



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

Tuesday, 4 February 2020

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TUESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2020



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

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

ASSENT TO BILLS



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

The Honourable C.W. Pitt MP

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Parliament House

George Street

BRISBANE QLD 4000

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

Date of Assent: 5 December 2019

A Bill for an Act to amend the Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994, the Motor Accident Insurance Regulation 2018 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to amend the Building and Construction Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 1991, the Contract Cleaning Industry (Portable Long Service Leave) Act 2005, the Holidays Act 1983, the Industrial Relations Act 2016 and the Liquor Act 1992 for particular purposes

A Bill for an Act to facilitate the publication and collection of information about public facilities and private facilities that provide health services, and to amend this Act, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Health Ombudsman Act 2013, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009, the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Private Health Facilities Act 1999, the Public Health Act 2005, the Youth Justice Act 1992 and the Youth Justice Regulation 2016 for particular purposes

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

Yours sincerely

Governor

5 December 2019

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 5 December 2019, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to bills on 5 December 2019 [\[45\]](#).

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Failure to Declare Pecuniary Interest



Mr SPEAKER: On 23 October 2019, the member for Capalaba wrote to me alleging that the Leader of the Opposition failed to declare a pecuniary interest on multiple occasions, potentially breaching standing orders 260 and 262. The matter relates to three separate occasions: first, when voting on the Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 on 17 February 2016; second, during a meeting with Mr Andrew Thomas and Ms Renae Smee, both senior employees of Woolworths, on 20 June 2016; and, third, during debate on a motion on drought in the House on 16 October 2019.

The pecuniary interest was alleged to arise from the Leader of the Opposition's beneficiary interest in the Weroona Family Trust. I sought further information from the Leader of the Opposition about the allegations made against her, in accordance with standing order 269(5). I have considered the matter and note that the Leader of the Opposition has made an adequate explanation against the allegations raised by the member for Capalaba. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter to the Ethics Committee.

It is worth noting that the member for Capalaba's allegations contained factually incorrect material.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! That is not a good start, members. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members that they should apply due diligence in verifying the facts relied upon when seeking to have a matter of privilege referred to the Ethics Committee. To make baseless or false accusations may amount to a contempt in its own right. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence in relation to an allegation by the member for Capalaba, Mr Don Brown MP, that the Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP, failed to declare a pecuniary interest under standing orders 260 and 262 [146].

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

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—FAILURE TO DECLARE A PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER STANDING ORDERS 260 AND 262

MR SPEAKER: Honourable members,

On 23 October 2019, the Member for Capalaba wrote to me alleging that the Leader of the Opposition failed to declare a pecuniary interest on three separate occasions, potentially breaching Standing Orders 260 and 262.

The first occasion was during a vote on the Tackling Alcohol-Fuelled Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 on 17 February 2016. The second occasion was during a meeting with Mr Andrew Thomas and Ms Renae Smee, both senior employees of Woolworths on 20 June 2016. The third occasion was during debate on a drought motion in the House on 16 October 2019.

In his correspondence to me, the Member for Capalaba contends that the Leader of the Opposition has a pecuniary interest in Woolworths as a result of her being a beneficiary of the Weroona Family Trust. That trust owns Weroona Pastoral Company, which in turn owns a beef cattle feedlot. The Member for Capalaba provided a link to a news article that states Weroona Pastoral Company has a supply contract with Woolworths to supply beef.

The Member for Capalaba further alleged that the beef cattle feedlot is in a drought declared region. As such, the Member for Capalaba contends that the Leader of the Opposition may have failed to declare that the property received drought funding when debating a motion on drought in the House. The Member for Capalaba admitted he was unsure whether any drought funding was actually received, and that he was just raising this as a possibility due to the location of the feedlot.

I sought further information from the Leader of the Opposition about the allegations made against her, in accordance with Standing Order 269(5).

In her response on 29 November 2019, the Leader of the Opposition advised me of the nature of her interest in the Weroona Family Trust as being one of a beneficiary in a discretionary trust. The Leader of the Opposition states that she has no input into the operations or investments of the trust, nor can she compel a distribution from the trust. The Leader of the Opposition has also never received a benefit or distribution from the trust, and does not expect to.

The Leader of the Opposition also advised me of the nature of the supply agreement that Weroona Pastoral Co has with Woolworths, being that they supply 85 head of cattle to Woolworths per fortnight, or approximately 0.00275% of Woolworths annual beef sales.

I am satisfied that the Leader of the Opposition's pecuniary interest in this supply contract would not place her in an overly limited class, as referred to by Speaker McGrady in his ruling in relation to standing orders 259 and 260 on 1 December 2005 and an information noted by the Members' Ethics and Parliamentary Privileges Committee published earlier in 2005.

The Leader of the Opposition also stated that she had sought information from the trust and confirmed that at no point in time has drought funding been received. Therefore, there was no requirement for any such disclosures in the debate on the motion on 16 October 2019 under Standing Order 260.

With respect to the meeting with the Woolworths employees, the Leader of the Opposition has stated that she did not attend that meeting. The Member for Clayfield, who was the Leader of the Opposition at that point in time, attended that meeting as per the Leader of the Opposition's diary note.

On the information before me, I consider that the Leader of the Opposition has made an adequate explanation in relation to the allegations under Standing Order 269(4).

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

In her submission, the Leader of the Opposition counter alleged that the Member for Capalaba was deliberately misleading and in breach of Standing Orders 266(2) and 266(10) in his original referral to me.

These counter allegations related to two statements. The first statement being that the Leader of the Opposition met with two Woolworths employees; and the second statement being that the Weroona Pastoral Company was a large supplier to Woolworths.


As previously outlined, the Leader of the Opposition was not present at the meeting in question. It is also questionable whether the supply contract to Woolworths requiring the supply of 85 head of cattle be referred to as 'large'.

While these statements are factually incorrect, they were not directed to the House or a committee, as required by Standing Order 266(2). Nor did they reach the threshold of molestation, as required under Standing Order 266(10).

While I am not taking further action in relation to the counter allegations, the Member for Capalaba should note that he should pay careful consideration to any future matters of privilege he may raise, and ensure the truthfulness of all allegations to the greatest extent possible.

In concluding I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members that they should apply due diligence in verifying the facts relied upon when referring a matter of privilege. To make baseless, or false accusations, may amount to a contempt in its own right.

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House

 **Mr SPEAKER:** On 4 November 2019, the member for Glass House wrote to me alleging that the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning deliberately misled the House during statements made on 24 October 2019. The matter relates to statements by the minister in regard to LNP manufacturing policy. The minister stated a future LNP government will be funding a new manufacturing program for \$20 million, rather than the \$46 million Made in Queensland government program.

I sought further information from the minister about the allegation made against him, in accordance with standing order 269(5). I have considered the matter and note that the minister has made an adequate explanation for his statements. Therefore, I will not be referring the matter to the Ethics Committee. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Correspondence in relation to an allegation by the member for Glass House, Mr Andrew Powell MP, that the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, Hon. Cameron Dick, deliberately misled the House [147].

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

Leave granted.

