in the relevant departments, document review and data analysis, and interviews with key stakeholders and experts. The QAO also undertook site visits to two nature refuges in Central Queensland and considered 31 written submissions from stakeholders, including universities, conservation groups, wildlife parks and individuals.


The Auditor-General made a number of findings and seven recommendations in the final report. Those were accepted by the director-general of the Department of Environment and Science, with an acknowledgement that improvements are needed in the areas of listing, the common assessment method, and conservation planning and oversight.

There was also an interesting observation made by the QAO report in relation to what happens when a particular government sharply changes policy direction and where we now find ourselves. In 2010, the former department of environment and resource management developed and issued a draft strategy in relation to the conservation of threatened species. That document, *Building nature's resilience: a biodiversity strategy for Queensland* was, according to the QAO report, 'well researched and developed and identified a holistic approach to conserving biodiversity'. The department finalised the strategy in 2011, yet it was never implemented. Perhaps a change of government had something to do with that.

I am pleased to see that once again we are very focused on the issue of threatened species. The Palaszczuk government is developing a new biodiversity conservation strategy to offer a new direction to threatened species conservation that ensures a coordinated and strategic approach. Since accepting the findings of the Auditor-General's report, the department has made progress to improve the effectiveness in identifying, protecting and recovering Queensland's threatened species. I draw the attention of the parliament particularly to recommendation Nos 1, 3, 4 and 7, which I am advised have been achieved. The process for listing threatened species has been enhanced. The governance and processes for the common assessment method have been strengthened and the Queensland government continues to work with the Commonwealth government and state and territory jurisdictions to implement obligations under the common assessment method memorandum of understanding.

Improvements to the process for listing threatened species, including encouraging nominations, have been made more transparent by the publication of information on the process, its purpose and its governance on DES's website. There are also several threatened species recovery programs that are helping animals such as the northern hairy-nosed wombat, the greater bilby and the Richmond birdwing butterfly, to name a few. Those are all having a positive impact on the recovery of those species and our government's recent announcement around further funding will continue that great work. Recently the minister announced 29 successful projects that protect threatened species, under the \$18 million Community Sustainability Action grants.

Meeting the recommendations of the QAO report, developing a new biodiversity strategy and funding on-the-ground projects will no doubt go a very long way in helping us to protect our most vulnerable flora and fauna. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (3.07 pm): I too will make a brief contribution on the Auditor-General's report No. 7, *Conserving threatened species*. Firstly, I will outline why it is important that we continue to benchmark the performance of the department and, indeed, other agencies in what

is a noble and worthy cause and why we must continue to implement all of these recommendations and continue to strive to improve. It is because Queensland is home to 85 per cent of Australia's native mammals, 72 per cent of native birds, just over 50 per cent of native reptiles and frogs, and more than 11,000 plant species. Queensland has 955 threatened species listed under the Nature Conservation Act. Those facts are from the initial report in 2018-19.


I want to make two points. The first is to pick up briefly on what the member for Noosa said. She mentioned the need to ensure that offsets are used effectively and directly, and that they can offset an impact in an immediate location. I will continue to advocate and push for that, particularly when it comes to key conservation corridors in growth areas.

In my brief contribution, I want to refer to point 2.6.1 in the report. The committee sought comment from the Audit Office about the cost of implementing the recommendations. When asked directly about the cost of implementing the recommendations, the QAO stated—

In terms of the recommendations, the costs probably are not all that high. It is more about harnessing the activity that is already occurring but sporadically ... We have not put a dollar cost on it, but it is certainly, from our point of view, not likely that it would require a considerable amount of additional funding or potentially any additional funding.

I place that on the record because I know that, when a government is told that it needs to improve, often its response is not about a change in focus, a change in attitude or a change in KPIs and then sticking to them. Often the response is, 'We just need more resources.'

Good ministers are able to issue clear and decisive direction and prioritise. Clearly, there should be few greater priorities for a department of environment than conserving threatened species. With that, I look forward to continuing on the journey of meeting these recommendations. I sincerely hope that the strong recommendation from the Audit Office to reprioritise, rather than throw money at the problem, is adhered to.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.10 pm): I rise to comment about the Auditor-General's report in relation conservation of threatened species. I start with the committee comment—

The Auditor-General's performance audit identified clear areas for improvement in the management of threatened species.

In particular, I point to the issue of the planning, coordination and oversight of threatened species conservation strategies and activities. I would like to touch on that point in relation to the management of our national parks here in Queensland. I table a picture which was recently taken by me in one of our national parks along the New South Wales-Queensland border.

*Tabled paper:* Photograph depicting national park sign [\[2190\]](#).

Conservation of species goes not only to animals but also to plants. As members can clearly see, the picture shows part of that national park that is completely overrun by noxious weeds, including lantana, and a whole series of other pests. No doubt, the infestation of our parks by those weeds would have an impact on the conservation of species that are meant to be protected under the Nature Conservation Act. Clearly, action needs to be taken in our national parks to address that issue. That will be a long-term process because it is a big issue across many national park estates.

As the member for Broadwater said, there are 955 species listed as threatened wildlife under the Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation—33 extinct in the wild, 301 endangered and 621 vulnerable. The QAO said that that is likely to be an understatement. I would say that is probably true, because there are a lot of scenarios I can think of, including the one I have just mentioned about national parks, where it would seem that the government, over a long period of time, has taken its eye off the ball when it comes to looking after our national parks.


The Nature Conservation Act was brought into being in 1992, nearly 30 years ago. When I talk to people who have been around my electorate for a long time, they say that the parks have never been in a worse state, even 30 years after that much heralded piece of legislation brought in by the Labor government in 1992 which was meant to be a great protector for our national parks. It just goes to show that, no matter what legislation you have in place, if you do not follow through on its implementation and you do not have the right procedures in place then it does not have its desired effect. That is the point when it comes to conserving threatened species, whether they be plants or animals, in our national park estate.

I refer to the management of fuel loads in relation to bushfire. Let's remember that noxious weeds on the national park floor are a huge source of fuel when it comes to bushfire. If they are not managed properly, they become a danger to every single species in that national park. I hate to think how many endangered or vulnerable wildlife have been killed by the fires that have ravaged parts of my electorate and other parts of Queensland.

I take issue with the member for Jordan, who alluded to a change in government as being the reason an integrated and comprehensive conservation strategy for the whole of the state was not implemented. Before 2011 the Labor Party was in government for 19 years, more or less—there was a short break—but it was only in 2009 that they started to implement a strategy for the whole state.

**Mr Power:** What happened in the short break?

**Mr KRAUSE:** Well, there was the Borbidge government in the 1990s for two years and two months. Apart from that period of time, Labor was in government for 19 years. It was not until 2009 that the integrated conservation strategy for the whole state was implemented. It just does not add up. Labor have been in office now for five years and they have still not made any improvement. National parks are in the worst state they have ever been in because of the fact we have had 25 out of 30 years of Labor in government and they have abandoned the old, better, practical ways of looking after parks. They should reverse that.

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (3.15 pm): I rise to speak on the report titled *Examination of Auditor-General Report No. 7: 2018-19—Conserving threatened species*. This report highlights the gap between stark reality and the government's hypocritical chest thumping and self-congratulation about its conservation credentials. It is a case of spin versus reality—of judging the government on what it does and not what it says.

The objective of the Auditor-General's inquiry was to find if the department 'has strategies and plans in place to effectively protect threatened species and their habitat' and if it 'is effectively monitoring and reporting on threatened species outcomes'. A key finding is that the government had 'no strategy or framework for conserving or managing threatened species' in place. The Auditor-General found that 'efforts in managing threatened species lack purpose, direction and coordination' and that 'the department largely focuses on individual species, rather than taking a strategic approach to conserving all threatened species'. I repeat: 'lack purpose, direction and coordination' and has no strategic approach. It is not a surprise. The government claimed the black-throated finch was a threatened species only to change the finding overnight after it was politically savaged at the polls. It is all about political measures, not practical measures.

The recent bushfires showed a complete lack of knowledge, coordination and good management in implementing a conservation strategy for the state. The strategy is based on photo opportunities to appease greenie activist organisations. Action is driven by pandering to their interests and not good governance.

Other comments in the report are just as critical, with findings of 'no plan', 'no coordination' and 'not on track to meet all obligations'. The Auditor-General found that 'Queensland is not on track to meet all its obligations' on a nationally standardised approach to assessing and listing threatened species. The report said that 'comprehensive project governance arrangements had not been developed and there was no overreaching plan to coordinate activities'. The government constantly claims it is getting on with the job. It is a feeble example of what it means to get on with the job.

The department is obsessed with legislation. Regulations that impose onerous burdens on farmers, landholders and rural and regional industries only hinder good land management and make it harder to protect threatened species.

The bushfires that ripped through the state highlight irresponsible government vegetation management practices which fuelled those fires and destroyed native animals and thousands of hectares of bushland in their wake. Creating a haven for feral animals and pests, uncontrolled weeds are often a fire hazard, and biosecurity risks on poorly managed state controlled land pose a risk to threatened species. It creates ongoing issues for landholders neighbouring state controlled land.

The report notes that the Nature Conservation Act requires the government to develop an integrated and comprehensive conservation strategy to achieve the conservation of nature for the whole of the state. Simply locking land away does not protect threatened species, its biodiversity or the land. It opens the door to feral animals, pest and weed infestation and serious fire risks.

State land is being overrun with invasive weeds which strangle native species. It is not being cleared or managed and it is ripe for a fire to tear through. Feral animals are multiplying because those who help keep them in check are being hamstrung by bureaucratic nightmares.

At considerable expense and at no cost to the state, farmers and landholders help preserve threatened species when they can efficiently manage declared environmental weeds, feral animals and fuel loads preventing catastrophic bushfires which destroy every living animal and plant in their path.

They manage declared weeds and animals such as wild dogs, feral pigs, foxes, cats, rabbits, giant rat's-tail grass, groundsel bush and environmental weeds such as lantana, noogoora burr, wild tobacco bush and cat's claw creeper.

The Auditor-General made seven recommendations and identified clear areas for improvement in the management of threatened species which the department has accepted. The department also urgently needs practical commonsense measures to help preserve threatened species.

Government members speaking on the report heaped self-praise on the government's conservation credentials. Those credentials are based on an obsession with granting excessive powers to bureaucracy, often have little scientific basis, are rushed, impose exorbitant fines, impinge on freehold property rights and devalue farming in rural and regional industries.

Most people want to protect the environment and preserve threatened species. Farmers and primary producers take seriously their responsibility as custodians of the land, ecosystems and biodiversity. They know they must care for it now for future generations. If the government wants to conserve threatened species, it should stop pandering to a green agenda and focus on practical and workable measures, not political ones.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (3.21 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly report No. 24 titled *Report on the 2019 budget estimates process* tabled on 19 September 2019.

Upon reading the report, it struck me that it is probably relevant to go back to when this whole process commenced. It was in 2009 under the Bligh government when the government released a discussion paper titled *Integrity and accountability in Queensland*. That, from the Bligh government, is worth a laugh to begin with. However, that then generated a report from a select committee in December 2010 titled *Review of the Queensland parliamentary committee system*. The names inside the front cover are revealing: Judy Spence, Lawrence Springborg, Simon Finn, Mike Horan, Carolyn Male, Evan Moorhead, Dorothy Pratt, Robert Schwarten and Jeff Seeney—all members who have now left the parliament. I recall the report came down with great fanfare in December of that year.

It is important to review the executive summary. The executive summary states—

One of the key functions of a parliament is scrutiny of the executive. Proper scrutiny of the executive helps to ensure accountability and transparency and in turn better administration.

It goes on to state that we have 'a strongly entrenched two-party system of government, with rigid party discipline', and that, as a consequence, we are 'elected from single-member constituencies through an optional preferential voting system'. Back in those days we had an optional preferential voting system. It is amazing, on reading that report, that we now, after 18 minutes, have anything but an optional preferential voting system. The report goes on to argue—

We must look to other means of ensuring accountability and scrutiny.

The executive summary on page xiii refers to 'Scrutiny of the estimates'. When I come to this current report—I am looking with full favour on the report back in December 2010—I reflect upon the pretty bars and charts contained in this report and wonder whether those bars and charts reflect a proper process of scrutiny as referred to in the report of December 2010.

The budget process under this government and the ALP is one of protection. It is as simple as that. The ALP members of the committee run a protection racket to ensure the minister and those around him are not assailed with questions that might elucidate real information for the people of this state. How many times have we seen the Labor members ask Dorothy Dixers to the minister and all we see is his head down reading the response to that particular question? So much for proper scrutiny. It is all funnelled in: 'Let's make certain that the minister at all times is protected, cocooned and secured.'

**An honourable member:** It never happened to you then?



**Mr McARDLE:** It never happened to me. Under the LNP, we were an open and accountable government. Under the ALP, the use of proper scrutiny comes down to Dorothy Dixers and a protection racket.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Weir): There is too much cross-chamber chatter. I ask the member for Caloundra to come back to the estimates in 2019.

**Mr McARDLE:** In 2019 the estimates are a prime example of the Dorothy Dixers being asked and a protection racket in full flow. It is the way the ministers answer these questions that is of real concern to me as well. If they hit the issue of the question it is a miracle. It is by accident. It must be by divine right. It is certainly not a planned exercise to give information to the public or to the parliament.

In December 2010 the Labor government put in place a regime that would elucidate information. Now what we have is corruption by this government and the one before to make that process an absolute farce. If the opposition dares to raise a question in the process that the minister does not like, you get the look from the minister to the Labor chair and suddenly the question is ruled out of order or there is some reason to ensure that the question is not required to be answered properly. At the end of the day, the process has lost all its integrity under the Labor government. I indicate to the House that under the LNP government post-election next year integrity will be returned and also honoured.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (3.26 pm): I move—

That the House take note of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report No. 47 titled *Examination of Queensland Audit Office report 2: 2017-18—Managing the mental health of Queensland police employees* tabled on 20 September 2019.


This report presents a summary of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's examination of the Queensland Audit Office report No. 2 for 2017-18 titled *Managing the mental health of Queensland police employees*. Mental health is very complex and mental health issues can take many forms.

In a previous life I worked in the justice department at the Magistrates Court in Cairns. One of my roles was as the coroner's clerk, which meant that I had to put together the reports that had come in from the different remote areas and also locally in relation to people who had met untimely deaths. I remember—I will not say as a young clerk, but I remember as a clerk in that courthouse putting together those reports, and the photos that went with the reports were very stark and revealing.

The reason I raise this is that we are talking about people who are the first at the scene. They are faced with the reality of the scene. I merely read reports and saw photos of the scene much later in the process, but it is as though I can still see some of those photos today. That is the slight effect that those experiences have had on me, so for those on the front line who have to go to motor vehicle accidents or to where people have met disastrous ends it must have a greater impact on them over time.

The Auditor-General's report into this matter looked at how the Queensland Police Service could improve the way they do it but, as we in this House all know, Queensland is a very vast state. We have the tyranny of distance and we have the tyranny of the hard work that frontline services have to do. There are many remote places with one-man stations, for example, and they have to deal with myriad issues, but the isolation that goes along with the vastness of Queensland is something that has to be taken on board.

The report suggests improvements to the system, but if we are realistic about what we are talking about today—the challenges that frontline services face—it is important that we understand that there will always be room for improvement. This is not an area where you can tick all the boxes and say 'Yes, we've got it right.' We are dealing with human beings, and any suggestion or recommendation to make the life of Queensland police officers—for that matter, anyone else on the front line—better and more able to cope with the stresses of their job should be not denigrated but should be taken on board to make the life of those frontline service workers better.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (3.31 pm): I too rise to make a contribution in this debate on the motion to take note of Queensland Audit Office report No. 2 of 2017-18 titled *Managing the mental health of Queensland police employees*. As my honourable friend the member for Toohey so eloquently put it, this is an area where we do need to strive for constant improvement. I am fortunate to call a number of former police officers friends. We have five of them on this side of the House. They tell me that, by and large, things are getting better in the field of mental health for serving police officers. The Audit Office examined the progress being made to manage the mental health of police officers and came up with six recommendations. They recommended that the QPS—

1. better coordinates and enhances its staff wellbeing and mental health support services and information within a clear strategy and integrated framework

...

2. acts to understand and address the mistrust of some employees in its current mental health frameworks and support services

...

3. improves how it designs, coordinates, delivers, and records its mental health training

...

4. assesses options for screening employees prior to them leaving the service, and for enhancing post-service support—

I think that is a very important one—

5. develops processes and measures for analysing its data for trends and to assess the effectiveness of support services so they can be continuously improved


...

6. improves the consistency and coverage of mental health screening and monitoring ...