SPEAKER'S RULING—ALLEGED DELIBERATELY MISLEADING THE HOUSE

MR SPEAKER: Honourable members,

On 4 November 2019, the Member for Glass House wrote to me alleging that the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure & Planning deliberately misled the House during statements made on 24 October 2019.

The matter relates to statements by the Minister in regard to LNP manufacturing policy. The Minister stated a future LNP Government will be funding a new manufacturing program for \$20 million, rather than the \$46 million Made in Queensland government program.

In his letter to me, the Member for Glass House contended that the Minister's statements were untrue and misleading. The Member attached statements he made in the House on 17 October 2019 prior the Minister's statements on 24 October 2019, where he explained there will be no reduction in funding to the manufacturing sector under a future LNP Government.

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

The Minister advised me that the nature of the Made in Queensland program is that it would require further expenditure to continue. The allocated \$46 million is expected to be expended in this term of Parliament. Therefore, unless future funding is allocated, the program will effectively be ended.

While the Member for Glass House provided statements that there would be no reduction in funding to the manufacturing sector, along with details of the LNP's Built in Queensland policy, there was no information provided that there would be funding allocated to the Made in Queensland program under an LNP Government.


The Minister contended there is a distinction to be made between a promise not to reduce funding, and a promise to allocate funding. That is, funding that does not exist, cannot be reduced and as such his statements were not factually incorrect or misleading.

On the information before me, I considered that the Minister has made an adequate explanation in relation to his statements under Standing Order 269(4).


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

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Threats to Disrupt Proceedings, Special Procedures

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, due to threats to disrupt today's proceedings, I have authorised a number of special procedures and extra restrictions on access to the precinct and the public gallery. I note that today's proceedings remain readily accessible to Queenslanders and trust that members support my decisions to reduce the risk of disruption to the House.

School Group Tours

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I wish to advise members that we will be visited in the gallery this morning by students and teachers from Hymba Yumba Independent School in the electorate of Jordan and Indooroopilly State High School in the electorate of Maiwar.

PETITIONS

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

Gladstone Hospital, Upgrades

From 119 petitioners, requesting the House to expedite upgrades to the Gladstone Hospital to deliver consistent level 4 services to the growing needs of the community [[132](#)].

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

Avondale, Mine Development Licence

Mr Bennett, from 5,247 petitioners, requesting the House to oppose Mine Development Licence 3040 near Avondale and not let it proceed under any circumstances [[133](#), [134](#)].

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

Paradise Dam

From 4,213 petitioners, requesting the House to release the technical reports relating to the structural integrity of Paradise Dam and to reinstate water being lost from Paradise Dam [[135](#), [136](#)].

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

Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) Regulation 2009

Mr Sorensen, from 1,696 petitioners, requesting the House to amend the current legislation to allow the inclusion of highways and motorways to Division 4, 177 and 178 of the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) Regulation 2009 [[137](#)].

Townsville Sailing Club

Mr Stewart, from 1,009 petitioners requesting the House to support the Townsville Sailing Club's purchase of land through the government's sports strategy funding program "Activate! Queensland 2019-2029" and to support the sailing club and all aquatic activities to remain on their current location at The Strand [[138](#)].

Bargara, Hughes Road and Bundaberg-Bargara Road Intersection

Mr Bennett, from 438 petitioners, requesting the House to upgrade the Hughes Road and Bundaberg-Bargara Road intersection at Bargara to a safe standard which will cope with present and future traffic and pedestrian conditions [[139](#)].

Metro North Hospital and Health Service, Supply Contract

Mr Powell, from 12,921 petitioners, requesting the House to call on the Palaszczuk Government to review the supply contract for Metro North Hospitals and award at least a portion to Maleny Dairies [[140](#)].

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

Renewable Energy, Generation

From 452 petitioners, requesting the House to have a plan to increase the amount of renewable energy generation from 21% to 100% by 2030 to bring electricity price relief to residents [[141](#)].

Renewable Energy, Export

From 324 petitioners, requesting the House to have a plan to build a strong export economy around hydrogen, international HVDC connectors, and other emerging renewables export industries to balance the loss of revenue from coal [[142](#)].

Renewable Energy, Transition Plan

From 376 petitioners, requesting the House to have a 10-year transition plan and job retraining program to make sure workers in the coal industries have the opportunity to move into the emerging renewables industry [[143](#)].

Tamborine Mountain, Water Extraction

From 4,765 petitioners, requesting the House to declare a water emergency and cease commercial bottled water extraction from Tamborine Mountain [[144](#)].

Ruiz, Mr RA

From 2,862 petitioners, requesting the House to appeal the sentence for recently convicted child sex offender Rogelio Acosta Ruiz [[145](#)].

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

PAPERS TABLED DURING THE RECESS (SO 31)

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

29 November 2019—

[2192](#) Gladstone Area Water Board—Annual Report 2019

[2193](#) Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the National Boards—Annual Report 2018-19

[2194](#) The Queensland Plan Annual Progress Report 2018-19

[2195](#) Transmax Pty Ltd—General Purpose Financial Statements 2018-19

2 December 2019—

[2196](#) Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee: Report No. 103, 56th Parliament, December 2019—Committee Travel Report 29 to 31 October 2019

[2197](#) Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner: Report of the work and activities of the Crime and Corruption Commission under chapter 11 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, 1 October 2019

4 December 2019—

[2198](#) Murray-Darling Basin Authority—Annual Report 2018-19

[2199](#) President of the Industrial Court of Queensland (in respect of the Industrial Court of Queensland, Queensland Industrial Relations Commission and the Queensland Industrial Registry)—Annual Report 2018-19

5 December 2019—

[2200](#) Auditor-General of Queensland: Report to Parliament No. 9: 2019-20—Addressing mine dust lung disease

[2201](#) Queensland State Archives—Annual Report 2018-19

6 December 2019—

[2202](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 43, 56th Parliament, December 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 4 September 2019 and 15 October 2019

[2203](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 44, 56th Parliament, December 2019—Natural Resources and Other Legislation (GDA2020) Amendment Bill 2019

[2204](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 42, 56th Parliament, December 2019—Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland

9 December 2019—

[2205](#) Overseas travel report: Report on Trade and Investment Mission to Indonesia and Singapore by the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), 4-9 November 2019

10 December 2019—

[2206](#) Auditor-General of Queensland—Auditor-General Auditing Standards, December 2019

13 December 2019—

[2207](#) Supreme Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

[2208](#) Childrens Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

[2209](#) Magistrates Courts of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-2019

[2210](#) District Court of Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19

[2211](#) Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal—Annual Report 2018-19

16 December 2019—

[2212](#) Response from the Premier and Minister for Trade (Hon. Palaszczuk), to an ePetition (3209-19) sponsored by the member for Traeger, Mr Katter, from 1,279 petitioners, requesting the House to resolve that no further government monies be spent seeking an Olympic bid

17 December 2019—

- [2213](#) Response from the Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (Hon. Hinchliffe), to an ePetition (3204-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 895 petitioners, requesting the House to impose a two-term limit (8 years) for mayors and councillors with the main goal being to reduce corruption in local government
- [2214](#) Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 58, 56th Parliament, December 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 16 October 2019 and 26 November 2019
- [2215](#) Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee: Report No. 104, 56th Parliament, December 2019—Review of the operation of section 329 of the Crime and Corruption Act 2001

18 December 2019—

- [2216](#) Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal: 2019 Review of Allowances, Determination 19/2019, 17 December 2019
- [2217](#) Department of Agriculture and Fisheries—Annual Report 2018-19: Erratum

19 December 2019—

- [2218](#) National Environment Protection Council—Annual Report 2017-18
- [2219](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 38, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Subordinate legislation tabled between 15 May 2019 and 11 June 2019, government response

20 December 2019—

- [2220](#) Queensland Law Reform Commission—Annual Report 2018-19
- [2221](#) Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council—Annual Report 2018-19

6 January 2020—

- [1](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), to an ePetition (3196-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 713 petitioners, requesting the House to review and amend the current legislation to curtail irresponsible breeding of puppies and to enforce mandatory standards
- [2](#) Response from the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries (Hon. Furner), to a paper petition (3241-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) from 310 petitioners, requesting the House to commit to new investments in plant-based industry
- [3](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Hon. D'Ath), to an ePetition (3191-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 311 petitioners, requesting the House to take the responsibility for the administration of the Legal Profession Act 2007 off the Legal Services Commission and to establish an Independent Corruption Commission entity to handle complaints against members of the legal profession
- [4](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Hon. D'Ath), to an ePetition (3211-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 986 petitioners, requesting the House to legislate for a mandatory requirement that criminals must pay for damages and/or repairs for any destruction caused during their criminal activity on top of any fine and/or imprisonment
- [5](#) Response from the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Hon. D'Ath), to an ePetition (3212-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 795 petitioners, requesting the House to pass legislation that makes it a criminal offence for any person or group of people to unnecessarily hinder or impede either vehicular or pedestrian traffic
- [6](#) Overseas travel report: Report on a ministerial trade mission to the United States of America by the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations (Hon. Grace), 17-23 November 2019
- [7](#) Response from the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development (Hon. Fentiman), to a paper petition (3246-19) presented by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, and an ePetition (3207-19) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 56 and 100 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to construct a specialist centre of learning for the Coomera Marine Industry at the Coomera TAFE Campus
- [8](#) QSuper—Annual Report 2019
- [9](#) Professional Standards Act 2004: Professional Standards (The CPA Australia Ltd Professional Standards (Accountants) Scheme) Notice 2019, No. 266
- [10](#) Professional Standards Act 2004: Professional Standards (The CPA Australia Ltd Professional Standards (Accountants) Scheme) Notice 2019, No. 266, explanatory notes
- [11](#) Professional Standards Act 2004: Instrument amending the CPA Australia Ltd Professional Standards (Accountants) Scheme—Professional Standards Act 1994 (NSW) [Refer Subordinate Legislation No. 266]
- [12](#) Response from the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning (Hon. Dick), to an ePetition (3202-19) sponsored by the member for Callide, Mr Boyce, from 274 petitioners, requesting the House to stop the approval of industrial wind turbines being built in non-industrial areas and to reject the approval of the Banana Range Windfarm
- [13](#) Legal Profession Act 2007: Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice (No. 3) 2019, No. 268
- [14](#) Legal Profession Act 2007: Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice (No. 3) 2019, No. 268, explanatory notes
- [15](#) Legal Profession Act 2007: Legal Profession (Society Rules) Amendment Notice (No. 3) 2019, No. 268, Human Rights Certificate

- [16](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts (Hon. Enoch), to an ePetition (3213-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 680 petitioners, requesting the House to acknowledge the current science that clearly finds humans are not responsible for climate change
- [17](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to two paper petitions (3247-19 and 3250-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) from 133 and 33 petitioners respectively, and an ePetition (3172-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 4,743 petitioners, requesting the House to expedite upgrades to the Gladstone Hospital to deliver consistent level 4 services to the growing needs of the community
- [18](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (3245-19) presented by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, and an ePetition (3193-19) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 356 and 423 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to construct a hospital in the northern Gold Coast region of Coomera/Ormeau/Pimpama
- [19](#) Response from the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services (Hon. Dr Miles), to a paper petition (3240-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) from 82 petitioners, requesting the House to ensure equal access to world class palliative care for every Queenslanders and to not consider legalising euthanasia
- [20](#) Response from the Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail (Hon. Jones), to an ePetition (3155-19) sponsored by the member for Mirani, Mr Andrew, from 365 petitioners, requesting the House to cause an investigation into all grants to ensure that grants are being allocated in accordance with law, policy and taxpayer expectations
- [21](#) Response from the Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services (Hon. Ryan), to a paper petition (3243-19) presented by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, and an ePetition (3127-19) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 1,924 and 2,030 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to construct a Police Hub in the Ormeau/Pimpama region and to provide 35 additional police officers to the region
- [22](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (3242-19) presented by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, and an ePetition (3126-19) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 98 and 113 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to upgrade bus services between Ormeau Railway Station and Coomera Railway Station
- [23](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (3244-19) presented by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, and an ePetition (3128-19) sponsored by the member for Coomera, Mr Crandon, from 106 and 109 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to increase the car park size at the Coomera Railway Station
- [24](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3203-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 657 petitioners, requesting the House to cancel the Coomera Connector project and shift the money towards improving public transport between Gold Coast and Brisbane
- [25](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (3237-19) presented by the member for Southern Downs, Mr Lister, from 168 petitioners, requesting the House to relocate the 80 km/hour speed limits on the New England Highway, Allora to the Reserve Road and the Bradfield Road junctions with the New England Highway
- [26](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (3238-19) presented by the member for Warrego, Ms Leahy, from 257 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently address the safety concerns of the Augathella community regarding the Main Street and Landsborough Highway intersection at Augathella
- [27](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to a paper petition (3249-19) presented by the member for Pumicestone, Mrs Wilson, from 288 petitioners, requesting the House to introduce free vehicle registration and licences for all Queensland aged pensioners
- [28](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey), to an ePetition (3201-19) sponsored by the member for Clayfield, Mr Nicholls, from 913 petitioners, requesting the House to provide seniors free off-peak travel on trains
- [29](#) Response from the Minister for Child Safety, Youth and Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence (Hon. Farmer), to a paper petition (3248-19) presented by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(3) and an ePetition (3192-19) sponsored by the Clerk under provisions of Standing Order 119(4) from 1,819 and 855 petitioners respectively, requesting the House to consider additional strategies to combat youth crime in the Yeppoon police district
- 8 January 2020—
- [30](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 40, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019, government response
- [31](#) Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019, explanatory notes: Erratum
- 15 January 2020—
- [32](#) Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions—Annual Report 2018-19
- [33](#) Queensland Family & Child Commission: Deaths of children and young people Queensland—Annual Report 2018-19
- [34](#) Office of the Public Guardian—Annual Report 2018-19
- [35](#) Public Interest Monitor—Annual Report 2018-19
- 16 January 2020—
- [36](#) Director of Child Protection Litigation—Annual Report 2018-19
- [37](#) The Public Advocate—Annual Report 2018-19