Whilst I cannot speak as a police officer or a former police officer, I did serve in the Australian Defence Force and I think there are some similarities there. It was my observation that from time to time service personnel would retire from the service or leave in some way other than a medical discharge and that that departure was prompted or contributed to by an undiagnosed underlying mental health problem. The tragedy of that situation is that those people can then fall through the cracks. They cannot necessarily be given access to their entitlements regarding treatment for their injuries. Also, the public perception of the defence department would be diminished because of the perception that our soldiers, sailors and airmen and airwomen are not properly looked after. I think that is quite unfortunate.

In 2017 the QPS agreed to implement all of the report's recommendations. They subsequently confirmed that they commenced work on all of the recommendations, yet the latest correspondence the committee received was 28 May 2018. In subsequent correspondence they said they were currently working on or had completed 'all six recommendations, with recommendations either finalised or implemented, or near finalisation with implementation subject to the availability of resourcing'. I think we can rest assured that there is progress being made there.

I would like to pay tribute to the members of the Queensland Police Service and other emergency service personnel who face particularly difficult circumstances in their jobs in terms of stress and so forth. We know that they are exposed to trauma, high levels of stress and difficult situations involving people whose plights are particularly tragic. Over time I am sure that any normal person would be affected by these things, and that is why I believe it is important that these recommendations are accepted and implemented and that every effort is expended to make sure those in whom we place the safety of the public are looked after so they can do their job well. It is important that they feel free to express if they feel they have a problem safe in the knowledge they are not going to be disadvantaged for doing so and that understanding, assistance and ongoing treatment will be available for them when they do. I am quite happy with the report and I commend it to the House.

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (3.35 pm): I rise to speak to the 47th report of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, the examination of the Queensland Audit Office report No. 2 of 2017-18 titled *Managing the mental health of Queensland police employees*. This report was tabled in this House in October 2017. In considering this report the committee made one recommendation: that the House note the content of the report.

From the outset, I would like to say that this report is clearly of interest to me for a number of reasons, not the least of which is I am a former serving police officer and the spouse of a current serving police officer. It is for this reason that I would specifically like to bring a couple of points raised in the Audit Office's report to the attention of members here. Before I do, I would like to point out what this

Audit Office report does not contain. It does not go towards identifying the causes of mental health issues within the QPS. Its starting point is the high incidence of mental health issues and the service's strategy and response or, in some instances, the lack thereof.

Firstly, members should understand how disproportionately overrepresented first responders are in mental health statistics, particularly in cases of depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. For males, the serious mental disorder claim rate is seven times higher than the average rate for all occupations. For females in the job, the rate is 16 times higher. For those experienced in dealing with uniformed personnel these figures would not be surprising. I have lost count of the number of funerals I have attended of uniformed colleagues who lost their own personal battles.

At the time the Audit Office was compiling this report there was no consolidated mental health and wellbeing strategy within the QPS, although I do note that concurrent to this report the QPS was developing its Our People Matter strategy and a discussion paper was available for the Audit Office to provide some comment on.

There are a few areas within the report that I would like to comment on; firstly, the level of trust that officers have with reporting mechanisms within QPS support services. I do note that recommendation No. 2 involves the QPS being required to understand and address the mistrust that some employees have within that mental health framework. For those who are not familiar, the support services primarily available and known to police officers are the peer support officers, the PSOs, and human services officers, the HSOs. Peer support officers are fellow police colleagues who have done a four-day course. The report found that officers were generally positive of the over 770 PSOs within the service, but it found that the QPS was unable to track whether those PSOs had completed required training or annual professional development. This would be concerning.

The other component is the human service officers, some 24 qualified psychologists or social workers spread throughout Queensland. These were a bit more problematic. The report found that some employees did not trust the role of HSOs, believing that the HSOs would report confidential information to management and thereby damage their career prospects. Again this is problematic, but I do understand that this is a trust issue and it will take some time to work through. I again note recommendation No. 2, which has been adopted and implemented by the QPS.

As the member for Toohey said, this is about the stigma of mental illness and how management and even peers respond to the occurrence of mental illness within the workplace. I certainly had firsthand experience. When I returned to the police after a stint with the army, that stint had resulted in a diagnosis of an adjustment disorder. I will not spend my time here critiquing the medical classification review board in the army—I will leave that for another time. Upon advising my QPS supervisor of this diagnosis, my accoutrements, my firearms, were removed from my control and I was sent for further and ongoing testing. Despite being deemed suitable to continue within the QPS, I was in no doubt that my service file was marked 'not fit for operational duty'. That is from there the stalling of a career.

The other point I would like to raise is the disparity between the support services offered to general duties officers and specialist officers. Those who do the plain-clothes jobs, those who go to the crime scenes on a regular basis, would often get screening and would often get support, but it was different for general duties officers, who are the bulk of our service. I note recommendation 6 is that the QPS will commit to improving monitoring the mental health of our general duties officers.



**Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.41 pm): The World Health Organization defines mental health as—

... a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Our police certainly contribute greatly to our community but their performance can be impaired by cases of mental health.

I spent many years as a police officer, and I was very proud to be a rehab officer to a lot of officers who suffered from the rigours of being a police officer. The stigma of mental health in the Police Service has evolved from one where there were cases of convenient mental health—where officers in some cases got significant payouts—through to a better culture where peer support officers, human service officers and your mates look out for you. It is a new culture where some officers from all ranks speak openly about their problems and support their mates. The Queensland Audit Office report explained—

Mental illness differs from poor mental health, because it refers to recognised, medically diagnosed illness, which impacts an individual's cognitive, affective and relational abilities.


Police have many relationships within their work. On a day-to-day basis, they have to establish relationships with the people they interact with. The Audit Office report also outlined that first responders to emergencies and critical incidents—such as police, paramedics and firefighters—are considered more susceptible to mental health illnesses than the general population because of the nature of their work. In Queensland we have a Labor government that has not maintained resourcing to the Police Service to keep up with the population, and the budget is so far behind where it needs to be. We have seen police numbers drop from 245 police per 100,000 to 233 police per 100,000. That is over 600 down, which means that those who are left behind have to pick up the workload of those 600 police.

The Audit Office found that, while the police have certain measures in place to monitor and manage the mental health of their employees and to prevent mental illness, they are not always effective. The Audit Office report outlined six recommendations. I will not bore the House on each of those recommendations here; however, it is encouraging to know that the Police Service are working on those six recommendations and have reported to our committee that they have significantly achieved a number of those recommendations.

I do note, however, that this is going to be an ongoing effort and will require the culture to continually change to one of support. We in this House can learn from that here and in our communities where we can look out for each other and ask, 'Are you okay?' That is the only way the Police Service and the community in general are going to deal with mental health and particularly suicide prevention. Whilst the Police Service has worked on each of those recommendations, there are still a number of areas that need to be undertaken. I look forward to seeing further reports from the Police Service to inform us of that.

When my colleague from Southern Downs and I were appointed to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in May 2018 just after we were first elected, we had a briefing on this matter and we requested a subsequent briefing by the commissioner, and it was gratifying that that occurred. I was very pleased to hear him answer our questions quite openly and honestly.


In closing, I would like to thank the Audit Office for the information and the Police Service for the way they have responded to this. I would also like to give a great deal of thanks to the officers and staff of all ranks who have come forward and discussed openly their own challenges of mental health and the leadership and support they have given to the rest of the service.

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.46 pm): This report presents a summary of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's examination of the Queensland Audit Office report No. 2 titled *Managing the mental health of Queensland police employees*. It puts front and centre the issue of mental health in the Police Service. Obviously, they do great work on the front line, but that has detrimental consequences to those officers and staff who time and time again have to experience events that the majority of us will never experience.

The report was tabled on 10 October 2017 during the 55th Parliament and it was referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee on 3 May following the commencement of the 56th Parliament. The objective of the Audit Office report was to analyse the ability of some of our departments, in this case the police, to manage the mental health of our Queensland police employees. The performance audit team were able to identify a number of recommendations and existing strategies that the police have in place in order to address this very complex and important issue.

One of the great aspects of having an external audit like this is that it provides large departments and businesses with an opportunity to cast a careful eye on some of the strategies they have in place. As we have heard, the QAO identified six recommendations. It is pleasing to see that the QPS have begun to implement or have implemented those recommendations.

I would like to pay tribute to the many wonderful police in my electorate. I would like to recognise all of the local police officers and staff in my community, including OIC Murray Crone at the Upper Mount Gravatt Police Station and OIC Kylie Doyle and her team at Holland Park. I know that not a weekend goes by in my community where they do not face events that may have a detrimental impact on their mental health. I commend the report to the House.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.49 pm): I concur with the words of the member for Macalister. I think this is something that we can all agree is critically important. The safety of our community in Queensland is obviously the No. 1 priority for a government. The mental wellbeing of the officers who provide that thin blue line cannot be a higher priority, and the numbers have been spoken about previously. Why was the audit held? When male police are reporting mental health distress at seven times higher than the average population, that is a concern. More particularly, when female

officers are reporting at 16 times higher, that is a dramatic multiple and something that should be taken very seriously. I know the police have been working on Our People Matter. It needs to apply to sworn and unsworn officers.

Report No. 47 is a very important report, and the recommendations it contains are ones that both sides of the House can support. There were some concerns in the report. We always want our officers to be well in the job; we want them to be able to do the job well. We know that the number of officers per head of population is dropping, and when people take sick leave or seek an absence that puts more pressure on them. As the crime rate increases and as the number of police per head of population is dropping, the workload that is being placed on other officers is increasing. We cannot afford for that to impact on their mental health and mental wellbeing because they are so critically important to the safety of us all.

We should be doing everything we can and ensuring this is led from the top. I am sure that the Police Commissioner, Katarina Carroll, will be looking at this report and ensuring—this is a little bit outdated now—that the police processes are up to date and that we are putting the very best candidates forward. Some of the conclusions of the report included—

The training is poorly linked and largely uncoordinated, and employee attendance records are not up to date. Most of the training is voluntary, but even employee mandatory participation in training is not monitored.

That is just not good enough. This has to be a priority within the service to make sure people are well. The high-risk units were spoken about. If we look at appendix D—and I will not go through them—we see a number of high-risk units listed. I think it is important that the QPS maintain a special watch over them. That does not take away from the fact that, every day that general duties officers go out and do the job, they have stress put on them. They do not know what the situation will be.

As we go into Christmas—and we know many of those officers will be working through the Christmas period—it is a time when the rest of us are enjoying our family time and catching up with friends. A lot of officers will not enjoy those privileges because they are out there on the thin blue line and they will be suffering the stress that the report talks about. It is important that within the QPS—from the very top down through all of the commissioned ranks and all of the non-commissioned ranks—people do not feel stigma and that this does not affect their career. If they do feel they are suffering from mental stress or pressures it is important that they reach out.

I commend the move in relation to the peer support officers. I am pleased that Our People Matter is underway, but I think we need to be ever vigilant to make sure that as the officers go about their duties they know that the community of Queensland will support them. We will not stigmatise them, we will not crush their careers if they report, but we will encourage them to get well and continue to do the job.

Training an officer is a very expensive investment. When an officer has to leave the service because of mental stress it is a terrible cost not just to them but also to us. We should do all we can to keep them in the job.



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.54 pm): When I travel around Queensland I meet with police officers who on a daily basis demonstrate their dedication and commitment to keeping the community safe. When Queensland is at its worst when natural disasters strike, our police officers are at their best. We saw it during the devastating floods that hit Townsville earlier this year. We saw police doing whatever it took, putting their own lives at risk to help others. This is what police do: they put others before themselves. Police work is challenging, police work is complex and police work can be dangerous. Police work can take a toll on the selfless individuals who comprise this world-class service.

Mental health issues are the third biggest health problem in Australia behind heart disease and cancer. They can affect anyone and their effect on the sufferer and those around them can be serious. Because of the nature of the work they do dealing with emergency situations or critical incidents, police can be vulnerable to the task and conditions they face. Policing is a people service; it is about police interacting with the public. At times the interaction occurs in tense, distressing and challenging circumstances.

The report we are discussing found that any one or an accumulation of these interactions can affect the mental health and wellbeing of police. The report also found that, coupled with the stress factors that affect the wider population, police are considerably more susceptible to mental illness such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress. The report found that the Queensland Police Service has in place many of the necessary elements to effectively monitor and manage the mental health of

its employees and prevent mental illness. Police have established a wide range of mental health related processes, screening, monitoring and support services. However—and this is very important—there is always more that can be done.

I know the Police Service is working to improve the monitoring and support services it provides. The service is progressing its Our People Matter health and wellbeing strategy. The objective is to build and sustain momentum and support for the strategy and other health and wellbeing initiatives. It is a strategy around the health, safety and wellbeing of Queensland Police and their families to help them during the tough times.

Our People Matter committees are established in every district and every command and they promote initiatives that support the strategy. It is about providing wraparound services for all, free help and counselling, access to specialist psychological support and social workers, advisers that offer advice on rehabilitation and injury management, and chaplaincy. Because when it does come to our police, our people really do matter. Our People Matter sets a direction and standard to provide working environments that enhance support to police employees and their families. This strategy represents a significant investment in terms of resources and services to support employees who may be experiencing poor mental health and physical health.

One of my first actions after the last state election was to write to the Minister for Industrial Relations requesting a review of workers compensation arrangements for first responders and emergency service workers with post-traumatic stress. To meet this government election commitment, the Queensland Police Service is assisting the Office of Industrial Relations and WorkCover Queensland in their review of current workers compensation and clinical services relating to police and post-traumatic stress. I note that the Queensland Audit Office also acknowledged the significant work undertaken in implementing the recommendations that were quoted in the committee's report.

The steps that the Queensland Police Service has taken, including through the Our People Matter strategy, are having a positive effect. I am advised that the Queensland Police Service has observed a reduction in work related psychological injuries from 0.72 per hundred employees 10 years ago to 0.62 per hundred employees in the 2018-19 year. Just yesterday I stood with the Police Commissioner and emergency services minister, Craig Crawford, to launch the 'Are they Triple OK?' campaign. This is a campaign that urges people and support networks to support our first responders.


Debate, on motion of Mr Ryan, adjourned.

## HEALTH TRANSPARENCY BILL

### Second Reading

Resumed from p. 3958, on motion of Dr Miles—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (4.00 pm), continuing: It was a good lunch and I am glad to be back speaking about nursing, one of my favourite topics. As I was saying in response to the member for Nicklin's contribution around aged-care facilities, he is correct: every aged-care facility is different. That does not mean that we do not need staff ratios in those nursing homes. We do know that the majority of people—in fact, I would say all people—who end up in aged-care facilities these days have complex and high care needs.

There is a vast network of community service organisations that support people to stay in their own home. The whole focus of our acute and primary healthcare system is to keep people well and in their own home. I think the My Aged Care system is absolutely and utterly failing to achieve that objective. Anybody who has attempted to navigate that—as I have on behalf of patients and more recently on behalf of my elderly mother—knows that it is a system that is completely and utterly failing. The federal government needs to take urgent action in relation to that system.


In response to the member for Caloundra's call to keep the politics out of this debate, this is not a political call; this just needs to be fixed. If the My Aged Care system works properly—I think its objectives are right—it will keep people in their own home. I think that is a very admirable objective.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government. It is a nursing government. It is the government that introduced ratios. It is the government that introduced nurse navigators. A nursing government is a government for patients. When you get things right for nursing and midwifery, you get things right for patients.

I refer to ratios. We know now that they save lives. They have been operational and the research results are in: they are saving lives in Queensland Health. I note the earlier interjection from the member for Maroochydore, who called out, 'What's going to happen in state-run nursing homes?' I say to her: when this bill passes there will be ratios in state-run nursing homes. We know from the research that that will save lives. I very much support that aspect of the bill.

Finally, I turn to the aspects of the bill that deal with information about facilities. We must bear in mind the decision-making processes et cetera that precede a person being placed into a nursing home. When those decisions are made by the individual—if they are able to do that—by their family or by their EPOA, a time frame is placed on those people finding accommodation. For private hospitals it is about 35 days. They have an acute-care certificate. It is often difficult to get a second acute-care certificate, so there is a fairly tight time frame. Bear in mind that you have probably never done this before in your life and your family members have probably never done this before in their lives, but you have to find a place in a fairly short period of time. With public hospitals there is potentially even more pressure. If there is pressure to free up a bed, they will be looking for a place as fast as they possibly can.

What people need when they are looking around and comparing facilities is information. We know from microeconomics that if you want markets to work—if you want consumers to be able to make sensible and good decisions about the use of resources—you need good information. That is what this bill is calling for. The bill allows people to make good decisions by providing them with good information. We should always remember that that microeconomic principle is based on the rational consumer. I argue fairly strongly that a consumer facing the pressure of 35 days or fewer to find somewhere to spend the rest of their days and who may have severe health problems is probably not a rational consumer. In my opinion, the more assistance we can give to families and the more help we can give to people making these changes in life the better. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.06 pm): Before I contribute to the debate, I wish to advise the House that my partner is the chair of a not-for-profit Rotary Club owned aged-care facility in my electorate. Later I will have more to say about that great facility and about a very special resident whom my electorate holds very dear.

The bill establishes a legislative framework for collecting and publishing information about public and private hospitals and residential aged-care facilities. It amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2001 to introduce a minimum nurse and support worker skill mix ratio and minimum average daily resident care hours in public and private hospitals. The bill amends the Health Ombudsman Act to implement recommendations of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee's inquiry into the performance of the Health Ombudsman's functions pursuant to section 179 of the Health Ombudsman Act. The Health Ombudsman is important, particularly for people in regional areas who face a malpractice issue or something untoward in the health care they receive. To accompany the bill, the government also tabled two draft regulations: the draft Health Transparency Regulation 2019 and the draft Hospital and Health Boards (State Aged Care Facilities) Amendment Regulation.

Although the bill appears to have reasonable intentions, the LNP has some concerns which I will outline. The lack of evidence to determine the level at which minimum care hours are set is concerning. Another concern is the cost of the new requirements—\$10 million annually—which is to come from existing Queensland Health resources. Another concern is the two-year phase-in period.

The minimum average daily resident care hours was set at 3.65 hours. There was little evidence as to how this benchmark was arrived at. Further, it applies only to 16 facilities, named in the Queensland Health state aged-care facilities regulation. In my electorate that includes the Karingal Nursing Home at Dalby—I understand that you are familiar with that, Mr Deputy Speaker—the Waroona Multipurpose Centre at Charleville and the West Haven Nursing Home in Roma. I will keep a watching brief in relation to how my HHSs—one of them has two of those facilities—find the staff, because it is particularly difficult to find appropriately qualified staff in places like Charleville, and how the HHSs fund it, because they do not have unlimited resources. I am disappointed that none of the facilities in my electorate were visited by the committee.

I also have in my electorate multipurpose health services operated by Queensland Health—at Injune, Surat, Dirranbandi, Quilpie, Augathella, Mungindi and Mitchell—that are not included. I am advised that the committee visited not one multipurpose facility. Given the number of them in Queensland—there are many in my electorate and a lot more across Queensland—and how the model works, I would have thought it would be high on the government's agenda to ensure that elderly people being cared for in those facilities are included in this legislation.

Surprisingly, the ratio will not apply to the residents of the MPHS facilities even though there are significant numbers of elderly people who live and access these multipurpose facilities. For instance, in Mitchell there are 10 beds in that MPHS. That is not insignificant. There are not one or two beds here and there; there are significant numbers of beds and aged people in those facilities. Aged care is a great challenge for our communities. We cannot ignore the evidence coming from the hearings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

The royal commission interim report was delivered on 31 October 2019. The Queensland bill, which we are debating today, was introduced on 4 September 2019 together with the two regulations dealing with the nurse percentages and the daily resident care hours and other matters. It is disappointing that this Labor government has not taken a more constructive approach to deal with the workforce matters, and we have heard from members opposite in relation to the *Four Corners* program. Members on the other side of the House have been actively quoting what happened on that *Four Corners* program, but it is a little bit rich for Labor members opposite to criticise the federal government when it is the Labor state government that did not include its own 16 state-run aged-care facilities that were the subject of 16 serious complaints, including the alleged rape of an elderly resident.


This should not be about which government goes first. It should be about getting the best possible outcome for those who are the most vulnerable in our community—those loved ones who are in aged care. I have had personal experience of this issue with both my mother and my father being in aged care, and that is not easy for people who are seriously affected by dementia. This legislation should be evidence based. It should not be average figures across a facility because that does not guarantee the provision of hours to the aged-care residents in accordance with the formula in terms of the number of nurses and others.

Turning to the new reporting framework, the bill establishes a legislative framework to compel public and private health facilities and the residential aged-care facilities to provide information to enable that information to be published. The intention is for that information to be published on a new interactive website. It does not compel private residential aged-care facilities to report information and private residential aged-care facilities may opt out of reporting the requested information. It remains to be seen as to how that will operate in the future. The bill also allows for private residential aged-care facilities to provide contextual information and explain their support and consumer understanding of the residential aged-care facilities and their average daily resident care hours.

Earlier I mentioned the not-for-profit Rotary owned aged-care facility in my electorate. The Pinaroo aged-care facility is the only one that is owned by a Rotary Club in Australia—owned and run by that service club—and there is nothing easy about running and operating an aged-care facility. I commend those who have served on the Pinaroo boards and committees and the members of the Roma Rotary Club for their dedication to aged care across my region. There is something very special about Pinaroo, and perhaps this is something that the minister could look at as a better model than some of the reporting. The community engagement that is present from the Rotary Club, from the families, from the staff and from the community really does set that facility apart from many other aged-care facilities. If you want to run a great aged-care facility, ensure you have the families, the community, the volunteers, the local support auxiliaries and eyes in that facility. That will ensure that it works well with a dedicated staff and you will continuously get good outcomes for aged care.

It would be remiss of me not to mention a very special resident of the Pinaroo aged-care facility in Roma. Dexter Kruger moved into Pinaroo when he was 103 years old. He will turn 110 in January 2020. Mr Kruger is already planning his 110th birthday and I have no doubt he will have a new book or something equally remarkable on his 110th birthday. He is an absolute inspiration. He has published 12 books detailing his life. He published one on his 109th birthday called *As You Like It*. Dexter is on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. I reckon that is a pretty good effort for someone who is approaching their 110th birthday. Roma and Pinaroo are very proud to have Dexter in our community.

I want to extend my thanks to the wonderful staff at Pinaroo who provide that 24/7 care for one of Australia's oldest men and all of the other residents at Pinaroo. I also extend my thanks to all of the staff in the aged-care facilities, of which there are many, across my electorate who work 24/7 to care for the elderly members of our community. I know that many of those staff will be working on Christmas Day and working on New Year's Day. They will be making sure that there is extremely good care for our elderly people to ensure that they have a quality of life over this festive season. I really thank them for their efforts and for what they do.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.14 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of the Health Transparency Bill, which will enable the collection and publication of information from private and public health facilities and residential aged-care facilities. It will make our healthcare system safer. This bill



will enable elderly residents and their families to make informed decisions when choosing a service. This is about making sure that our parents and grandparents and loved ones are treated with respect, dignity and appropriate levels of care. We are sick of dodgy contractors and greedy owners exploiting vulnerable Queenslanders for profit. Even though the federal government is responsible for the sector's regulation, this is one way we can make them more accountable.

This legislation will help open up private and public facilities to similar levels of scrutiny which will help improve the care provided to older Queenslanders. Queensland families want to know, if their loved one gives their life savings to a company to care for them in their old age, exactly what they are paying for. Are they paying for enough staff with the right skill mix to care for them or for another Lamborghini for the CEO?

The Health Transparency Bill will create a standalone legislative framework to collect and publish information from public and private health facilities and public and private residential aged-care facilities. Consumers will be able to view and compare this information on a new interactive website. Residential aged-care facilities will be asked to report their average daily resident care hours quarterly. Private residential aged-care facilities can choose not to report this information, but their decision to opt out will be highlighted beside their name on the new website.

The bill also requires Queensland Health's residential aged-care facilities to have a minimum nurse skill mix of 50 per cent and for 30 per cent of the total care staff to be registered nurses. These residential aged-care facilities must also provide a minimum average of 3.65 hours of nursing and personal care to residents daily. I visit the nursing homes, both the public and private nursing centres and aged-care facilities, in my electorate four times a year—for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter and Christmas. I visit the North Rockhampton Nursing Centre, the Capricorn Adventist Retirement Village, Bolton Clarke Sunset Ridge and Blue Care's Capricorn Gardens.

The North Rockhampton Nursing Centre is a Queensland government facility operated very proudly by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. This facility was being prepared for sale by the LNP when those opposite were in government in Queensland. They wanted to sell it off to the highest bidder and privatise this important public health facility in Central Queensland. Those opposite do not care about quality public aged care. They stripped back the North Rockhampton Nursing Centre to make it look as profitable as possible on paper for prospective buyers.


I speak with residents, their families, staff and management at each of the facilities I visit. I see the tireless work that the staff do to help residents, and on several occasions staff have spoken to me about the need to make changes to improve safety and staffing levels. Older Australians—those who cared for us as we grew—are entitled to affordable, accessible and high-quality aged-care services delivered by a professionally trained, accredited and dedicated workforce. Caring for elderly people, especially those with behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia and other disabling health conditions, is a stressful occupation requiring the right people with the right knowledge and skills to develop and implement holistic care plans customised to individual needs.

There is so much more work that needs to be done to bring the standard of aged care in Australia up to the standard that Australians expect. This legislation introduced by the Palaszczuk Labor government is a step in the right direction. Aged care is primarily a federal government responsibility and the Morrison LNP government has been absent on this issue. The Prime Minister seems happy to take responsibility for calling the royal commission into aged care but refuses to acknowledge that it was his aged-care cuts and the Liberals in action that led to it. Older Australians deserve better. The Morrison LNP government is still yet to introduce a serious incident response scheme that would respond to incidents of assault in Australia's aged-care system. Scott Morrison must act immediately to ensure that older Australians get the quality aged-care services that they need.

Scott Morrison and the LNP are responsible for cutting billions of dollars from aged care, including \$1.2 billion from residential care in the 2016 federal budget, \$500 million from residential care in the 2015 MYEFO, and \$100 million from the dementia and severe behaviour supplement in the 2014 budget.

For more than a year the Morrison government has been sitting on a comprehensive report on building the workforce that Australia's aged-care system requires, but there is no evidence that it has fully responded to even one of the report's 14 actions. In fact, earlier this year the author of the report gave evidence at the royal commission that the government would not even respond to his requests for an update on how it was progressing each of his recommendations. This is just not good enough. I call

on the member for Capricornia, those opposite and the federal LNP to stand up for Central Queensland aged-care residents and their families and the staff of my local facilities and call for urgent changes to improve our aged-care system. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (4.20 pm): In speaking to the Health Transparency Bill 2019, I want to raise some of the issues that emerged from the committee's review, including the lack of evidence to determine the level at which minimum care levels are set and the cost of the new requirement—I believe \$10 million annually—that will come from existing health resources. It has taken two years to get to this point. It was an election commitment. It will take another two years to phase in this legislation. With all the talk from those opposite about how urgent this bill is, we question their priorities.

Queenslanders want to see world-class aged-care facilities. No-one in this place would argue against that. Queenslanders who have worked hard all their lives deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. We support the federal aged care royal commission. We need all levels of government to work together on this issue, particularly in the interests of elderly Queenslanders. We want to try to keep politics out of it, but I do not think we in this place have it in us.

The bill amends the Hospital and Health Boards Act. The draft amendment regulation also amends the Hospital and Health Boards Regulation. As the bill has a significant long title relating to transparency, I intend to discuss issues about the Wide Bay health service, particularly as the bill references the chief executive and their powers.

The bill states that the chief executive will be empowered to collect and publish, among other things, general information about public and private health facilities, quality and safety information about public and private health facilities, and residential care information. The bill will empower the chief executive to request general information and safety and quality information from those facilities. The chief executive may also request quality and safety information prescribed in the regulation.

We want to make sure that people throughout Queensland have a world-class public health system. In my part of the world, the Wide Bay health district, people are suffering. I have spoken before in this place about some data, the challenges of data, and the facts. Unfortunately, for the Wide Bay area, that data refers to ambulance ramping and surgery wait times. Over the past two months a terrible culture as returned to the Wide Bay health service.

In relation to this Health Transparency Bill, I want to talk about the transparency in relation to, of all things, the laying off of the chief executive, Mr Adrian Pennington. I have previously called on the minister to show leadership. I understand that there are some legal issues involved but, after two months, I would really love the minister to come to the Bundaberg region to talk to key providers and stakeholders about what is going on.

This issue is about patients. I want to make sure that today I give the people of Hervey Bay and Bundaberg a voice. They are entitled, under public transparency, to answers about the standing down of the chief executive of the Wide Bay health service. It is a sorry saga. It has continued for two months and there has been no explanation. Questions remain unanswered.

We created the hospital and health services to give our communities opportunities to engage with the health system and we must make sure that political interference is kept out of that. My community deserves answers from the board chair and particularly the minister. As we are debating health transparency, in my contribution I will again ask questions of the board chair and the minister.

As nearly two months have passed since Mr Adrian Pennington was put on special leave with an email on 30 September to 4,000 staff—

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is well outside the long title. I ask you to bring the member back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Weir): As I stated when I was in this chair yesterday, this is a very broad-ranging bill. It talks about public and private health facilities and the complaints framework. I have allowed the same leniency for both sides.

**Mr POWER:** It does not talk about the employment options of the CEO of the Wide Bay health service. That is clearly outside the long title of the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have made my ruling. If you do not like my ruling, you can write to the Speaker.

**Mr BENNETT:** In acknowledging the interjection by the member for Logan, I have tried to keep my contribution within the long title of the bill. The Health Transparency Bill allows questions about transparency. I hope I can be given some latitude to continue to make my contribution.

What entitlements have been paid to Mr Pennington after two months? After seven years of excellent service, why was this chief executive marched out of the hospital and treated so poorly? What are the reasons for his dismissal? After two months, those reasons must be provided. Will the minister call for a review of the events leading up to Mr Pennington's crisis event and the Facebook post that I have spoken about before in this place? Under a transparency banner, can the minister confirm that there was not a personal vendetta and that the complaints used to terminate the chief executive were thoroughly investigated independently of the board chair?


**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BENNETT:** I take the interjections from those opposite. This is a broad-ranging bill. It is about transparency. I have listened to the speeches of those opposite. It is really wonderful that the members are listening.

More importantly, under the transparency banner I want to know what mental health support has been provided to Mr Pennington since he was escorted from the Bundaberg Hospital two months ago. Sources have indicated that, contrary to the statements of the board chair in the media that Mr Pennington has been offered support, that has not happened. In an organisation that should be about the health and wellbeing of staff, I cannot believe that we have a board chair of the Wide Bay health service talking about an employee's mental health, particularly in the media.

I reiterate that the way this issue has been handled was designed to cause maximum damage and destroy the credibility and future prospects of, I would argue, not only this health executive but others. We need a full external investigation of the chair's actions in the so-called sacking of this chief executive. As predicted, the situation has become a lot worse. The Wide Bay health service will lose staff as they will not tolerate working under this board chair.

In conclusion, I know now that the performance of this high-performing HHS has started to slide. I think it is only prudent, in debating this Health Transparency Bill, that I call on the government to be transparent about this process. My community deserves better. I would have thought that, in relation to a modern facility that is concerned about patient care, we show respect to my community and get to the bottom of what has turned into a very sorry state of affairs.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (4.27 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Health Transparency Bill 2019. My dear mother, who turned 80 last year, spent 14 years of her life working night shift looking after the elderly. That is why I learned to cook—because she was not there to cook. I hope I have someone like her looking after me when I am old, because she did a fine job.

I thank the public for the wide range of contributions that were made to form this important bill that seeks to improve the care and welfare of Queenslanders. This bill creates a legislative framework for the collection and publishing of information about hospitals and aged care as well as associated information relating to the quality and safety of these services. I note from a recent ministerial reply to my own question on notice that the government is not yet prepared to publish all of the data collected. I am speaking specifically of some health and hospital services being forthcoming on their annual metrics related to severity assessment codes, which is a small step towards being more honest with the people of Queensland. It is certainly not a good look for the minister, on the eve of this bill being debated, to acknowledge that the health service delivery standards do not require SAC data to be published and make no commitment to changes.


While speaking of service delivery standards, this bill makes amendments to the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 to establish nurse-to-resident ratios in state aged-care facilities. International data shows that failures in care are closely related to staffing levels and ratios. The recent examples of poor quality care at Earle Haven retirement village and 50 per cent of Bupa nursing homes failing their quality tests show what can happen when the mix of staff ratios and financial priorities do not correspond with the provision of quality care to residents. Average direct care nursing levels in Australia stand at just 2.8 hours per day. This figure is a long way behind what research regards as necessary and well below the 4.1 hour minimum set in the United States.

Clause 10 of the Health Transparency Bill 2019 requires the residential aged-care sector to provide information relating to the nursing and personal care staffing provided to residents and the reporting of average daily resident care hours for facilities. Ultimately the community is right to be outraged at the disturbing cases involving elder abuse in health facilities throughout Australia in recent years. One of my constituents, Mr David Farrow, came to me about what happened to his wife. It was absolutely disgusting. It was prior to my appointment as the member. I have written letters and made submissions to the federal government in relation to that issue.

The aged care royal commission stated in its interim report titled *Neglect* that both commissioners were appalled at the findings, stating that substandard care is much more widespread and much more serious than they had first anticipated. Major issues highlighted in the report include inadequate wound and continence management, widespread malnutrition, dehydration and the overuse of physical and chemical restraints.