20 January 2020—

- [38](#) State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee: Report No. 37, 56th Parliament, October 2019—Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019, interim government response

21 January 2020—

- [39](#) Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts Pty Ltd—Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2019
- [40](#) Letter, dated 13 January 2020, from the Chair of the Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts (ACPA), Mr Tom Webster, to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts, Hon. Leeanne Enoch, regarding ACPA's Financial Statements for the 2018-19 Financial Year

24 January 2020—

- [41](#) Crime and Corruption Commission: Operation Yabber—An investigation into allegations relating to the Gold Coast City Council, Investigation report, January 2020

28 January 2020—

- [42](#) East Deeral Drainage Board—Final Report 1 July 2018 to 11 October 2019

31 January 2020—

- [43](#) Ministerial Gifts Register—Reportable Gifts 1 July 2018—30 June 2019

3 February 2020—

- [44](#) Letter, dated 1 February 2020, from the Speaker, Hon. Curtis Pitt, to the Premier and Minister for Trade, Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk, regarding the resignation of the member for Currumbin, Mrs Jann Stuckey MP, including attached letter, dated 1 February 2020, from the member for Currumbin, Mrs Jann Stuckey MP, to the Speaker, Hon. Curtis Pitt

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

The following statutory instruments were tabled by the Clerk—

Liquor Act 1992:

- [46](#) Liquor Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 235
- [47](#) Liquor Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 235, explanatory notes

Public Trustee Act 1978:

- [48](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2019, No. 236
- [49](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) 2019, No. 236, explanatory notes

Education (General Provisions) Act 2006:

- [50](#) Education (General Provisions) (Tambo State School) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 237
- [51](#) Education (General Provisions) (Tambo State School) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 237, explanatory notes

Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012 (Qld) and by the law of States and Territories:

- [52](#) Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 238
- [53](#) Heavy Vehicle National Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 238, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995, Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994:

- [54](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2019, No. 239
- [55](#) Transport Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2019, No. 239, explanatory notes

State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999, Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995:

- [56](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management) (Road Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 240
- [57](#) Transport Operations (Road Use Management) (Road Safety) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 240, explanatory notes

Sustainable Ports Development Act 2015:

- [58](#) Sustainable Ports Development (Port of Townsville Master Planned Area) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 241
- [59](#) Sustainable Ports Development (Port of Townsville Master Planned Area) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 241, explanatory notes

Water Act 2000:

- [60](#) Water (Annual Levy for Underground Water Management) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 242
- [61](#) Water (Annual Levy for Underground Water Management) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 242, explanatory notes

Planning Act 2016:

- [62](#) Planning (Spit Master Plan and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 243
- [63](#) Planning (Spit Master Plan and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 243, explanatory notes

Major Events Act 2014:

- [64](#) Major Events (T20 World Cup) Regulation 2019, No. 244
- [65](#) Major Events (T20 World Cup) Regulation 2019, No. 244, explanatory notes

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994:

- [66](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2019, No. 245
- [67](#) Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2019, No. 245, explanatory notes

Economic Development Act 2012:

- [68](#) Economic Development (Roma Street Cross River Rail PDA) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 246
- [69](#) Economic Development (Roma Street Cross River Rail PDA) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 246, explanatory notes

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

- [70](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 247
- [71](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 247, explanatory notes

Planning Act 2016, Transport Infrastructure Act 1994:

- [72](#) Transport Infrastructure and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 248
- [73](#) Transport Infrastructure and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 248, explanatory notes

Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

- [74](#) Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2019, No. 249
- [75](#) Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment (Postponement) Regulation 2019, No. 249, explanatory notes

Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999:

- [76](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health (Methane Monitoring and Ventilation Systems) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 250
- [77](#) Coal Mining Safety and Health (Methane Monitoring and Ventilation Systems) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 250, explanatory notes

Water Act 2000:

- [78](#) Water Plan (Moreton) (Supply Scheme Arrangements) Amendment Plan 2019, No. 251
- [79](#) Water Plan (Moreton) (Supply Scheme Arrangements) Amendment Plan 2019, No. 251, explanatory notes

Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) Act 2017, Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991:

- [80](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 252
- [81](#) Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 252, explanatory notes

Major Sports Facilities Act 2001:

- [82](#) Major Sports Facilities (North Queensland Stadium) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 253
- [83](#) Major Sports Facilities (North Queensland Stadium) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 253, explanatory notes

Public Records Act 2002:

- [84](#) Public Records (Category 2 Water Authorities) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 254
- [85](#) Public Records (Category 2 Water Authorities) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 254, explanatory notes

Retirement Villages Act 1999:

- [86](#) Retirement Villages (Closure, Transition and Redevelopment Plans and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 255
- [87](#) Retirement Villages (Closure, Transition and Redevelopment Plans and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 255, explanatory notes

Retirement Villages Act 1999:

- [88](#) Retirement Villages (Transitional) Regulation 2019, No. 256
- [89](#) Retirement Villages (Transitional) Regulation 2019, No. 256, explanatory notes

Forestry Act 1959, Marine Parks Act 2004, Nature Conservation Act 1992:

- [90](#) Forestry and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2019, No. 257
- [91](#) Forestry and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2019, No. 257, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992:

- [92](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) (Bellthorpe) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 258
- [93](#) Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) (Bellthorpe) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 258, explanatory notes

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

[94](#) Local Government Legislation (Boundary Changes and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 259

[95](#) Local Government Legislation (Boundary Changes and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 259, explanatory notes

Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

[96](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 260

[97](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 260, explanatory notes

Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, Youth Justice Act 1992:

[98](#) Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 261

[99](#) Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 261, explanatory notes

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:

[100](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Grants Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 262

[101](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Grants Scheme) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 262, explanatory notes

Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011:

[102](#) Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 263

[103](#) Hospital and Health Boards (Changes to Prescribed Services) Amendment Regulation 2019, No. 263, explanatory notes

Water Act 2000:

[104](#) Water Plan (Cooper Creek) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2019, No. 264

[105](#) Water Plan (Cooper Creek) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2019, No. 264, explanatory notes

Nature Conservation Act 1992:

[106](#) Nature Conservation (Macropod Harvest Period 2020) Notice 2019, No. 265

[107](#) Nature Conservation (Macropod Harvest Period 2020) Notice 2019, No. 265, explanatory notes

Water Act 2000:

[108](#) Water Plan (Baffle Creek Basin) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2019, No. 267

[109](#) Water Plan (Baffle Creek Basin) (Postponement of Expiry) Notice 2019, No. 267, explanatory notes

Supreme Court of Queensland Act 1991:

[110](#) Supreme Court (Admission Guidelines) Amendment Notice 2019, No. 269

[111](#) Supreme Court (Admission Guidelines) Amendment Notice 2019, No. 269, explanatory notes

Electrical Safety Act 2002:

[112](#) Electrical Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice 2019, No. 270

[113](#) Electrical Safety (Codes of Practice) Amendment Notice 2019, No. 270, explanatory notes