The ABC *Four Corners* program 'Who Cares?' has also generated community outrage with its revelations of the extent to which the public has been deliberately misled and denied vital information over the years. Some of the issues exposed by the ABC program included the following facts: (1) the levels of nursing staff and other skilled staff have declined to dangerously unsafe levels; (2) the regulatory system which developed has remained more concerned with protecting government and the industry than the elderly—which is shocking; (3) the aged-care sector is run by managers who are not required to have any experience in aged care or health but rather are experts in finance and business management; (4) the complaints system has never adequately investigated complaints or acted on them; (5) those in charge of enforcing regulations have been more concerned with secrecy and keeping information about failures behind closed doors than they have been about the public safety or the public's right to know; and (6) a revolving door of collusion between government regulators and industry has been created that conspires to collect the minimum of data and what it does collect is kept away from the public eye. We need to adopt a policy of zero tolerance when it comes to abuse and neglect of vulnerable members of our community. Caring for older Australians should not be left in the hands of profit driven industry insiders any longer.

On a final note, this bill also makes amendments to the Health Ombudsman Act 2013. The Office of the Health Ombudsman has dealt with a significant increase in health service complaints each year since it commenced operation in 2014-15. Year on year increases of 28 per cent, 12 per cent and 19 per cent are stark. Most obviously, the Health Ombudsman has been serving an important function but is reliant on having sufficient internal resources and efficient cooperation with QCAT, AHPRA, national boards and other state and federal agencies. Might the measures contained within this bill serve as a means to weed out the failures of the health and aged-care system that prevents many issues from happening in the first instance.

 **Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (4.32 pm): I rise in support of the Health Transparency Bill 2019. While the regulation and funding of aged-care facilities is a federal responsibility, there are still things we can do to make sure people in our care are safe and looked after. I do not think any of us can forget hearing the health minister recount to us the moments that our paramedics and health authorities were made aware of what was happening at Earle Haven. We all almost cried at the thought of what was unfolding before our eyes. I acknowledge the member for Gaven and the amazing role that she played when that happened at Earle Haven. What a dedicated local member.


There are 16 residential aged-care facilities run by Queensland Health. These provide safe accommodation for more than 1,000 older Queenslanders. In 2017 we made a commitment to implement safe staffing levels in the aged-care facilities we run and the bill before the House delivers on this commitment. It will introduce minimum numbers and ratios of nurses and registered nurses. It will also mandate a minimum number of hours of care that must be provided to each resident each day, giving certainty to those older Queenslanders who make these facilities their home but also to residents' loved ones who rely on staff to look after them. I do not think there is any greater responsibility you can give to another human than to look after your child in a childcare centre, kindy or school or your elderly loved one. It is important that we are setting up a proper framework for this to occur. More broadly, we as a government are resolute that we will do whatever we can to make sure that the Queenslanders who are in our care are safe and looked after and that there are people who are specifically responsible for that care.

Like in Queensland Health and our aged-care facilities, in my own portfolios we are responsible for some of the most vulnerable Queenslanders there are. We are responsible for the safety and care of more than 10,000 children who cannot live safely with their families and we are also responsible for the safe care of young people who are in detention in Queensland. If this bill is passed we will have effected some important—not flashy or outstanding but nevertheless important—changes which means our arrangements about looking after young people in holding cells while they are waiting for court will be appropriate.

We want to implement a new and clearer model for the care and management of children in court cells, creating greater flexibility and efficiencies for all agencies working in the cells. These new arrangements will provide for a child focused framework and safeguards that are consistent with the

government's reform agenda. The powers that apply already in youth detention centres importantly will now apply to court cells. Training will be provided by Youth Justice for corrective services officers and watch house officers who will be exercising those powers. They will mean a clearer focus on the human rights of children who are in the custody of courts and a child focused framework for the daily management of children held in court cells.

Whether we are talking about young people in youth justice or our elderly Queenslanders in residential facilities, we will never shy away from doing everything that we can to make sure that Queenslanders in our care are safe. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (4.36 pm): In our interactions with the health system we may only use a particular service once. We often only get one chance to make a decision to undertake an operation or to choose to enter a nursing home. We only get to make that decision once and we do it with very limited experience. When we need to make these decisions, or guide our loved ones to make these decisions, we need the right information and understanding the value of that information is critical. It is not always an easy task. Information may be confusing and not reflect the whole situation. During the hearings which I attended as a substitute we heard in some detail the nature of useful information with which to make decisions. The bill will more transparently provide information to the public to better empower their decisions over their own health care and to better interpret the value of that information.

We have heard the LNP say, some would say cleverly but others would say cynically, that this piece of transparency is not the silver bullet. They make the good the enemy of the perfect. The good information that is useful is to be hidden by the LNP against the perfect piece of information that they also refuse to reveal. I find it passing strange that the LNP, which should support the consumer—in this case the patient and their family—have all the information they need to make an informed decision. It is especially strange when the LNP are wanting to hide information about the care of elderly in nursing homes—in this case the ratio of nurses to patients that are present in the home. The LNP is blinded with a market ideology that is so ignorant of market theory that they think a market can function properly without information for those making choices. The LNP disingenuously use the phrase 'it is no silver bullet' about the number of nurses compared to patients, again attempting to make the good the enemy of the perfect.

I think of this in a personal way: what information would I want if I were, with my mother, considering what nursing home she might choose? I put to all members in the House: if you were looking at nursing homes with your mother, would you want to know the ratio of nurses to patients within the nursing home that you were considering?

How hollow and trite that argument is in a real situation. I dare members to stand in this place and say that they would not want to know how many nurses were employed in a nursing home in which their mother resided if they knew that some nursing homes have dangerously low nurse-to-patients ratios. Through the submissions we learnt that, in 2008, 21 per cent of residents had high-acuity needs. However, by 2018 that figure was 80 per cent—that is, 80 per cent of residents required specialised nursing care. One would then suppose that the ratio of nurses has gone up in proportion. However, over a similar time period the percentage of nurses to staff has gone from 21 per cent to 14.9 per cent. The level of care required is going way up; the number of nurses providing that care is going down.

The number of nurses who care for our loved ones is critical in our decision-making, yet the LNP want that information to be hidden from the public. I cannot help but be cynical about their motivation on this. I am also deeply disappointed that the LNP is not supporting the ratios. I urge those on the other side to read the evidence of Dr Richard Kidd, Chair of the Council of General Practice of the Australian Medical Association Queensland.

In response to a question from the member for Caloundra, Dr Kidd gave evidence that, in his own words, was 'quite harrowing'. He spoke about the difference between two confronting operations that he had performed. The first operation was some time ago, in 1990, on a 96-year-old. He had to perform an amputation because of serious complications. Two experienced nurses assisted him through the long, slow and harrowing process, which needed to be performed without general anaesthetic. The experienced nurses were critical to the operation and to comforting the patient. The patient went on to live a fulfilling life for nine more years.

The second operation involved dealing with postoperative complications from an amputation on another patient. At that time, Dr Kidd had no nurse to assist him, because the nurse had to do something else and no other nurse was available. Instead, he was helped by an 18-year-old who had started working at the home only two weeks before. The young worker had to hold the leg that he was operating on. I will not go into the details of the procedure.

Before members vote, they must read the evidence of Dr Kidd at page 12 of the committee transcript. I have copies here. I ask members to come and get these copies, because they cannot responsibly vote on this bill unless they have read Dr Kidd's evidence. As I said, I will not go into the harrowing details. Dr Kidd stated—

She had not seen anything like this before.

He is talking about the 18-year-old. He continued—

Halfway through the procedure she was shaking, she was crying, she was on the point of vomiting.


He is talking about the assistant, not the patient. He continued—

It was an incredibly traumatic experience for her and for the patient. We got through the procedure and I got rid of a lot of that rotten tissue, but I then spent another hour debriefing this poor young person, who had no training and no experience to prepare her for this. As I said, the patient also needed some debriefing. She was quite traumatised too.

I repeat: this is the evidence of Dr Kidd. He said—

It was a very different experience to 30 years ago. You would like to think there would be progress, an improvement in quality. Without enough qualified, experienced nurses, things like this just fall apart.

Any member in this place who votes against transparency votes against the stark, harrowing and direct evidence of nurses and doctors such as Dr Kidd. Before you vote, you must read Dr Kidd's evidence in full.

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (4.43 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the debate on the Health Transparency Bill 2019. This is a very important bill before us because, as noted by the parliamentary committee that was tasked to review this legislation, the bill deals with the welfare of elderly Queenslanders and one of the most important ingredients for safe, dignified and professional care of our elderly in nursing homes—the staff. The legislation proposes to establish a legislative framework to compel public and private health facilities and residential aged-care facilities to provide certain information and to enable that information to be published. It is clear, even from international research, that transparency of health service information leads to better quality of care and outcomes.


Currently in Queensland we do not have easy access to information about public and private health services or aged-care facilities. The information to be provided includes: general information, administrative in nature; quality and safety information, including a range of clinical information and patient data; and residential care information, which includes information about the nursing care and personal care provided to residents of residential aged-care facilities, including staffing.

As important as it will be to gather this information, how it is published will be equally important. The Department of Health has confirmed that the information will be published on a new interactive website as an easy way to access information about health and residential aged-care facilities that is up to date, informative and Queensland focused, whilst also providing a single point of reference. Importantly, this will not be a marketing comparative tool but a proper source of quality information for consumers to make informed decisions about their own care or the care of their loved ones. A number of key stakeholders were very supportive of the bill's intent, including the AMA, which congratulated the government for these changes, particularly the move to publish the level of care, safety and health outcomes in hospitals and aged-care facilities and the introduction of minimum nurse and support worker skill mix ratios in public residential aged-care facilities.

I am sure that, as representatives, we have all heard stories about the experience of our older residents within aged-care facilities. Very early on in my time as a member of parliament, I met with a lovely constituent who wanted to share the story of her mother's care in a residential aged-care facility. Sadly, it is a tale too often told: there was not enough nursing staff employed within the facility and those who worked there were rushed off their feet and unable to provide proper care. I saw photos of the elderly lady's bed sores gained because there was no-one available to help move her and her bandages were put on so unprofessionally that one would question the nurse's basic qualifications.

My constituent made the decision to move her mother to another facility, as it was clear that to leave her mother there would be to hasten her death. My constituent then showed me two other photos, one taken of her mother in her former aged-care facility and the other of her mother in the new facility. It was those two photos that shocked me and broke my heart a little. The first photo showed an elderly woman who looked sad and lost. The second photo was transformative. The same elderly woman was smiling and looking healthier and certainly happier. The difference was clear and it was all due to the increased care and support received in the new facility.

As my generation begins to deal with ageing parents, I want to know that my parents will have quality care, hopefully in their home for as long as possible but, if necessary, in a trusted residential aged-care facility. As we have recently read, the royal commission into aged care has found that our country's aged care system is 'sad and shocking' and 'diminishes Australia as a nation'. That does not fill me with hope, but the Health Transparency Bill that is before us goes some way to bringing our health and aged-care systems into the light, to ensure that we are raising the bar and the expectations of what care for our elderly should be, without question and without excuses. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.47 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Health Transparency Bill 2019, which deals with transparent reporting of Queensland public and private health facilities in our communities. Seeing as it is Christmas time, I would like the health department to pay its bills, because a lot of people are not being paid for goods and services provided. It is necessary for them to be paid before Christmas so that they can pay their workforce. The transparency around that is very important, because those people do not know when they are going to be paid. Some of them have not been paid since August. It would be much appreciated if those people were paid for the goods and services that they provide to Queensland hospitals.

The other day I attended a Dementia Australia event. It was quite interesting to learn that the estimate for Hervey Bay is that about 1,452 people will have dementia, which equates to about two to three per cent of the population of Hervey Bay. In Queensland, Hervey Bay ranks No. 2 for the most cases of dementia. I also learned that currently in Australia more than 50 per cent of people pass away in hospitals, around 32 per cent pass away in residential aged-care facilities and only a small percentage pass away in their own homes.

I wonder sometimes whether the hospital system caters for dementia patients. From my own experience with dementia patients over the years I have noticed that when they are put into a hospital ward with three or four other patients they seem to become very upset and wander all night, keeping other patients awake and driving the nurses crazy. If we do not have appropriate facilities within the hospitals, how do we deal with these people? Up to 50 per cent of people with dementia will end up in hospital, where they will pass away. How do we deal with that? We have to develop strategies to deal with that into the future, especially with nursing homes and such facilities.

It is a little upsetting when the good work carried out by a lot of retirement villages and nursing homes is denigrated. Just because one facility does the wrong thing does not mean that every other facility has. There are a number of nursing homes in Hervey Bay. Torbay, one of the first nursing homes there, was established by the community. A group of businesspeople joined with some of the local clubs, and together they built the nursing home and a retirement village.

There are now approximately 10 nursing homes in Hervey Bay. Kirami is a fairly longstanding nursing home that caters for people with dementia. The patients are able to wander around the gardens without fear of becoming lost. The TriCare facility boasts one of the best views in Hervey Bay. It sits on the esplanade at Point Vernon overlooking the sea.

There are also two new facilities. The Waterford has incorporated dementia research from overseas into its design features, including coloured lighting to settle people down. It is one of the flashiest nursing homes you will ever see. Entering there is more like walking into a motel than a nursing home. Ozcare is only a new facility. People come from as far away as Ipswich to Hervey Bay for a place in a nursing home. In some areas, nursing home positions are very scarce. Before these two were built there was a shortage of nursing home places. These are both fairly large nursing homes, catering for 150 patients.

Masters Lodge has done a great job over many years. One of the residents there, a lady by the name of Mrs Schmierer, who lived to 113, wrote a lovely letter to me. Former Speaker Mickel granted me some extra time in an adjournment debate so I could read out the letter she wrote when she was 111 about the care she was given. She had beautiful handwriting for a woman of her age. That was an example of the care that some nursing homes give people. To criticise the people in those facilities who have done hard work over the years, providing comfort for some of these older people, is a bit rich.

Fair Haven Nursing Home looks after a lot of people with dementia and other illnesses. The Bolton Clarke nursing home and retirement village has 200 units, and people can transfer from the units into the nursing home when required. We have some good nursing homes in Hervey Bay. To put them into the same class as others that have not done the right thing is unfair. Torbay is run by a board of businesspeople. They have now expanded to build another facility called Parklands. This is what the community needs.

When you consider the number of baby boomers coming through—that number will decrease in a few years time—you have to ask whether we will have the facilities to meet the peak demand.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): Sorry to interrupt, member for Hervey Bay. Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time allocated for this stage of the bill having expired, the question is that the bill be now read a second time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

### Consideration in Detail



**Dr MILES** (4.56 pm): I table the explanatory notes to my amendments.

*Tabled paper:* Health Transparency Bill, explanatory notes to Hon. Dr Steven Miles's amendments [2191].

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms McMillan): In accordance with sessional order 2B, the House must now consider clauses 1 to 75, schedules 1 and 2 and any amendments circulated by the minister. I note that the minister's amendment No. 4 is outside the long title of the bill and therefore requires leave of the House. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 1 to 4, as circulated, be agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

#### 1 Part 6 (Amendment of Acts)

Page 19, line 1—

*omit, insert—*

##### Part 6 Amendments of Acts relating to health matters

#### 2 Before clause 69

Page 57, before line 3—

*insert—*

##### 68A Amendment of s 20 (Powers of Services)

Section 20—

*insert—*

- (6) To remove any doubt, it is declared that a regulation made under subsection (4) may be amended or repealed to revoke the prescription of a Service under that subsection.

*Note—*

See also section 282(7) and (8).

##### 68B Insertion of new s 80D

After section 80C—

*insert—*

##### 80D Division does not limit making of particular regulations

To remove any doubt, it is declared that this division does not prevent the revocation of the prescription of a Service under section 20(4).

#### 3 After clause 69

Page 63, after line 11—

*insert—*

##### 69A Amendment of s 282 (Regulation-making power)

- (1) Section 282—

*insert—*

- (6A) Without limiting subsections (2) to (5), and despite any other provision of this Act, a regulation may make provision about a matter if—

- (a) it is necessary or convenient to make provision for the matter to allow or facilitate the transition of a Service from a prescribed Service to a Service that is no longer prescribed under section 20(4); and



- (b) the following Acts do not make provision, or sufficient provision, for the matter—
- (i) this Act;
  - (ii) the *Industrial Relations Act 2016*;
  - (iii) the *Public Service Act 2008*.

*Examples of matters for which it may be necessary or convenient to make provision—*

- the transfer of health service employees, other than health executives and senior health service employees, from the Service to the department
- the continuation of accrued rights, benefits and entitlements of a health service employee mentioned in the first dot point
- a proceeding related to the employment of a health service employee mentioned in the first dot point by the Service

(6B) Without limiting subsection (7), a regulation made under that subsection may state the way in which a provision of this Act, the *Industrial Relations Act 2016* or the *Public Service Act 2008* applies in relation to a matter to which the subsection applies.

- (2) Section 282(6A) to (7)—  
*renumber* as section 282(7) to (9).