Public Health Act 2005:

[114](#) Public Health (Coronavirus (2019—nCoV)) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 1

[115](#) Public Health (Coronavirus (2019—nCoV)) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 1, explanatory notes

[116](#) Public Health (Coronavirus (2019—nCoV)) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 1, human rights certificate

Civil Liability and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

[117](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 2

[118](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 2, explanatory notes

[119](#) Proclamation commencing remaining provisions, No. 2, human rights certificate

Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019:

[120](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 3

[121](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 3, explanatory notes

[122](#) Proclamation commencing certain provisions, No. 3, human rights certificate

Public Trustee Act 1978:

[123](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 4

[124](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 4, explanatory notes

[125](#) Public Trustee (Interest Rate) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 4, human rights certificate

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994:


- [126](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (2019—2020 Extraordinary Bushfires Disaster Recovery Funding) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 5
- [127](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (2019—2020 Extraordinary Bushfires Disaster Recovery Funding) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 5, explanatory notes
- [128](#) Rural and Regional Adjustment (2019—2020 Extraordinary Bushfires Disaster Recovery Funding) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 5, human rights certificate

Local Government Act 2009:

- [129](#) Local Government (Change of Representation for Cloncurry Shire Council) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 6
- [130](#) Local Government (Change of Representation for Cloncurry Shire Council) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 6, explanatory notes
- [131](#) Local Government (Change of Representation for Cloncurry Shire Council) Amendment Regulation 2020, No. 6, human rights certificate

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Coronavirus

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.38 am): Queensland is often tested by the worst that nature can throw at us. Just this past year we have faced fire and floods. Now we confront a new challenge—the coronavirus. I am proud of our doctors, nurses and health workers every day, but I have never been more proud than I am today.

Our Chief Health Officer and State Disaster Coordinator were preparing our defences when the first patients with the virus were 7,000 kilometres away. Hospital capacity, resourcing, staffing and containment plans were enacted, and enacted swiftly. The State Health Emergency Coordination Centre was activated. Then last Monday, a man who recently arrived from Wuhan flew from Melbourne to the Gold Coast. The fact that he and another member of his party are Queensland's only coronavirus patients to date is testament to the measures introduced to contain it.

As of this morning, 471 people have been tested for the virus, 13HEALTH has processed 554 nursing assessment calls and over 1,700 text messages have been sent to families of Queensland schoolchildren recently returned from China. I also want to thank the outstanding work of the education department, including the education minister. Nurses are posted at airports. So far they have assessed more than 400 people who have self-isolated. There are nurses and translators stationed in emergency departments and all our health messages have been translated into Mandarin.

Our first job is the health and safety of people in Queensland. Our priority is to contain this virus. Then my government will lead the recovery from it as we have from the fires, the floods and the cyclones that have come before it.

Today all MPs are invited to a briefing to be conducted by the health minister and Queensland Health officers at 1 pm in the Dandiir Room. I urge all MPs to come along to get the most up-to-date information. Tomorrow I will join the Treasurer, the health minister, the Minister for State Development, the minister for tourism and the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development to provide an update for industry stakeholders.


It is barely three weeks since the coronavirus was identified as the cause of the first illnesses in Wuhan. There are now worldwide over 17,000 cases and more than 350 deaths. It is naturally causing distress in the community, but everyone should be reassured that by taking sensible precautions like basic hygiene we will help stop its spread.

I commend the outstanding leadership of the Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young; the health minister, Steven Miles; my directors-general; and all government ministers and departments who are working collectively on this. In fact, I think we have met nearly every day to address this issue. I also want to mention Dr Dan Holmes from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital who is leading the team caring for those Australians arriving on Christmas Island.

In addition, we also stand with our very strong Chinese community. I joined the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, along with the members for Toohey and Stretton, and leaders of the Chinese community for yum cha at the Landmark Restaurant on Saturday. In the spirit of our strong stance with the Chinese community, I today invite all members of parliament to attend a special reception that is being held here at Parliament House tomorrow night. It was going to celebrate the Lunar New Year. It will now be a reception for the Chinese community and for this parliament to show our support, our

100 per cent support, for the Chinese community in Queensland. We will beat this new challenge the same way we beat all the rest—we will do it as Queenslanders always do and we will do it absolutely together.

Bushfires

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): This has been an overwhelming and unforgettable bushfire season for Australia and also for Queensland. Last year we had devastating fires—the ferocity of which have not been seen in generations—and they left a scorched scar across the nation as they continued their relentless march.

In Queensland, we have seen more than 7,000 bushfires scorching more than 6.6 million hectares across the state, injuring firefighters and leaving 137 homes damaged and 49 destroyed. We have been very fortunate that our bushfires have not resulted in any loss of human life.


When Queensland faced bushfires in 2018 and 2019, firefighters from across the nation came to our assistance, and now Queensland has been able to repay that favour. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has deployed over 490 firefighters and operational support staff to relieve exhausted teams on the ground in New South Wales and Victoria.

We are also supporting our volunteer firefighters by ensuring that the federal government's compensation package announced for New South Wales also applies to Queensland, which is now in place and available. As of yesterday, payments for 41 volunteers have been processed, totalling more than \$136,000.

As our southern colleagues continue to fight bushfires despite recent rain, for Queensland it is time to begin the long road to recovery. The State Recovery Coordinator, former police commissioner Ian Stewart, has visited all impacted regions and is preparing a plan which will guide and assist communities to rebuild, recover and reconnect. The plan will focus on tourism, the health and wellbeing of affected residents, the repair of property, and the restoration of small businesses, primary producers and the environment.

Disaster recovery funding arrangements have been activated for 14 local government areas, and to date more than \$2.5 million has been paid out in personal hardship assistance grants, benefiting approximately 12,200 people. The remainder of this disaster season will likely be warmer and drier than average, with the Bureau of Meteorology advising that fewer than the average number of tropical cyclones are expected. Let's keep our fingers crossed on that one! We will keep a close watch and, as always, our brave and dedicated firefighters remain at the ready and able to respond.

School Infrastructure

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.44 am): Last week 856,500 Queensland students went back to school—the state's highest ever overall enrolment count. More than 1,500 of these, along with 300 staff, walked into their brand-new school for the first time.


To cater for our growing communities, we promised and delivered eight new schools for 2020. This is the highest number of new Queensland state schools to open on one day in more than 30 years. Those schools are: Yarrabilba State Secondary College; Foxwell State Secondary College at Coomera—which I will attend on Friday—Mango Hill State Secondary College; Ripley Valley State School; Ripley Valley State Secondary College; Lee Street State Special School at Caboolture; Calliope State High School in Central Queensland; and Fortitude Valley State Secondary College, which is the first school to be built in inner-city Brisbane in half a century and is the state's first vertical school. Mr Speaker, I am quite sure I am going to have a lot to say about that during the week.

Last Tuesday was an historic day and, along with the member for McConnel and education minister, Grace Grace, and principal Sharon Barker, it was an honour to welcome the 150 year 7 students, their parents and 30 teachers and staff at Fortitude Valley State Secondary College for the very first time. This is a \$100 million investment. It created 300 jobs, including 53 apprentices. Hutchinson Builders have done an amazing job.


We are not only building new schools as part of my government's \$1.3 billion Building Future Schools Fund but also building new halls, classrooms and infrastructure at our existing schools through our \$250 million 2020 Ready program. There are going to be a lot of openings this year right around the state. While we are delivering on our commitment to provide the best learning spaces for Queensland students, we are also creating jobs, with more than 2,000 jobs supported by the construction of those schools. We have also recruited more than 1,000 additional teachers who commenced this term as part of our commitment to employ more than 3,700 teachers over four years.

We are not stopping there. We have another five schools on track to open next year. It just keeps getting better. Today I can announce my government has awarded contracts to build a high school in Baringa, Caloundra South, a special school and primary school at Palmview and a primary school at Pimpama. Construction is already underway at a new vertical high school at Dutton Park. We will continue to invest in our students by investing in their education because that is what Labor governments do.

Currumbin By-Election

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.47 am): As I announced yesterday, following the receipt of the member for Currumbin's resignation letter, I will be recommending to the Governor that the writ be issued to hold the Currumbin by-election on the same day as the council elections on Saturday, 28 March 2020. The former member for Currumbin, Jann Stuckey, has served her electorate for 16 years. Being a member of parliament means that you give up a lot of things. You work tirelessly. It is not a nine-to-five job. You work weekends. You miss many family events. Mrs Stuckey has served her electorate for 16 years. I wish her and her family all the very best for her future.

Job Creation; Queensland Economy

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.47 am): Creating more jobs in more industries is the Palaszczuk Labor government's No. 1 priority. I am pleased to announce that the latest ABS labour market data for December 2019 showed Queensland's labour market remains strong.

Since the Palaszczuk government was elected in January 2015, a total of more than 235,000 jobs have been created in Queensland. That is around 4,000 jobs created every month on average, including 2,100 full-time jobs a month. In comparison, under the Liberal National Party government, an average of 240 full-time jobs were lost each and every month. It is not difficult to see why Queenslanders trust our government when it comes to job creation.

December marked the 39th consecutive quarter of jobs growth in Queensland. In the last year alone, 57,600 jobs have been created in Queensland, equating to an annual jobs growth of 2.3 per cent, which is stronger than the national rate. The government's economic plan and its focus on creating jobs across all of our regions has given Queenslanders the confidence to get back into the labour market.

Despite facing prolonged drought, the Darling Downs-Maranoa unemployment rate is now the lowest in Queensland at 3.4 per cent, down more than two per cent over the year. Cairns has recorded the strongest jobs growth in the state over the past year with 15,300 new jobs, and the region's unemployment rate is a healthy 4.8 per cent. These are positive results, but we know they occur against a backdrop of increasing uncertainty. While there has been promising rainfall in some parts of the state, we know that much of Queensland is still struggling through devastating drought and getting back on its feet after the bushfires. Now our tourism and export industries face upheaval as the movement restrictions necessary to contain coronavirus cut deeply into their customer base.


I also want to place on record my solidarity with the Queensland Chinese community and acknowledge the distress this outbreak has caused at a time when they should have been celebrating with family and friends the beginning of the auspicious Year of the Rat.

These conditions reinforce the importance of this government's commitment to build a diverse economy right across Queensland that supports ongoing well-paid, skilled and secure jobs across our regions and in traditional and emerging industries. As we start the new year I am mindful that we also start a new decade. Queensland in 2020 is vastly different to what it was one, two and three decades ago. Over the past three decades it has been Labor governments that have modernised and transformed the Queensland economy, and only Labor has a vision for the decades ahead.

Queensland's growth has outpaced the national average over the past three decades. Our economy turns over \$350 billion per year and has tripled in size since 1989. While Queensland's workforce has almost doubled since 1989, employment in professional and technical services, education and training and mining has roughly tripled. The healthcare workforce has almost quadrupled since 1989, reflecting our ageing population and the rise of complex health and disability needs. Since 1989, private sector investment in our state has grown by almost 180 per cent. The value of our merchandise exports has quadrupled since 1989 to more than \$85 billion and our export composition has changed dramatically.

These figures are not just economic measurements and statistics; they are the story of Queensland's economic growth and success writ large, a story which Labor has authored and achieved and which the Palaszczuk Labor government will continue to deliver on.

Coronavirus, Response

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.52 am): I want to start by thanking our health workers who have been on the front line of the response to the fast-spreading novel coronavirus outbreak: the nurses assessing people at our airports; the ambos transporting people to hospital; our GPs and emergency department staff seeing and testing people; our public health units and the team at the State Health Emergency Coordination Centre; the scientists in our labs who moved so quickly to develop testing capability and who are working around the clock to return tests; and of course our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, and our Queensland Health Director-General, Dr John Wakefield, who have led the Health response here and with their colleagues in other states and territories. Thank you for your calm and professional support for Queenslanders during this time of uncertainty.


The Palaszczuk government is making sure our frontline workers have what they need to keep Queenslanders safe. We still only have two confirmed cases, and those people are receiving the very best possible care at the Gold Coast University Hospital. I am pleased to report that contact tracing for anyone else on that same Tigerair flight TT566 from Melbourne has been completed, with all passengers reporting no symptoms to date. Certain passengers in close proximity to the pair have agreed to self-isolate for a period of 14 days as a precaution. Throughout the country Australia currently has 12 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus, and we are working closely with our state and federal colleagues to share information. Three have now been discharged from hospital in New South Wales. Fever clinics are either operating or ready to be stood up at very short notice at all of our major hospitals. This helps us separate patients who potentially have the virus and other patients presenting to emergency departments with other illnesses or injuries.

This is a new virus and we are doing everything we can to stop its spread. We also want to assure Queenslanders that it is safe to go about their daily lives. Since 22 January more than 471 patients have been tested for the disease in Queensland and more than 400 travellers have been assessed for coronavirus since screening started at Queensland's international airports on Sunday. They have been advised to self-isolate as a precaution. I am pleased to report that all tests returned yesterday were negative for the virus, but we need to do everything we can to keep it that way. That is why we are asking anyone who has travelled to mainland China in the last two weeks to self-isolate until they have returned without symptoms for 14 days. Anyone with any concerns should contact their GP or call 13HEALTH.

It is also why today we will introduce a bill to extend the official coronavirus health emergency order by three months. These laws will ensure health officials can protect Queenslanders from the spread of this new disease. As the Premier said, we have organised a briefing today for all MPs regarding the coronavirus response and these new laws.

I am also proud to say that Queensland expertise has been recognised with a Sunshine Coast doctor chosen to head up the team of medical experts treating Australians repatriated from Wuhan to quarantined accommodation on Christmas Island. Dr Dan Holmes from the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service will serve as a fine team leader of the AUSMAT mission heading up the specialist team drawn from across Australia. He has been one of our great responders when it comes to delivering medical care where it is needed most. His most recent mission was leading the AUSMAT team into the devastating measles epidemic in Samoa as well as previous health emergencies in the Philippines and Vanuatu.