#### 4 After part 6

Page 66, after line 8—

*insert—*

#### **Part 7 Other amendments of legislation**

##### **Division 1 Amendment of Corrective Services Act 2006**

###### **76 Act amended**

This division amends the *Corrective Services Act 2006*.

###### **77 Amendment of s 308 (Powers of proper officer of a court)**

- (1) Section 308(2)(a) and (b)—  
*omit, insert—*
- (a) the chief executive to provide corrective services officers; or
  - (b) the commissioner to provide police officers or, to the extent the commissioner considers it appropriate, watch-house officers.
- (2) Section 308—  
*insert—*
- (6) In helping the proper officer of the court, a watch-house officer—
- (a) is subject to any directions of the commissioner; and
  - (b) may—
    - (i) exercise a power of a watch-house officer under the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, section 648, 649 or 652 as if the prisoner of the court or person mentioned in subsection (1) were in custody at a watch-house; and
    - (ii) use reasonably necessary force under the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*, section 653 for transferring or escorting the prisoner of the court or person mentioned in subsection (1) to or from a place mentioned in that section as if the prisoner or person were in custody and the transfer or escort were authorised by a watch-house manager.
- (7) Subsection (6)(b) does not limit the help the watch-house officer may give to the proper officer of the court to perform the proper officer's functions.
- (8) In this section—  
**watch-house officer** see the *Police Service Administration Act 1990*, section 1.4.

##### **Division 2 Amendment of Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000**

###### **78 Act amended**

This division amends the *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*.

###### **79 Amendment of s 640 (Transfer of persons in watch-houses)**

Section 640(2)—  
*omit.*

**80 Amendment of s 653 (Power to use force—transfer etc. of person in custody to or from court cell or other place)**

- (1) Section 653, heading, 'court cell or other place'—  
*omit, insert—*  
**holding place**
- (2) Section 653(1)—  
*omit, insert—*  
(1) It is lawful for a watch-house officer who is authorised by a watch-house manager for the purpose of transferring a person in custody to use reasonably necessary force—  
(a) to transfer a person in custody from a holding place to another holding place; or  
(b) to ensure a person in custody at a court precinct appears before a court and is transferred to a holding place after the appearance, if the person is not otherwise released; or  
(c) to ensure a person in custody does not escape from lawful custody while the person is—  
(i) being transferred to a holding place under paragraph (a) or (b); or  
(ii) being held in a holding place to which the person has been transferred under paragraph (a) or (b); or  
(iii) in a court under paragraph (b).
- (3) Section 653(2), 'purpose to escort'—  
*omit, insert—*  
purpose of escorting
- (4) Section 653—  
*insert—*  
(4) In this section—  
**court precinct** means any land or building, or the part of any land or building, used for the purposes of a court of the State, including, for example, a court cell.  
**holding place** means a watch-house, court precinct or corrective services facility.

**81 Amendment of s 659 (Custody continues while person in custody is being transferred or escorted by watch-house officer)**

- Section 659(a), 'court cell'—  
*omit, insert—*  
holding place under section 653(1)

**82 Amendment of sch 6 (Dictionary)**

- Schedule 6—  
*insert—*  
**court cell** means a place attached to or near a court that is used for detaining prisoners of the court and other persons.

**Division 3 Amendment of Youth Justice Act 1992**

**83 Act amended**

This division amends the *Youth Justice Act 1992*.

**84 Amendment of s 56 (Custody of child if not released by court)**

- Section 56(1)—  
*insert—*  
*Note—*

See also part 5A in relation to a child who remains a prisoner of a court.

**85 Insertion of new pt 5A**

- After part 5—  
*insert—*

**Part 5A Children who are prisoners of a court or detained in court cells**

**59B Definitions for part**

- In this part—  
**corrective services officer** see the *Corrective Services Act 2006*, schedule 4.  
**watch-house officer** see the *Police Service Administration Act 1990*, section 1.4.  
**youth justice staff member** means—  
(a) a detention centre employee; or  
(b) another employee of the department in a capacity that involves supervising children in the chief executive's custody.

**59C Child in custody of proper officer of a court**

- (1) A child who is required by law to surrender himself or herself into the custody of a court must do so by surrendering himself or herself into the custody of the proper officer of the court.
- (2) A child who surrenders himself or herself into the custody of a court is in the custody of the proper officer of the court until the child is—
  - (a) released on bail or without bail; or
  - (b) discharged; or
  - (c) remanded into the custody of the chief executive; or
  - (d) otherwise dealt with as the court directs.

**59D Powers of proper officer of a court**

The proper officer of a court has, in relation to a child who is a prisoner of the court or mentioned in section 59H(1), all the powers of the chief executive under this Act, in relation to a detainee, that are necessary for the discharge of the proper officer's functions.

**59E Proper officer of a court may ask for help to perform functions**

- (1) To help the proper officer of a court perform the proper officer's functions, the proper officer may ask—
  - (a) the chief executive to provide youth justice staff members; or
  - (b) the chief executive (corrective services) to provide corrective services officers; or
  - (c) the commissioner to provide police officers or, to the extent the commissioner considers it appropriate, watch-house officers.
- (2) Subsection (1)(a) applies only in relation to functions performed at, or in relation to, a place prescribed by regulation.
- (3) The chief executive, chief executive (corrective services) or commissioner must comply with the request.
- (4) In this section—

**chief executive (corrective services)** means the chief executive of the department in which the *Corrective Services Act 2006* is administered.

**59F Officers providing help to proper officer of a court**

- (1) In helping the proper officer of a court under section 59E, a youth justice staff member, corrective services officer or watch-house officer may exercise powers—
  - (a) prescribed by regulation for this section; and
  - (b) as if—
    - (i) the child who is a prisoner of the court or mentioned in section 59H(1) were a detainee; and
    - (ii) for a corrective services officer or watch-house officer—the officer were a youth justice staff member; and
  - (c) as otherwise prescribed by regulation.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not limit the help the youth justice staff member, corrective services officer or watch-house officer may give to the proper officer of the court to perform the proper officer's functions.

**59G Delegation of powers of proper officer of a court**

The proper officer of a court may delegate the proper officer's functions or powers under this part, including functions or powers prescribed by regulation under section 59F or 59I, to an appropriately qualified person.

**59H Detention of children in court cells**

- (1) A child who is not a prisoner of a court may be detained in a court cell if the child is lawfully in custody to attend before a court or another entity.
- (2) While detained in the court cell, the child is in the custody of the proper officer of the court where the court cell is located.
- (3) The proper officer of the court is responsible for the management, security and good order of the court cell, despite anything in the *State Buildings Protective Security Act 1983*.

**59I Regulation about exercise of powers**

- (1) This section applies in relation to—
  - (a) the exercise of the chief executive's powers by the proper officer of a court under section 59D; and
  - (b) the exercise of powers by a youth justice staff member, corrective services officer or watch-house officer under section 59F.
- (2) A regulation may state matters about the exercise of the powers, including, for example—
  - (a) conditions or requirements about the exercise of the powers and how the conditions or requirements may be satisfied or complied with; or
  - (b) requirements about keeping records, or giving information, about the exercise of the powers.
- (3) In this section—

**condition** includes a limitation or restriction.

**86 Amendment of sch 4 (Dictionary)**

Schedule 4—

*insert—*

**corrective services officer**, for part 5A, see section 59B.

**court cell** means a place attached to or near a court that—

- (a) is not a detention centre; and
- (b) is used for detaining prisoners of the court and other persons.

**prisoner of a court or prisoner of the court** means a person who is in the custody of a court.

**watch-house officer**, for part 5A, see section 59B.

**youth justice staff member**, for part 5A, see section 59B.

**Division 4 Amendment of Youth Justice Regulation 2016****87 Regulation amended**

This division amends the *Youth Justice Regulation 2016*.

**88 Insertion of new pt 4A**

After part 4—

*insert—*

**Part 4A Children who are prisoners of a court****Division 1 General matters about helping proper officer of a court****43A Places where youth justice staff member may help proper officer of a court—Act, s 59E**

For section 59E(2) of the Act, the following places are prescribed—

- (a) the Brisbane Magistrates Court building;
- (b) QEII Courts of Law.

**43B Powers for helping proper officer of a court—Act s 59F**

For section 59F of the Act—

- (a) the following powers are prescribed—
  - (i) the power of a detention centre employee to give an instruction under section 16(1) or use reasonable force under section 16(5);
  - (ii) the power of a staff member to use approved restraints under section 19;
  - (iii) the power of a detention centre employee to conduct a search under part 4, division 6, subdivision 1;
  - (iv) the power of a detention centre employee to help a doctor to conduct a search under part 4, division 6, subdivision 2; and
- (b) the powers may be exercised only as provided under division 2.

**Division 2 Exercise of powers by persons helping proper officer of a court****43C Application of division**

This division prescribes matters about a youth justice staff member, corrective services officer or watch-house officer (each a **relevant officer**) exercising a power under section 59F of the Act.

**43D Definitions for division**

In this division—

**condition** includes a limitation or restriction.

**proper officer of a court**, in relation to the exercise of a relevant power by a relevant officer, means the proper officer of a court for whom the relevant power is exercised under part 5A of the Act.

**relevant officer** see section 43C.

**relevant power** means a power mentioned in section 43B(a).

**43E General conditions and requirements**

(1) A relevant officer may exercise a relevant power only if—

(a) any condition under this regulation about the circumstances in which the power may be exercised is satisfied; and

*Example—*

A relevant officer may use reasonable force under section 16(5) only if the conditions mentioned in section 16(5)(a) and (b) are satisfied.

(b) the relevant officer complies with any requirements under this regulation about the way the power may be exercised.

*Example—*

A relevant officer conducting a search of a child under section 24 must comply with section 24(3).

(2) Also, a relevant officer may help a doctor to conduct a search under part 4, division 6, subdivision 2 only if the proper officer of a court has authorised the doctor to conduct the search.

*Note—*

See section 59D of the Act in relation to the proper officer exercising powers of the chief executive under the Act.

**43F Authorisation of exercise of power**

(1) This section applies if a relevant power may be exercised only if the chief executive has authorised the exercise of the power.

(2) A relevant officer may exercise the power only if the proper officer of a court has authorised the relevant officer to exercise the power.

(3) Any condition under this regulation on the chief executive giving the authorisation applies in relation to the proper officer of a court authorising the relevant officer to exercise the power.

*Example—*

A relevant officer may be authorised to use approved restraints to restrain a child under section 19 only if the condition mentioned in section 18(2) is satisfied.

**43G Supervision of exercise of power**

(1) This section applies if, under this regulation, the chief executive must ensure a thing in relation to the exercise of a relevant power.

(2) The proper officer of a court must ensure the thing in relation to a relevant officer exercising the relevant power.

*Example—*

If a relevant officer is using approved restraints to restrain a child under section 19, the proper officer of a court must ensure the things mentioned in section 19(2).

**Division 3 Other matters about exercise of powers****43H Information and record keeping requirements**

(1) This section applies to the proper officer of a court who exercises a power, or for whom a power is exercised, under part 5A of the Act.

(2) The proper officer of the court must comply with each information or record keeping provision applying to the exercise of the power—

(a) as if—

(i) a reference in the provision to the chief executive were a reference to the proper officer of the court; and

(ii) a reference in the provision to a detention centre employee or staff member were a reference to a person exercising a power under section 59F of the Act; and

(iii) a reference in the provision to a detention centre were a reference to the place at which the child is detained or otherwise in custody under part 5A of the Act; and

(b) with any other necessary changes.

(3) In this section—

**information or record keeping provision** means the following—

- (a) section 16(6);
- (b) section 17;
- (c) section 20;
- (d) section 27.

#### **43I Property found during search**

Section 28 applies in relation to a search of a child by a person under part 5A of the Act as if—

- (a) a reference in the section to a detention centre were a reference to the place at which the child is detained or otherwise in custody under part 5A of the Act; and
- (b) a reference in the section to the chief executive were a reference to the proper officer of a court conducting the search or for whom the search is conducted.

#### **89 Amendment of sch 2 (Dictionary)**

Schedule 2—

*insert—*

**condition**, for part 4A, division 2, see section 43D.

**proper officer of a court**, for part 4A, division 2, see section 43D.

**relevant officer**, for part 4A, division 2, see section 43C.

**relevant power**, for part 4A, division 2, see section 43D.

Motion agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 75 and schedules 1 and 2, as amended, agreed to.

### **Third Reading**

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### **Long Title**

Question put—That the minister's amendments Nos 5 to 7, as circulated, be agreed to.

Amendments as circulated—

#### **5 Long title**

Long title, after 'this Act,'—

*insert—*

**the Corrective Services Act 2006,**

#### **6 Long title**

Long title, after 'Boards Act 2011,'—

*insert—*

**the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000,**

#### **7 Long title**

Long title, from 'and the' to '2005'—

*omit, insert—*

**, the Public Health Act 2005, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Youth Justice Regulation 2016**

Motion agreed to.


Amendments agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

## COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY


### Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates and Referral of Auditor-General's Reports

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (4.57 pm): I seek to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee report on the Implementation of The Spit Master Plan Bill by 7 February 2020; the Transport and Public Works Committee report on the Transport Legislation (Disability Parking and Other Matters) Amendment Bill by 7 February 2020; the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee report on the Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 21 February 2020 and the Community Services Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill by 14 February 2020; the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee report on the Biodiscovery and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 21 February 2020; the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report on the Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 7 February 2020 and the Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 21 February 2020; the Economics and Governance Committee report on the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill by 7 February 2020; and the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report on the Health Legislation Amendment Bill by 21 February 2020.

The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General's report No. 5 of 2019-20 titled *Transport: 2018-19 results of financial audits* be referred to the Transport and Public Works Committee; the Auditor-General's report No. 6 of 2019-20 titled *Energy: 2018-19 results of financial audits* be referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee; the Auditor-General's report No. 7 of 2019-20 titled *Health: 2018-19 results of financial audits* be referred to the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee; and the Auditor-General's report No. 8 of 2019-20 titled *Queensland state government entities: 2018-19 results of financial audits* be referred to the Economics and Governance Committee.

## MOTION

### Amendments to Standing Orders

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.00 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the amendments to the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly circulated in my name be agreed to, effective from 1 January 2020.

1. Page 5, Standing Order 23(2)(c)  
Omit, insert—  
“(c) A list of all committees of the House, their membership, current referrals or inquiries.”
2. Page 28, Standing Order 123(7)  
Omit.
3. Page 30, Standing Order 129(3)(b)  
Omit, insert—  
“(b) immediately tabling:
  - (i) a copy of the Bill
  - (ii) the explanatory notes for the Bill
  - (iii) a statement of compatibility with human rights for the Bill; and
  - (iv) if the Bill includes an override declaration under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, a statement in relation to the declaration;”
4. Page 30, Footnote 21:  
Omit, insert—  
“21. Section 22 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* provides: When introducing a Bill in the Legislative Assembly, a member must circulate to members an explanatory note for the Bill. Section 38 of the *Human Rights Act 2019* requires a member to table a statement of compatibility when introducing a Bill. Section 44 of the *Human*

*Rights Act 2019* requires a member who introduces a Bill containing an override declaration to make a statement to the Legislative Assembly explaining the exceptional circumstances that justify including the override declaration."

5. Page 31, Standing Order 132(1)

*Omit, insert—*

- "(1) Each portfolio committee to which a Bill is referred shall examine the Bill and—
- (a) determine whether to recommend that the Bill be passed;
  - (b) may recommend amendments to the Bill;
  - (c) consider the application of fundamental legislative principles contained in Part 2 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* to the Bill and compliance with Part 4 of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992* regarding explanatory notes;
  - (d) consider the Bill and report to the Assembly about whether the Bill is not compatible with human rights; and
  - (e) consider the statement of compatibility tabled for the Bill and report to the Assembly about the statement. <sup>22</sup>"

6. Page 31, new footnote no. 22 and renumbering of subsequent footnotes

*Insert—*

---

22. Section 39 of the *Human Rights Act 2019*."

*Renumber subsequent footnotes.*

7. Page 35, Insert new Standing Order 148A

*Insert—*

**"148A Amendment containing override declaration**

If a member proposes to move an amendment which contains an override declaration in accordance with section 44 of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the member must table a statement in relation to the declaration when the amendment is moved."

8. Page 39, Insert new Standing Orders 173A and 173B

*Insert—*

**"173A Reference to portfolio committee**

If a Minister tables a copy of a declaration of incompatibility about a statutory provision, in accordance with section 56 of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, the declaration stands referred to the portfolio committee responsible for the Minister's portfolio.

**173B Varying responsible committee**

(1) The House or the Committee of the Legislative Assembly may vary the portfolio committee responsible for the declaration.

(2) If the Committee of the Legislative Assembly varies the committee responsible for the declaration it must report its decision to the House at the earliest opportunity."



**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.00 pm): We note the motion just moved by the Leader of the House with respect to the amendments to the standing orders. These amendments talk about the Human Rights Bill, which the Attorney-General introduced earlier in the year, which will take effect early next year.