Coronavirus, Tourism Industry

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Cooper—ALP) (Minister for Innovation and Tourism Industry Development and Minister for Cross River Rail) (9.56 am): As the Premier outlined this morning, our government understands that the coronavirus is a serious threat to Queensland's economy and in particular Queensland's tourism and international education industries. The Premier has written to the Prime Minister calling on him to action disaster relief funding to support tourism operators and local businesses that are already seeing thousands of cancellations due to the virus scare.

This is a national issue and Australia needs a consistent and strong national response, but in Queensland we are already taking action. To offset some of the impact, right now we have a multimillion dollar campaign encouraging Australians and Queenslanders to holiday at home. This

package is an immediate shot in the arm for tourism operators and specifically targets Sydney and Melbourne and the lucrative drive tourism sector for Queensland. Today I can advise that Tourism and Events Queensland has also boosted marketing in key international markets outside of China such as the US, UK, Europe, Japan and Korea.

Tourism and Events Queensland international officers are working around the clock to support our tourism industry overseas. In the last 12 months we have seen America reach new heights for us—a record \$422 million in the last 12 months. Right now I can report that Queensland is heavily involved in a Tourism Australia led trade mission to 11 cities across the US to promote new Chicago and San Francisco flights that kickstart directly into Queensland this month. In Germany, in conjunction with Singapore Airlines we are running a campaign to attract more visitors to Queensland, and right across Europe and the UK we are initiating direct-marketing campaigns with key distribution partners. Of course, not forgetting our cousins in New Zealand—our second-largest community outside of China—we have campaigns with the House of Travel, Flight Centre and Air New Zealand. In Japan we are undertaking 500 meetings with Japanese trade partners to promote our new Brisbane to Tokyo direct flights with Qantas and Virgin.

One thing we know that is great about being a Queenslander is that during tough times we stick together. We are also encouraging as many Queenslanders as possible to holiday at home because right now there is no better way to support Queensland. We will even organise a king-size bed for you on request!

Our government is proud that more Queenslanders are working in the tourism industry than ever before. We know that one in three jobs in the Whitsundays relies on tourism, as does one in five in Cairns and one in seven on the Gold Coast. It is the heartbeat of our communities. How we handle this crisis will have long-term ramifications for our economy.

I was deeply distressed to read in the *Australian* today reports of how Border Force has treated Chinese students arriving in Australia. Chinese students inject more than \$1 billion into Queensland's economy every year. We need to ensure that we are looking after our Chinese students, we are treating them with respect and we are protecting their welfare and safety throughout this time. I echo the calls of our industry for the acting immigration minister, Alan Tudge, to directly deal with these allegations of mistreatment and ensure that we are looking after the safety of these young Chinese students who have chosen to come and study here in our great country.

Shark Control Program, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park



Hon. ML FURNER (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.00 am): I am pleased to inform members that after months of painstaking negotiations—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Minister. Members to my left, the minister has the call.

Mr FURNER: After months of painstaking negotiations, we have reached an agreement with the federal government that will see shark control measures returned to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Palaszczuk government has no higher priority than ensuring the safety of human life. That is why we have always remained 100 per cent rock-solid behind the highly successful Queensland Shark Control Program in this state.

That is also why, in the face of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal decision that changed the very nature of the program in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, we removed our drum lines because it was not possible to meet the new permit conditions without the risk of serious injury or death of our staff and contractors. Since that time we have been consistent and we have been clear that we wanted shark control measures returned to our most popular beaches within the marine park as soon as possible.


In that time, we have seen ill-informed criticism from some quarters that has done nothing to keep swimmers safe, done nothing to contribute to a solution and risked damage to one of our most important industries—that being the tourism industry. Against this backdrop, we remained focused on the most important outcome—a safer environment for swimmers and visitors at our most popular beaches.

Under the agreement we have reached, we have an amended permit from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority that takes into account the health and safety of our staff and contractors. The federal government has also committed \$4 million towards transitioning our Shark Control Program within the marine park to a nonlethal program. That will include trials of SMART drumlines, rebates to councils to install swimmer safety netting, piloting drone surveillance and swimmer education. A further

\$1 million in funding will assist with shark management in the Whitsundays community where recent shark incidents have caused particular concern. This will include ongoing research, technological trials and increased signage and education of water users. I welcome this funding and I am pleased to report that discussions with the federal government about contributions to the expected continuing costs of these measures are ongoing.

We expect that drum lines will be returned to their previous locations within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in the next couple of weeks. The drum lines will be checked regularly. Non-target species will be released at the site of capture and target species will be released where it is safe to do so. We expect that relocating and releasing sharks will reduce the immediate risk to swimmers at that location, although it will not remove the risk entirely, making the other shark control measures under this agreement all the more important. This is a responsible outcome on this issue, a grown-up outcome, which is a lot more than can be said for those who have chosen to grandstand on this matter while people's lives were potentially at stake.

Weather Events, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning) (10.03 am): Today we recognise that it is now one year since Townsville, North Queensland and North-West Queensland endured the terrible consequences of an extraordinary monsoon trough flooding event. Thirty-nine of Queensland's 77 local government areas were directly impacted by last year's unprecedented rainfall and flooding which left billions of dollars of damage in its wake. It also marks one year since the Palaszczuk Labor government has been on the job supporting communities as they rebuild.


To date, more than \$380 million in joint Commonwealth-state Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements recovery and reconstruction works have been delivered. Some 6,420 kilometres of state roads were closed or had restricted access, with all of them now open, even as some repair works are continuing, but our recovery efforts focus on more than just reconstruction activities. We are helping individuals, businesses, industries and organisations get back on their feet.

The Queensland government negotiated a record \$242 million category C and category D extraordinary circumstances recovery package with the Commonwealth for impacted communities. This includes a \$100 million Betterment Fund, of which more than \$43 million has been approved for 13 projects across five local government areas to enable councils to rebuild infrastructure to a more resilient standard, saving time, money and potentially lives in the long run. More than \$2½ million has been allocated to improve damaged water and sewerage infrastructure in impacted communities to make them more resilient to future natural disasters. The category D package also includes a \$10 million economic recovery package, a \$5 million tourism package and a \$22 million beef industry recovery package after almost 500,000 cattle perished in the flooding and its aftermath.

The Queensland government acknowledges it is a long road to recovery for many communities, but as everyone in this chamber knows Queenslanders are the toughest and most resilient people in the nation. Officers from the Queensland Reconstruction Authority worked with the State Recovery Coordinator, retired Major General Stuart Smith, now chair of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, and the Deputy State Recovery Coordinator, Mark Plath, to develop the State Recovery Plan 2019-2021, which provides a roadmap to enable locally led recovery to ensure impacted regions fully recover. QRA's regional liaison officers have been on the ground providing funding support and advice to all 39 impacted local government areas, coordinating disaster recovery activities to help those communities recover and build their resilience to future events. The QRA will be back in North Queensland next week for the next round of reconstruction monitoring.