The standing orders are being amended to include that, on the tabling the bill in the House, they table a copy of the bill and the explanatory notes but also a 'statement of compatibility with human rights for the bill'. My view is that it does not require a separate statement to be issued. The explanatory notes are already issued. A statement could be contained within the explanatory notes without having a separate statement. I think it is a waste of time. It is a waste of resources.

It could easily be achieved by having a statement contained in the explanatory notes. They are the explanatory notes of the bill, and they already contain certain statements, for instance, on the fundamental legislative principles. It seems that the government wants to make a political point of the Human Rights Act by having a separate big statement in bold, a shiny bauble. I think it is a waste of time.



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

**Mr SPEAKER:** Members, I had asked for chamber services to replace the bells with Christmas bells. Unfortunately, it did not happen. Please use your imagination.

**AYES, 49:**

**ALP, 44—**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, Miles, Mullen, B. O'Rourke, C. O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Power, Pugh, Richards, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Stewart, Trad, Whiting.

**Grn, 1—**Berkman.

**KAP, 2—**Dametto, Katter.

**PHON, 1—**Andrew.

**Ind, 1—**Bolton.

**NOES, 34:**

**LNP, 34—**Bates, Batt, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyce, Crandon, Crisafulli, Frecklington, Hart, Hunt, Janetzki, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Leahy, Lister, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Connor, Perrett, Powell, Purdie, Robinson, Rowan, Simpson, Sorensen, Watts, Weir.

Pairs: Mellish, Stevens; Pegg, Wilson; Miller, Mickelberg.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## ETHICS COMMITTEE

### Report, Motion to Take Note



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.07 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That this House—

1. notes the Ethics Committee report No. 193, including the conclusion and recommendations of the committee in that report, tabled in the House on 4 November 2019;
2. notes the Ethics Committee report No. 193 recommendation 2 which emphasises the 'important role the Ethics Committee has in upholding and enhancing the House's privileges and standards, and that it must be afforded the utmost respect';
3. notes the member for Traeger's apology to the House and committee given today; and
4. accepts the member for Traeger's apology made today and resolves to take no further action in respect of the matter.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## PRIVILEGE

### Speaker's Ruling, Process for Introduction of Bills



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, during the introduction of the Electoral and Other Legislation (Accountability, Integrity and Other Matters) Amendment Bill this morning, the member for Maroochydore rose on a matter of privilege complaining that copies of the bill had not been circulated in the House. The Clerk has advised me that his inquiries have revealed that there were in fact sufficient copies of the bill for each member of the House supplied to the Table Office and that they were in fact at the back of the chamber with the parliamentary attendants when the bill was introduced.

The explanatory notes were in the process of being resupplied and there were only 10 copies of the explanatory notes available at the back of the chamber with the parliamentary attendants when the bill was introduced. Unfortunately, due to a communication error, the parliamentary attendants initially distributed only eight bills and explanatory notes to non-government members including the shadow minister. They should, of course, have distributed the bills that were available.

The member for Maroochydore was advised by a parliamentary attendant that there was a supply issue with the bill due to an error. This was incorrect. The situation regarding the distribution of the bill was rectified after the matter of privilege was raised and the copies of the bill were then distributed. The additional explanatory notes arrived and were distributed shortly afterwards.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.09 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 4 February 2020.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (5.09 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

## Valedictory



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (5.10 pm): The end of 2019 is in sight. We are not quite there yet. We have a few more weeks of endeavour before we can relax for a while and enjoy the Christmas and new year break, but the parliamentary year is almost over and as legislators and representatives we pause to take stock of this year when we continued to deliver on our commitments, share the benefits of our achievements and help each other through difficulties. Once again life has been full, fascinating and formidable. Natural disasters wrought havoc but brought out the best in people. On the economic front, more jobs were created. Our economy continued to expand and diversify, exports grew and services increased.

Regional highlights include: our massive roads program; governing from the regions; our regional community cabinets; a very successful sitting of parliament in Townsville; new regional forums; new regional offices; and a North West Minerals Province summit held in Mount Isa. Socially we passed important new legislation, and we achieved gender parity in government bodies with 50 per cent female representation. A value assessment is being conducted on whether or not Queensland should host the Olympics in 2032 on the back of the best ever Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast. We hosted the INAS games for athletes with an intellectual impairment for the first time in the Asia-Pacific region. We struck an infrastructure funding deal with the Morrison government to benefit the whole state, Anzac Square was fully restored, and we established an office for veterans in Ipswich.

In the arts we welcomed back the Bolshoi Ballet as part of QPAC's 2019 international series. Sporting highlights included Ash Barty finishing the tennis year as No. 1 in the world; the Broncos women's team winning back-to-back premierships; and the Brisbane Heat winning the women's Big Bash League, just to name a few.

Queensland's climate at its kindest makes us the envy of the nation; at its cruellest, it can drive us to our knees. It is hard to say what is worse: the terrifying devastation of fire, the overwhelming catastrophe of flood, or the unrelenting heartbreak of drought, but all have affected our people and our state this year. Not long after the House rose in November last year catastrophic fire conditions struck our state for the first time ever. We have suffered again this summer. At the other extreme, our north and north-west were impacted by monsoonal flooding. Before, during and after the floods and fires, the cruel fist of drought has kept two-thirds of our state in its grip.

I have spoken all year about the many things we are doing to mitigate the impacts of these disasters—financial, physical and emotional—and three times in the past year we have come together here at Parliament House in a bipartisan way to raise money, and that is a good thing. I think I speak for everyone when I say that I hope the need will not arise again, but I fear I cannot express that as anything stronger than hope. Nevertheless, we persevere, we help each other, we recover and we rebuild. We deal with climate change and we plan and prepare for next time.

I profoundly thank all our emergency services workers for what they do not just in times of crisis but each and every day. To all of our volunteers I say that the Queensland community is grateful, and we pray that you get a break over Christmas and new year to be with your families.

As we wind up the parliamentary year, let me say how proud I am of our legislative agenda. We passed a budget that maintains a healthy surplus, creates jobs, builds infrastructure and funds services. On the legal front, stronger sentences will now be handed down when people take the lives of Queensland's most vulnerable—the children, the elderly and the disabled—through reckless indifference. We made it more straightforward for survivors of abuse to sue institutions and we will make

it mandatory for people to report suspected abuse. Amendments to the Environmental Protection Act strengthened our Great Barrier Reef protection measures. We passed sensible laws to outlaw dangerous protest devices, and we brought in tougher drink-driving laws. Of course, this week we introduced transformational electoral reform.

I am also proud of our economic achievements. More than 220,000 jobs have been created since we came to office, but we will not let up. Our budget received strong endorsements from industry, economists and ratings agencies for maintaining a healthy surplus, investing in infrastructure and, of course, payroll tax relief. Our monthly export figures told another great story. The year-on-year results grew from \$82.8 billion in January to \$87.6 billion in September. I am proud of our farmers and graziers, whose contribution to these figures was enormous. We also announced export hubs in Cairns and Toowoomba.

Following our landmark Skills Summit last year we have had a laser-like focus on jobs and skills in 2019, including: free TAFE courses, free apprenticeships, cutting the cost of further training and bringing back QBuild. Billions of dollars worth of job-creating infrastructure has been completed, progressed or planned this year, including: expanded hospitals, new schools, air conditioning, the Townsville stadium, the Townsville water pipeline, the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing, major regional road projects, the Logan Motorway Enhancement project, Gold Coast Light Rail, the Brisbane cruise ship terminal, QPAC's new theatre, the Rockhampton Art Gallery, the State Netball Centre, Cross River Rail and Queen's Wharf, just to name a few.

One hundred and fifty years ago this year, a railway construction facility began work in Maryborough. Downer is still going strong now in 2019, and next year Rheinmetall's Military Vehicle Centre of Excellence at Ipswich will begin producing Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicles—just two indicators that what we now refer to as advanced manufacturing has gone from strength to strength this year.

This year we have also clearly shown that we are on track to meet our renewable energy target: 21 per cent by next year and 50 per cent by 2030. Clean energy generator CleanCo is now trading in the National Electricity Market. There are more large-scale renewable energy projects: wind, solar and hydro. Our hydrogen strategy was further boosted by QFleet's move to use hydrogen-powered fuel-cell electric vehicles. We have gone out to tender for another 30,000 square kilometres of land for gas exploration. Metallurgical coal, bauxite and zinc mines continue to contribute to jobs and revenue in our great state. We are setting up an independent body to protect the health and safety of resources industry workers and we are planning industrial manslaughter laws.

As well as renewable energy and the Great Barrier Reef laws I mentioned, there has been another outstanding environmental achievement this year: more than one billion containers have been returned to the Containers for Change refund scheme, and we are asking Queenslanders what they think about banning single-use plastic items.

It has also been another significant year in aviation and aerospace. New direct flights were announced: Qantas from Brisbane to San Francisco and Chicago; and Virgin from Brisbane to Tokyo. Work is underway at the Toowoomba Qantas Group Pilot Academy and is progressing on Bundaberg's Aviation and Aerospace Precinct. We released the landmark Building Queensland's Space Economy report.

In this year, the Year of Outback Tourism, for the first time the number of tourists to the outback was more than one million. Overall, a record 28 million tourists spent \$24.8 billion in the year to June. Outback Tourism events will continue next year, but we will also celebrate the Year of Indigenous Tourism. Meanwhile, our visual production centre has flourished again this year with more movies, TV shows, industry events, streaming deals, premieres, announcements and awards, including the Logies.

It has also been another year of important social reforms and achievements. All 140 recommendations of the *Not now, not ever* domestic and family violence report have been delivered. We implemented another 17 of the 29 recommendations of the Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce. I have already mentioned gender parity and that we have made it easier for survivors of abuse to sue institutions. We have taken steps to ensure proper staff-to-patient ratios and information in aged-care facilities, and we are consulting Queenslanders about a treaty with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Thousands and thousands of unsung heroes this year have quietly contributed to making Queensland a better place—in service clubs, charities and volunteer organisations, and in their own homes, schools and neighbourhoods. I cannot thank them all personally but I can pay tribute to them collectively, and we can do that as a House.

I met many inspiring Queenslanders this year during our recovery efforts, sometimes in tears, oftentimes with bright smiles on their faces. I will name just a few. I met Pamela, Joan, Rosemary and Esme at the Noosaville evacuation centre. I can remember being on the phone to a daughter of one of the ladies who was working as a physio in Aspen. She said to me, 'How's my mum? Is she okay?' I said, 'She's right here. She's great.' She could not believe that she was talking to me and her mum at the evacuation centre in Noosaville. She was very appreciative of the support everyone was showing. That is just one key example.

Don Knopke and the Coolum Lions donated their fundraising efforts into putting on a community thankyou for those who were involved in the Peregian fires. I met Eddie Cowie on his lychee farm near Yeppoon. I appreciate the strength that these people have, having gone through two natural disasters—I do not know how they do it. They get up and they keep going, and we have to be there and support them every step of the way. I also met Silvia Pozzebon on her orchard at Applethorpe. Pam Murphy lost her home but was immediately helped by friends and neighbours.

Away from the fires, there was the Marsden State High School principal, Andrew Peach, who introduced us to his apprenticeship students; Cath Johnstone and Shane Beaumont at the PA Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit; Jessica and Isabella from the Queensland Endometriosis Association; the many school students I met this year—gee, they are inspiring, what great futures they have ahead of them; and Archie Graham, the Australian men's captain for the INAS Global Games. Just yesterday, the Attorney-General, Minister Farmer and I joined Allan Allaway, Joan and Mary. I will always say this about Allan: he has always kept up the fight. To think that he was once branded a serial pest! He is now at peace. He has been a fighter, he is a champion, he is a warrior, and it is what Queensland is all about—that in the end justice does come.

I would also like to note some significant individuals this year. Katarina Carroll took up the crucial position of Commissioner of Queensland Police Service. Naturally, we are proud that for the first time a woman is in the role, but more importantly Commissioner Carroll is the best person for the job. We also welcomed Gregory Leach as our new Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner. In June we named eight more Queensland Greats—Bob Atkinson, Judith Clements, Mark Loane, Kay McGrath, Patricia O'Connor, Chuck Feeney, John Sinclair and the Country Women's Association. Rachel Downie, Ash Barty, Peter Dornan and Nick Marshall were named as Queensland's Australians of the Year.

As a nation we farewelled Bob Hawke. We lost Michael Roche, the former head of the Queensland Resources Council. What a good, decent, honourable man. Just yesterday, we heard the sad news of Sam Watson's passing. The Deputy Premier paid a wonderful tribute to him in this House today. Since the House rose last year, we also honoured the life of Dr Bonita Mabo. One of the nicest days this year was alongside the Governor helping to celebrate the 110th birthday of Mabel Crosby—Queensland's greatest treasure.

Recently, we held the annual Premier's Awards for Excellence in the public sector. Today I reiterate to the entire Public Service of Queensland my thanks for taking on the priorities of government with diligence, dedication, devotion, skill and professionalism. We are grateful for everything you do and I wish you all a merry Christmas.

I ask a lot of my cabinet, and rightly so. It is also right that I publicly acknowledge their hard work, their policy insights and the improvements they achieve for the people of this state. We have long meetings, we deliberate and we come to a consensus in the best interests of the people of this state. The people around me, the team, are a great bunch. They are hardworking, they are dedicated and I have never met such inspirational people. I want to pay tribute to the Deputy Premier, Minister Dick and Minister Jones as my leadership team, along with the Leader of the House, Yvette D'Ath. To each and every one of my cabinet colleagues: I thank you for your amazing work. I offer my deep thanks and appreciation.

To the caucus members of this great Labor government: every single one of you gets up every day and fights for your community. I know at times it can be tough and it can be difficult, but at the end of the day you were elected. It is a great honour to serve in this House, and you do it with great pride and with great dignity. I love working with you and I hope you all have a lovely and safe Christmas.

My sincere thanks also go to the director-general of my department, Dave Stewart, and to Rachel Hunter, who acted for much of this year whilst Dave Stewart was on sabbatical. He decided to plunge into the icy waters of Antarctica. He returned invigorated, so perhaps I will make it a condition of employment.

To all of my departmental staff and to all of the directors-general who assist us so diligently and so well: thank you. A special mention goes to Parliamentary Liaison Officer Shelley Francis, who is over here on the left. After 19 years and four governments—Beattie, Bligh, Newman and Palaszczuk—Shelley is moving on to new things. Thank you, Shelley.

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is exactly what I said when I found out the other day. In my office, I am fortunate to have a hardworking and dedicated team who provide unflagging support and astute advice, and they also have a good sense of humour. They are led by Mark Cridland, Denise Spinks, Shane Doherty and Jacquie Hughes. A big thankyou also goes to all the ministerial staff across government and to everyone who has given of themselves this year to enable our team to do our job to the best of our ability.

I would like to highlight my electorate, where I opened the \$4 million Inala Community Centre. The new facility includes a community legal centre and neighbourhood centre services run by HUB Community Projects under the leadership of Jonathan Ward. It also houses the Inala Youth Service, led by Lisa Evans. It has been a busy year for the staff and volunteers who run my electorate office so well. To Virginia, Susan, Jack, Nayda and Daniel: thank you.

A much loved character in a famous novel once said, 'I like less than half of you half as well as you deserve.' In the story, people scratched their heads trying to work out if that was good or bad, but let me say that across this chamber we are for the most part, I think, women and men of goodwill who can respect and sometimes even like each other—sometimes, member for Kawana.

**Mr Bleijie:** You do have some sort of weird thing for me, I know.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Mr Speaker, I take offence and I ask the member to withdraw!

**Mr Bleijie:** I withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I can tell you that if the Premier was not doing it I was going to label it unparliamentary!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It may sound like an end-of-year cliché, but high-octane debate can drown out a genuine appreciation for our opponents' role. What we must avoid is the contest of challenging ideas degenerating into a contest of cheap insults. Our political differences are no cause for personal diatribes or hateful Twitter remarks. If we are to end the cycle of cyberbullying and abuse, it starts right here. I wish all those opposite, the Leader of the Opposition and her team—the member for Nanango, the member for Everton and their families—and the crossbench members all the best for the remainder of the year. Don't work too hard, and I hope you have a merry Christmas.

I offer the same to the parliamentary media gallery under the enduring presidency of Steve Wardill and to all reporters throughout the state who do their best to cover Queensland politics fairly, impartially, diligently and sometimes imaginatively. They are under more pressure to maintain their journalistic values amid the conflicting demands of audience preferences, their bosses' agenda and the accountants' bottom lines—or that is what they tell us. I know it is not easy. This year we have said goodbye to two of the gallery's finest—Sarah Vogler and Tegan George. I wish them well in their new ventures.

Turning to the parliament, it has been a big year and I personally thank you, Mr Speaker, for all of your hard work and the way in which you have presided over this parliament and your staff. I also thank the Clerk, Neil Laurie, and the Parliamentary Service for the Townsville sitting. What a big job! The week ran like clockwork, a testament to the planning and hard work. We might give a bit more notice next time! Overall, Mr Speaker, I thank you for the way that you have presided over the chamber. Thanks also to the Deputy Speakers and the panel of temporary Speakers. Thank you again to the Clerk; the Deputy Clerk, Michael Ries; and the First Clerk Assistant, Amanda Honeyman and all the other clerks at the table.

I also recognise the Director of Corporate Services, Craig Atkinson; the Director of Property and Facility Services, Stewart Johnson; and all their officers as well as the gardeners, the cleaners, the maintenance staff—everyone who makes up this place. What a great job everybody does.

**Ms Trad:** The catering staff.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the catering staff. They do everything to the best of their ability and we thank them. I offer thanks to the Director of Information Services and the Parliamentary Librarian—I actually rang Janet myself during the course of this year—and the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service's staff, led by the Chief Hansard Reporter, Jo Mathers; as well as the Sergeant-at-Arms, Michael Watkin; all the parliamentary attendants; and the security officers for the


conscientious performance of their very important duties. Catering Services, led by Simon Neale, is going from strength to strength in showcasing Queensland's fine produce—a very good idea if I do say so myself.

I also acknowledge the work of Lynne Armstrong, Paul Boreland, Adrian Harding, Robyn Moore, Peter Morris, Mark Richardson, James Robertson, Peta Sweeney and Bernice Watson and their staff in sections from Financial and Administrative Services to IT, the Committee Office, Human Resources and beyond; and the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel under the leadership of Tony Keyes.

Finally, as I draw to a close, allow me to publicly acknowledge my own family and friends. I thank my mum and dad, my nanna, my sisters and my nieces and nephew for their love and support. My nanna has been in and out of hospital this year and I hope I get more time to see her.

End-of-year valedictory messages, the suspension of hostilities and expressions of goodwill may strike casual observers as a hollow gesture or an absurd contradiction. No. It is important on occasions like this to put into words the honour and privilege of serving this state, of partnering with my government colleagues in that service and working with all sides of the House for the benefit of the people we represent.

May I finish by restating what I said elsewhere. In just over a month we enter the 2020s and I see that as a great beginning, a new dawn for Queensland. I firmly believe Queensland's best days are ahead of us. We have 2020 vision. Until then, I wish every Queenslander the very best for the remainder of 2019, a safe and happy Christmas, a great new year and may God bless you all.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (5.32 pm): This year, 2019, has certainly been a tough year for Queensland. The people of this great state have been tested many times by natural disasters. However, Queenslanders have risen to every challenge. From the Far North to the Southern Downs, Queenslanders have faced danger and destruction, but we have never given in to despair.

I wish to thank every member of our emergency services for the bravery, compassion and determination they have shown in the face of floods and fires. I want to thank every rural firefighter, every SES member and every other volunteer who has helped save lives and homes. I want to thank everyone who has rallied to support those whose homes and businesses could not be saved. This House cannot thank you enough. You make us all proud to be Queenslanders.

I will never forget my visit to Townsville in the aftermath of the February floods. While suburbs were submerged by water and mud, together with my deputy and the member for Burdekin I joined the volunteers cleaning up Westbrook Drive in Idalia. Off-duty soldier Matt Anderson and his partner Marlene ran the clean-up with military precision. Their own home had been flooded but their priority was helping others. That is the spirit that makes Queensland great.

As the recovery got underway in Townsville devastation was spreading across the north-west where more than an estimated 650 head of cattle were lost. I flew with grazier Marcus Kerr close to his Julia Creek property and I never again want to see the scenes we saw below. I have never seen anything so gut-wrenching: hundreds and hundreds of cattle lay dead. After battling through years and years of drought it was a really cruel blow for so many.

I am pleased to report that nine months later the north-west is getting back on its feet. Forget Flemington; the best place to be this year for Melbourne Cup was the Richmond races. It was great to see that the community came back stronger than ever. Those there said that the race day was their first big blowout after a very long and a very hard year. I can tell honourable members that the rums were flowing pretty freely from around 2.30 or 3 pm. They continued to flow until quite late in the evening as well.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** There was responsible service of alcohol there that day. The next day I had an opportunity to go to several of the properties that had been affected by that devastation that we saw in the north-west earlier this year. Of course, every good day that starts in the bush starts with a smoko, and I spent that with Ardie and Kacie Lord. We were able to sit down and discuss the LNP's big, bold, ambitious vision for the new Bradfield scheme. We talked about water and we talked about their kids' hopes for the future and wanting to keep them in the north-west.

Then I headed over to see Ryan and Tracey Hacon. After another great feed of beef sandwiches Ryan took me out for a tour of his property on the way to Julia Creek. That was a drive I do not think I will ever forget. As we drove through each of the different paddocks along the back way to Julia Creek Ryan recalled how many cattle had died in each paddock as we drove through. He remembered exactly

where the helicopters had landed and he showed me where he had buried the thousands and thousands of cattle that he lost. He talked about—and this was a drive of well over an hour—the stock he had to leave and the stock he had to bury. I can tell honourable members that nine months on, the emotions were still raw.

This Christmas my thoughts—and I know the thoughts of everyone in this House—will be with those in the north-west and every other Queenslanders who bravely faced the floods this year. I really want to give a shout-out to Prime Minister Scott Morrison for the hope he gave the people in the north-west during that visit when he and I were there, and I know he has been back since. My thoughts will also be with the victims of this year's bushfires, and Queensland faced ferocious fires this year. We know that for 86 years generations of Queenslanders enjoyed the beauty of Binna Burra. Today, unfortunately, Binna Burra is most famous for the bushfire that swept through it on Sunday, 8 September. The blackened remains of the lodge symbolised this year's fires. However, the fires spread far beyond Binna Burra, Beechmont and Canungra.

This year an army of Queenslanders united to fight bushfires around Stanthorpe, Yeppoon, Noosa, Bundaberg, Somerset, Kilkivan and countless other communities. Our rural fireys have put their own lives on the line to fight the flames around the clock day in, day out and they are still doing it. There is really only one word to describe them, and that is heroes. Our rural fireys do not ask for gratitude or recognition, but they deserve it. I would also like to place on record my thanks to the firefighters who flew to Queensland from all across Australia and New Zealand to help us in our time of need. We are blessed to have such great mates. The bushfire season has not ended and we know that this danger will remain for many months, so we must ensure that Queensland is as ready as it can be. We must ensure our fireys have the manpower and the equipment they need to keep Queenslanders safe.

This year we must also remember the struggles faced by regional Queensland. Two-thirds of our state is drought declared. Two-thirds of this state is just, quite simply, at breaking point. At times rural communities feel that they are facing this crisis alone, but they are not. Queenslanders in every corner of this state are with them and so are we. I promise rural and regional Queenslanders they will always have a voice in this parliament.

The role of the opposition is to hold the government to account and we have certainly done that this year. There is not enough time to mention it all, but we have helped to ensure that people with disabilities will continue to enjoy cheap transport.

We stood with the small businesses and the farmers against the activists. We helped to save Queensland craft brewers from a new tax. We demanded a second M1, more air conditioning in our schools, more maternity services in the bush, and better skills and training. We continue to offer solutions for the crime crisis facing Townsville. We continue to demand water security for our drought-stricken regions.

We called for tougher laws for unlawful protesters. We called for the government to come clean on Paradise Dam. We stood up for juveniles during the watch house crisis. We have called for an overhaul of the child safety system. We have called for an open and transparent review into mine safety. We will continue to push for a full and open review of the preparedness of Queensland in terms of bushfires. My team and I will continue to fight for these issues, because they matter in every corner of Queensland.

I would like to use this opportunity to recognise one of Brisbane's best loved leaders. Politicians do not come any better than Graham Quirk. Brisbane's former Lord Mayor is a great man who has done tremendous things for this great city. We wish him all the very best for the future. I also congratulate the new Lord Mayor, Adrian Schrinner. Brisbane City Council is in good shape and has been left in very capable hands. I place on the record my heartfelt congratulations to Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Queensland LNP team who were returned to Canberra in 23 seats out of 30.

I would also like to remember the former members who passed away this year. Vicky Kippin-O'Connor was the first woman in the National Party to be elected to any parliament in Australia. Vicky was a National Party colleague of Martin Tenni, the former member for Barron River whom we acknowledged this morning.

Mr Speaker, if you will indulge me, I left the chamber this morning and ran into one of the press gallery, Pat Lion, who said to me, 'Deb, I need to tell you a story that when I was young I used to use a tarpaulin as a slip-and-slide in Martin Tenni's backyard.'

**Mr Mander:** Picture that.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I am not taking that interjection! Both Martin and Vicky will be greatly missed by their families this Christmas and by their many friends on both sides of politics.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to recognise your hard work and dedication throughout this year of parliament. You have brought a dignity to this chamber and to the office of Speaker and have ensured fairness in all of our proceedings. I thank you. On behalf of the LNP, I thank you for your dedication to this very important role. I also thank all of those members who have deputised you. Mr Deputy Speaker, I apologise that this side of the House constantly calls you 'Acting Speaker'. We know that you have the job but for some reason we keep calling you that. I know that you scowl at us each time. He is still scowling at us!

Let me also thank the many fine people of the parliament who ensure the smooth running of this place—firstly, to the Clerk, Neil Laurie, whose knowledge and wisdom is invaluable to this parliament. Neil leads a dedicated and tireless team which also includes Deputy Clerk Michael Ries and First Clerk Assistants Bernice Watson and Amanda Honeyman. We know that Amanda will begin the new year with a baby. Amanda, we wish all the best for you, your family and your bub.

I also recognise the work of the Director of Corporate and Electorate Services, Craig Atkinson, and the Office of Queensland Parliamentary Counsel. I also would like to give, along with the Premier, a special mention to the Director of Information Services and Parliamentary Librarian, Janet Prowse. Janet really is a library legend. I mentioned to her just the other day at the lighting of the Christmas tree that I would like to read the new Frances Whiting book *The Best Kind of Beautiful*. By 10 am the next day it was sitting on my desk and the note said that I could have it out until February. Thank you, Janet. You really are the best kind of beautiful.

I thank also the Director of Property and Facility Services, Stewart Johnson. Stewart's team ensures that the parliament is much more than a debating chamber. His team makes this place a home for every member of this parliament. In particular, I know that those regional members are so grateful for the work that you do. All of us, but I think especially the member for Burdekin, thank you for the work that has been done to improve the safety of the Annexe following last year's fire—and I think we can leave that there.

I thank all the cleaners, catering staff, maintenance team and security guards. They do not just look after this building. I know it is dangerous to mention names, but I just have to. I really want to give a shout-out to Helena Simpson. Helena has been a cleaner here since 1985. I do not think any one of us gets in that lift without Helena saying hello, knowing us all by our names.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** She has also worked in catering. I apologise. She has worked in the parliamentary precinct since 1985. She has worked in many different areas but that is currently her role. Today she has set up for our Christmas drinks this evening. Helena, we look forward to that. I thank Andrew, who is I think one of the best coffee makers we have had for many years. In security, I give a special shout-out to Phil Flaherty. Phil knows the extra hard work he has done this year to make all of us in this place feel welcome. Phil, you know what you did and thank you so very much. In IT, Glenn Simpson is always ready to fix my wi-fi which for some reason never works in my room—but it is working now, so thank you, Glenn. I also want to give a massive shout-out to chef Andy Bowden. This year I had to make what is meant to be my prize-winning pesto that was not prize winning this year. I had to make it in the Annexe, and Andy made sure I had everything available to be able to cook it in Deb's kitchen on level 19.

There are a few other people I would like to mention. I thank Hansard Chief Reporter Jo Mathers and her team for somehow making sense of all of our waffle. I thank Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Watkin; Sue Cawcutt, who is retiring next month after eight years as committee secretary; and Col Ogle, who has completed 25 years of parliamentary service this year and is now enjoying a well-earned retirement. I must also recognise the tremendous contribution made by Chief Parliamentary Attendant Angie Jones. Angie has served the parliament for 30 years. That is quite an innings. Thank you Angie. I also give a shout-out to Margaret and Lyn, who helped me thread a needle just this morning when my button fell off so I could sew it back on.

Of course, I thank the whole opposition team for its outstanding work this year. Our team does not have a fraction of the resources that the government has—that goes with being in opposition, no matter what side of politics you are from—but we punch above our weight. I say a massive thankyou to our administrative staff and our advisers, both here and in all of our electorate offices. I particularly thank my electorate officers in Kingaroy: Lenny, Belinda and Jules. I also thank every single LNP member of this House, their families and their staff. Their dedication to their local communities is unrivalled. I thank them so very much.



I am so proud of my shadow cabinet. I am so proud of this team. I know that we are going to make 2020 an even bigger and better year. The shadow cabinet has travelled to each and every corner of this great state of ours, working and listening to the people of Queensland. I especially want to thank my deputy, the member for Everton. He is a wonderful colleague and a wonderful friend. To you and to Gail: enjoy what little family time you are going to get off over this Christmas break. I also thank the Manager of Opposition Business, the member for Kawana, for the vigour he shows in this House and for the entertainment that I think he gives both sides of the House. To each and every one of the LNP team: please take some time and enjoy this Christmas break with your families.


To everyone on the crossbenches and to the members of the government—to the Premier and her team and to all of her cabinet: I wish each and every one of you a well-deserved break. I hope that you get to spend some precious time with your loved ones and your friends.

This Christmas I know that we will all be thinking of the member for Stretton. We were all moved by the courage he has shown this week and please know that everyone on this side of the House, like the whole House, is thinking of you. I also extend my good wishes to our Governor, the Hon. Paul de Jersey, and his wife, Kaye. Let me also thank the parliamentary press gallery for its work this year. This is the people's house and the press are the eyes of the people, and fortunately this gallery has excellent vision. Of course, thank you Sarah Vogler for your contribution to journalism along with Tegan George, who has left us for the bright lights of Canberra.

**An honourable member:** Bright lights?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Yes, that is exactly what she said! For families Christmas is the most special time of the year and I am blessed to have a beautiful and loving family. The families of MPs do not stand in elections but they make huge sacrifices for us to do our jobs, so of course to my husband and to Isabella, to Lucy and to Elke: thank you for being there again for me this year.

Finally, I want to wish every Queenslanders a merry Christmas and a happy new year. We are so fortunate to live in this beautiful state, but it is the people who make Queensland such a special state. Their courage, compassion and quick wit has no equal. It is an honour and a privilege to serve the people of this state and it is my parting wish that every Queenslanders enjoys a safe break and a merry Christmas with the ones they love.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (5.51 pm): It is with great pride that I again represent the crossbench in giving gratitude and appreciation for the year passed and what has been achieved from both sides of this House. Four of us were newbies last year. This year we managed to get rid of our L-plates, move on to our Ps and now we are ready for an open licence in 2020. That could be dangerous! We appreciate the guidance of those who have provided sound advice, including the whole chamber when I did not comprehend the paper on the head moment!

It is well known that crossbench members are often at totally opposing sides of debate. Regardless of the needs of our often vastly different communities and viewpoints, we have solid common ground—addressing inequity, developing efficient systems and addressing the flaws in process and policy. We concentrate on what unites, not what divides. The core essentials provide fertile ground for us—food security, water collection as part of drought proofing, affordable housing, real jobs to replace those on the wane, and a focus on looking after our vulnerable much better than we do currently, including our returned service men and women.

As well as a successful private member's motion to address the inequity in resourcing for opposition members, the crossbench put forward a total of six bills—from vegetation management and safer waterways to disability parking permits—with a success rate of 50 per cent of those so far debated. Not a bad batting ratio from the Katter boys. There was a successful motion on behalf of the dairy industry, referral to the Ethics Committee and in amongst that raw, down-to-earth debate speeches about the reality for regional Queenslanders and a growing division, sadly, between our remote electorates and those of us in the south-east corner. This can and must be addressed through empathy and customisation of policies that recognise the differences and inequities.

With the success of our private member's motion we look forward to the decisions of the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal not only for current serving members but also for future members. This will give the opposition greater capacity to address needed systemic change, including to our estimates process, the role of the CLA and committees in determinations, as well as increased independent entities to assess performances and processes. We are a business whose core focus is delivering for Queensland and need to operate as such. This at times is not the case, including some buck-passing, blurring of lines and that favourite run-around to questions and issues on behalf of our electorates.

We all live in an extremely lucky country—wealthy in comparison to many others and yet one that still struggles with the basics. I will just give one example. In the seventies affordable housing was delivered through transportable home communities. Some 50 years on in a supposedly innovative and progressive world, we see increasing numbers of veterans, families and women over 55 having nowhere to call home. This is a reality that every single one of us should be ashamed of as this could be easily resolved and yet it is not. Why is that? There are also the many conversations that need to be had without anger, blame or media grabs. These include the growing divide between the private and public sectors, issues identified and yet not acted upon until the impacts are sensational headlines, and the increasing use of anti-anxiety medication by our children to deal with pressures. They are just some examples. One statistic from a recent education forum in Noosa stood out: our children on average receive five years—yes, years—extra instruction time than comparable countries and yet have similar academic results. This is not a criticism of our education system; it is a conversation that needs to be had about why one size does not fit all.