Impacted Queenslanders can rest assured we have a plan in place, as we always do after natural disasters. One year on from the event, the Palaszczuk government continues to support impacted communities because we are with them for the long haul.

Weather Events, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Minister for Disability Services and Seniors) (10.06 am): It is hard to believe a whole year has passed since floodwaters devastated large parts of my home city and other areas of North Queensland and North-West Queensland. I am proud of the Palaszczuk government's response, from the immediate event to the ongoing recovery and our commitment to stick with these communities until everyone is back on their feet. To date, my agency has administered support to more than 116,000 flood affected Queenslanders totalling almost \$34 million in financial assistance. This includes more than \$20.7 million in Emergency


Hardship Assistance grants, but we still have a long way to go. I visited many service providers during January to check in and find out what ongoing support they need. The message from all of them is that the need for ongoing support for people affected by the floods continues.

I heard from Ruth at Family Emergency Accommodation Townsville, which continues to make sure that people who lost their houses have stable, safe housing. Even now, organisations are discovering people who have tried to work it out themselves but remain in damaged, unsafe accommodation. When I met with Aaron and his team at the Townsville Community Legal Service, I heard how they have supported clients who need to take legal action for insurance or where there are issues with body corporate or builders, and every week there are still five or six new cases being referred to them. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government provided an additional \$150,000 to the Townsville Community Legal Service to continue to provide ongoing financial and advocacy support to flood affected residents up to June next year.

Tamara from the Salvation Army told me how people are still struggling to find the money to repair damage required before insurance companies will commence work and how the Salvos are working closely with other organisations and government agencies to find solutions. When I caught up with Sandra from the North Townsville Community Hub, she spoke about how many people continue to struggle to afford the basic necessities and the pressures of the early part of any new year after Christmas and the holidays, with back-to-school expenses and sports sign-ups just to mention a few. That is why I am pleased to announce today an additional \$7,000 in emergency relief for the North Townsville Community Hub to help families at this financially difficult time of year.

I have been humbled and moved by the response, recovery and resilience these communities have shown since the floods. There is still a way to go on the recovery journey but we have come a long way in 12 months. I look forward to continuing to update the House on the ongoing recovery efforts in Townsville and the rest of North and North-West Queensland.

Weather Events, Recovery Assistance

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.09 am): Twelve months ago communities in North and North-West Queensland were lashed by unprecedented rainfall and flooding. It saw hundreds of kilometres of roads damaged and never-before-seen flooding engulf the Mount Isa rail line. We know that when times get tough Queenslanders band together and get it done.


Queensland Rail workers worked more than 160,000 hours to repair more than 200 different sites while the Palaszczuk government's road crews rallied to repair critical roads and highways in the state's north and north-west and along the coast. As we enter 2020, parts of Queensland are once again experiencing heavy rainfall, especially over the next week or so. While this rain is certainly welcome and needed for our rural communities, it means our crews have again jumped to action and are in the field. With the current monsoonal trough expected to continue over coming weeks, the Palaszczuk Labor government's road and rail teams continue to work around the clock and remain ready to respond to any situation at hand.

It is not just flood damaged areas of our state where road and rail crews are focused. At Binna Burra in the Gold Coast hinterland the Palaszczuk government via Transport and Main Roads has been working night and day to repair local roads ravaged by bushfires late last year to restore access to the local businesses and the forests. They have built new safety barriers and rock protection measures, with works on track for completion in coming months to help local businesses get back online.

On the Cunningham Highway our workers have also put pedal to the metal to carry out emergency works at Cunninghams Gap. These crews have not just faced bushfires; they have also dealt with the subsequent impacts of heavy rainfall with no vegetation left to hold back many embankments. I am proud to say that our hardworking road repair men and women are on track to complete the first raft of emergency works within coming weeks.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all those who have worked to restore our roads and rail and who remain at the forefront of our recovery efforts. The Palaszczuk government is delivering a record \$23 billion for Queensland roads and transport. Importantly, we also remain ready to rally alongside our fellow Queenslanders to help communities recover and to get through tough times.

School Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (10.11 am): As the Premier stated earlier, last Tuesday was an historic occasion for the Queensland education system. Eight new schools located in rapidly growing parts of the state were opened for the

very first time. From the Foxwell State Secondary College on the Gold Coast to the brand-new Calliope State High School outside of Gladstone, more than 1,500 excited students attended their first day of school for 2020 at state-of-the-art, brand-new facilities.


I was fortunate to join the Premier at Fortitude Valley State Secondary College in my electorate where the inaugural students cut the ribbon to welcome the entire school community for the first time. The smiles on the faces of the new students as they entered this modern, technologically advanced facility were only matched by the beaming smiles of parents, staff and the leadership team headed by principal Sharon Barker. I know that the joy seen at the Valley school was mirrored seven times over at each of the new schools. I want to thank those members who were fortunate enough to attend and welcome students to these brand-new schools' first day. I congratulate all eight foundation principals, who have done a fantastic job in preparing the schools from the very beginning and taking the local community on the journey with them, ensuring their school has deep and longstanding ties with their local areas.

Not only does the Palaszczuk Labor government's incredible \$1.5 billion investment in education and infrastructure ensure our children get a great start in life; it also supports hundreds of jobs in the construction industry, including 1,450 jobs at our eight new schools alone. To ensure that this pipeline of construction jobs continues throughout 2020, we are building five more new schools in parts of Queensland to meet rapid growth demands. At the Inner City South Secondary College at Dutton Park work is progressing well, and the new vertical school is on track to open its doors in 2021. Today we announced the successful contractor, FKG Construction, for the new schools at Baringa near Caloundra South, Palmview on the Sunshine Coast and Pimpama on the Gold Coast.

I look forward to seeing these new schools rise from the dirt, just as those eight new schools did last year. I congratulate my department on a mighty job well done completing all schools on time and on budget. As a government we are so proud to have opened the most schools in one day in 30 years, including the first new school in the inner city in more than 50 years, ensuring Queensland children get a great start no matter where they live.

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Membership

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am), by leave, without notice: I move—


That, consequent to the resignation of the member for Currumbin, the member for Lockyer be appointed to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Reports

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (10.15 am): I table Ethics Committee report No. 195, titled *Report on a right of reply No. 40*, and report No. 196, titled *Report on a right of reply No. 41*. I commend the reports and the committee's recommendations to the House.


Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 195, 56th Parliament, February 2020—Report on a Right of Reply No. 40 [[148](#)].

Tabled paper: Ethics Committee: Report No. 196, 56th Parliament, February 2020—Report on a Right of Reply No. 41 [[149](#)].

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 11.15 am.

Murphy, Mr J

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (10.15 am): My first question is to the Premier. The Premier's new chief of staff, Jim Murphy, as Under Treasurer had oversight of the process that handed a company linked to the Premier's former chief of staff a quarter of a million dollar grant for a smartphone app. Why did the Premier appoint Jim Murphy as her chief of staff given this connection to this controversial grant, which is still being examined by the Crime and Corruption Commission?

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Just a reminder to members to my right, there will be no discussion or speaking during questions being asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. That is not true. Once again