Whichever label anyone wishes to put on our changing environment—whether that be a climate emergency, urgency, crisis or change—the label is irrelevant. The most immediate action is to ensure that our mitigation, responses, systems and processes are able to meet the challenge of this change as well as clearly articulate the short-, medium- and long-term actions regarding keeping our communities safe. Government has stated that it accepts the science of climate change, including contributors. A clear plan must include not only the transition to renewables but also jobs for Queenslanders in regions that are reliant on the coal industry to feed their families. Until this is done, no-one can sit in judgement of those communities nor make demands on them. It is we legislators who are failing them in not delivering the clean, green, sustainable industries promised for so many years as a replacement.

There are a number of highlights that we have been thrilled to see this year, and there are too many to mention, including the phenomenal work by many departments that are rising to meet challenges head-on and to rectify errors or issues as they occur. If we can transpose this culture across all realms, we will have a very different operating landscape and those responsible are to be heartily congratulated. That dreaded word ‘bureaucracy’ is just a word and it can be overcome.

As we said in last year’s valedictory, it is essential to honour those who have gone before us. They sacrificed so much for the life we enjoy, whether in war or in peacetime. We can do that by moving away from the blaming of others and acknowledging the role we as individuals and communities play in the reality we are creating and get on with what needs to be done, as they did.

Frontliners, parliamentary department and agency staff: thank you. We have so many amazing Queenslanders doing tough jobs, often thankless. The media highlights isolated cases, amplifying the not so good over the overwhelming majority of good—no, actually, make that great—works and people, including during our emergencies. We send a heartfelt thank-you and express deep gratitude to those who keep us and our communities safe, with a special call-out to our incredible volunteers. You are all our heroes and there are no words to express how very gold you are.

To those not on the front line who make decisions, including us MPs, please give consideration that their work is made that much harder when there is a lack of collaboration, communication and simple understanding that ‘territorialism’ and political game playing does not assist them or in what we need to achieve.

To our Clerk, Neil: again, how you continue to deliver knowledge and patience to all is incredible. I believe you even managed to get us out of our ‘locked-in’ scenario in the crossbench demountable in Townsville. That was a great whodunit moment that is still unresolved.

Speaker Curtis, you have continued to strive for improvements in chamber behaviour and I am surprised that you have not pulled out the wooden spoon on some occasions. It has been good to see so many MPs striving for a respectful discourse and I trust that Queenslanders notice and appreciate efforts to ensure that debates stay to the policy at issue and not the person.


In closing, thank you to my fellow crossbenchers—not a bad mob, actually—and to every single one of you in this chamber, your families, electorate and parliamentary staff and your communities. May your holiday break be full of goodwill and people. We wish you a safe, happy and healthy 2020 where what you are working so hard for is achieved. May it rain where needed to alleviate drought.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms BOLTON:** The fires extinguished and diminished and that any floods or storms on the way be replenishing, not devastating.

**Honourable members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms BOLTON:** May we focus on and appreciate what is real and important. To our own families, staff and communities, heartfelt blessings for your care, support and unbelievable hard work. Like every MP in this chamber, we so look forward to spending time with you over the holidays as you are the reason we come into the people's house to make the difference that you seek. Merry, merry Christmas Queensland.

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Noosa. Honourable members, it is that time of year where we count our blessings and spread the message of peace and goodwill to all. It may come as a surprise to some members that this is not the usual behaviour in this chamber. That is why, by convention, we set aside the last debate of the year's sitting calendar to ensure that we reflect on the year that was and begin to get into the spirit of this festive season.

It has been a big year for the Queensland parliament. We have rekindled some of our former traditions. Firstly, we held a regional sittings of parliament for the first time in three terms. This year, we took parliament back to where it all began with regional sittings—Townsville. The North Queensland sitting was a success. I thank all members for their contribution and support for the regional sitting.

You may recall that, as part of the program, visiting students were asked to write on a piece of paper what they would do if they were a member of parliament. There were many thoughtful responses that covered many different areas, but I am still quite chuffed that most of them wanted to be the Speaker 'because you get the fanciest chair'.

The regional sitting also evidenced how we are well served in this place by the Parliamentary Service. The efficiency and professionalism of the service as a whole in delivering the regional sitting is a credit to every member of the service who was involved. I wish to place on record my thanks to the regional parliament project team.

We have also restarted the all-party parliamentary trade delegations with representatives from the government, the opposition and the crossbench. I thank the government and opposition particularly for ensuring that we were able to do that. It has been an important part of parliamentary tradition over the years. I was proud as Speaker to lead the delegation to Papua New Guinea in June. This was the first all-party trade delegation of this kind since 2007. This was followed by a delegation visiting our other twinned parliament in Vanuatu shortly thereafter. In September, I also led a parliamentary trade mission to Shanghai in honour of the 30th anniversary of the sister-state relationship between Queensland and Shanghai, which was also paralleled by a government mission led by the Deputy Premier.

This year, in addition to the official visits to our Pacific friends, we also renewed our parliamentary twinning agreements with both our twinned parliaments, PNG and Vanuatu. In acknowledgement of our twinning relationships, I was proud to rename a redecorated committee room 2 as the Twinned Parliaments Room for Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu.

I am also proud to continue the strong tradition of the Queensland parliament in engaging with Indigenous Queenslanders and promoting connections with their parliament. The Queensland parliament was the first Australian parliament to have a dedicated Indigenous liaison officer. Of course, this year we farewelled Brett Nutley, who gave this parliament 11 fantastic years of dedicated service. Through his work we have expanded our engagement with Queensland's Indigenous community immeasurably. Only a few months ago Brett left to pursue other challenges. I wish to place on the record my thanks to him and to let everyone know that Joe Stewart is ably filling the large shoes that Brett left behind. If you have not met Joe yet, please make a point of doing so. He is doing a terrific job.

This term, the Queensland parliament has further increased its engagement and strengthened its connection with Queensland's Indigenous community. We had a parliament education team hosting the second annual Indigenous youth parliament in Townsville just before the regional sitting. I am very proud of this initiative as it helps instil a knowledge of and faith in our democratic process in future Indigenous generations.

Along with the Twinned Parliaments Room, we also renamed the parliamentary committee rooms 1 and 3 the Aboriginal Peoples' Room and the Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Room respectively. In addition to these rooms being much more colourful than they used to be, those names mark Queensland parliament's connection with the First Nations people of this state.

I was also proud to host the premiere of the ABC miniseries *Blue Water Empire* in the Legislative Council Chamber in June. *Blue Water Empire* was a retelling of the story of Australia's Torres Strait Islanders in an entertaining and accessible way. I was honoured to host the premiere here in parliament because it was very fitting that this story was being told in the building that for many years controlled their lives and fortunes from so far away.

The Queensland parliament also played host to the 50th Annual Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in July. It was more exciting than it sounds. I give my thanks to the Parliamentary Service, led by Amanda Honeyman, who delivered the conference. It was a big effort and the planning that went into this conference paid off, because it was very well received by the delegates who came from state and federal jurisdictions from all over Australia, New Zealand and across the Pacific. In fact, this was the first conference where every nation and Pacific island that was invited attended. It was a real achievement to get everyone here.

I wish to thank the Leader of the House and Manager of Opposition Business who also presented at the conference. We were spoiled for delegates. Two former Speakers of the Commonwealth House of Representatives, Harry Jenkins and Bronwyn Bishop, were here. There were very different views as to Speaker style and a range of other issues. We were also privileged to be joined by Sir Lindsay Hoyle, who was then the Deputy Speaker of the UK House of Commons. I can report that Sir Lindsay was elected as the new Speaker at Westminster a few weeks ago, taking over from the retiring John Bercow. I am very happy to advise that that high office of the Speaker of the Commons is now occupied by a friend of Queensland and a friend of Rugby League. Our number is growing!

I would also like to point out that the POCC was also a catalyst for a modernisation and makeover of some parts of the parliamentary precinct. I have already mentioned the committee rooms. However, there were other minor refurbishments throughout the precinct that, hopefully, members have noticed.

I wish to place on the record my thanks for this upgrade to Stewart Johnson, the director of Property and Facility Services, and Mark Richardson, the senior supervisor of Property and Facility Services. I acknowledge others in their team as well.

Honourable members, the operation of the parliament and the management of our precinct does not happen without a lot of hard work and goodwill. In this valedictory debate, I would like to record my thanks to those who have supported these endeavours. I record my gratitude to the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition and their respective leadership teams for their constructive approach to the parliamentary process. Specifically, the smooth running of our parliament relies heavily on the respective managers of business on both sides of the House, namely, the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business, the Attorney-General and the member for Kawana—or should I say the vigorous member for Kawana. I thank both of you for your efforts.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly for their counsel and support of the operation of the chamber and in representing all members' interests at those meetings: again, the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the member for Logan, the member for Capalaba, the member for Condamine and the member for Hill as well as all of the alternates who have assisted over the year.

Keeping the House in order over the course of any sitting week is a team effort, so I thank the panel of temporary Speakers who have come in here, sometimes taking on a thankless task. They have done a terrific job in my stead in upholding the standing orders: the member for Caloundra, the member for Oodgeroo, the member for Mermaid Beach, the member for Greenslopes, the member for Condamine, the member for Bancroft, the member for Mansfield and the member for Mount Ommaney.

I must, of course, pay special thanks to the Deputy Speaker, the member for Townsville, who not only steps into this chamber and represents me but also on many other occasions has represented me in semi-diplomatic opportunities. I want to say thank you to the member for Townsville. Members may not be aware that the Speaker's chair suffered an unfortunate injury this year. The member for Townsville broke the Speaker's chair. However, can I say that, in all fairness, if you have two big burly blokes sitting on this chair on a regular basis something is bound to happen. Thankfully it has been repaired masterfully and you would not know it had happened—although now everyone does.

I would like to thank the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Neil Laurie. The parliament is an institution but I believe that Neil is an institution within that institution, without being institutionalised, and we are all the richer for it. Quite simply, the parliament would not run as it does without his guidance, without advice to both the government and the opposition and the crossbenches and, of course, also advice to me as Speaker. This advice is based on decades of corporate memory and centuries of precedent. I thank him for his counsel and for his services to the parliament.

The Clerk does not work alone. I thank the Deputy Clerk, Michael Ries, and other clerks at the table for their support and assistance this year. I place on record my thanks to the staff in the Table Office for the work that they provide. I offer a pre-emptive farewell to the First Clerk Assistant Amanda Honeyman, who is going on maternity leave in a few weeks. I saw some early signs before she officially

announced the news and I was so pleased to hear it. I look forward to the fact that she will be having a baby in the New Year and I am sure all members of the parliament wish her all the very best for her forthcoming arrival.

I wish to note significant anniversaries for long-term Parliamentary Service members. The following staff members have served for 30 years in the Parliamentary Service: Angie Jones, well known to members of this House as the chief parliamentary attendant; Paul Boreland, the senior electorate accommodation officer from Precinct Services; and Steven Brook, parliamentary security officer. The following staff members have served for 20 years in the Parliamentary Service: Giacinta Pollicina, parliamentary reporter; Carolyn Heffernan, committee support officer; Lynda Pretty, inquiry secretary; Stephen Finnimore, committee secretary; and Zac Dadic, assistant committee secretary. I record my thanks for their service.

I would also like to take the opportunity to say thank you and farewell to some members of the Parliamentary Service about to retire. Sue Cawcutt is commencing leave in December and will retire in April next year. Sue first worked for the Parliamentary Service in 2008 for approximately six months when she was a research director of a select committee which undertook an investigation into altruistic surrogacy. Sue then returned in 2011 and has been a committee secretary since that time. I wish Sue all the very best with her retirement. Col Ogle commenced leave in July 2019 and will be retiring in March of next year. Col has worked for the Parliamentary Service since 3 October 1994 and has held a variety of positions within financial and administrative services. I wish Col well for his retirement.

Honourable members, the Parliamentary Service as a whole deserve our thanks and gratitude for the excellent service that they provide. I wish to place on record my thanks to the various service areas, and I hope members can indulge me to ensure that we do say thank you. I wish to thank our Hansard staff, led by Jo Mathers, for their diligence and professionalism in recording our debates and, as we have heard, making sense of the sometimes nonsensical. There can be no parliament without Hansard and I thank them for their dedication.

I would also like to thank staff members of the functions and catering team for the excellent service they provide, and we will be getting more of that tonight. As every member who hosts a function can attest, when it comes to quality, service and attention to detail our functions team are second to none. I would like to thank our head chef, Andrew McCrea; manager of Catering Services, Simon Neale; and Functions Coordinator, Megan Lomas.

I would also like to thank the staff members of the Parliamentary Library for the excellent service they provide. The Parliamentary Library provides us with knowledge at various levels, whether it be the hard copy collection, online databases or historical media archive. However, their important contribution is the historical research that they often provide. In the past the Parliamentary Library has undertaken historical research that has informed and supported our historical celebrations.

Many members may recall the 30th anniversary functions for the Fitzgerald report in September. I thank the Minister for Public Works and the work of the State Archives in providing the Mike Ahern copy of the Fitzgerald report for display and support for the exhibition. The Parliamentary Library was also instrumental in designing and delivering the display. I thank Janet Prowse, director of information services, and the team at the library for their important work.

I give a big thankyou to the committee secretaries and committee office staff members for the service they provide, in particular the staff of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee, led by Rob Hansen. All committees work hard but I single them out because I believe that they have had an enormous workload on the end-of-life and palliative care and voluntary assisted dying inquiry. It has been a body of work and I thank them personally for that work.

I would like to thank the parliamentary education team for the youth parliaments that they hold across the state with the assistance of Roylene, Katina and their teams. We have had youth parliaments in Townsville, Toowoomba and the Sunshine Coast. The Sunshine Coast youth parliament coincided with Steve Irwin Day, which was the very next day. It was an excellent opportunity to do something a little different. I thank all of the members of parliament who also attended those youth parliaments, coming together to help act as chairs.

In Property and Facility Services, I thank Stewart Johnson and Mark Richardson. In corporate and electorate services I wish to thank Craig Atkinson, Peter Morris, James Robertson and their teams. In terms of IT, I thank the team led by Adrian Harding for the critical service they provide and for responding to all of our IT help requests, no matter how big or small. I also wish to thank the security team led by the Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr Michael Watkin, for their services to the precinct generally and

to their commitment to the safety of all MPs. There are other members to thank and I will be paying tribute to those members at the Queensland parliament staff awards which will be happening in a couple of weeks.

In relation to the media gallery, we have already farewelled Channel 10s Tegan George to that other parliament in Canberra. Another member is making that journey away from the seats just above us here and that is Sarah Vogler from the *Courier-Mail*. I wish both of them well in their future endeavours. I also thank the president of the parliamentary media gallery, Steven Wardill, for the constructive working relationship, particularly in relation to the upgrade of facilities in the media rooms upstairs, which was much needed and well deserved.

I thank my Mulgrave electorate officers, Coral and Bec, for the great service they provide. I would also like to thank my Speaker's office staff, George, Shane and Elly, for their service during the parliamentary year and also give a shout-out to Jayden Miller, who has subbed in for Elly when she has been undertaking her nursing studies. It is very exciting because Jayden understands the NBA as well as I do, and perhaps maybe the member for Sandgate. That has certainly been a very welcome addition.

I thank my wife, Kerry, for her unwavering support in my role both as a local member and as Speaker and, more importantly, helping me raise three wonderful children: Tristan, Layla and Kobi. All of us will be away from our families at times. Sadly for me this year my son got a fish tank and let us just say I have buried five fish. Do not worry, the pet store took full responsibility. They gave us an infected fish and it infected the tank. The times when you are away are always the times when these things happen. I think most members can relate to that. It is a challenging environment we work in, but particularly when you are a plane trip away for some of those moments you otherwise would have been there for to console them. I acknowledge the love and support that partners and families play right across this chamber. None of us can do what we do without the foundational support that our families, our loved ones, provide to us. We give up a lot, but so do they. Thank you so much to all of our families.

Members, it is indeed a great honour to preside over this parliament. I thank all members for their patience and for their respect. I value the friendships and the camaraderie of all members. I may be the presiding officer, but I am still one of you and I understand many of the issues and challenges that you face in your roles. I thank you for your mutual forbearance of other members and also sometimes the rulings.

As per the longstanding tradition, I invite all members of the parliamentary, ministerial and opposition staff to the Speaker's drinks on the Green Deck which will commence immediately after the House rises. To all members taking part in this important tradition, let us not forget the important tradition of the serving of food and drink by members of this House to the staff. I take this opportunity to wish all members a safe festive season and a happy New Year.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 6.19 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, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszczuk, Pease, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting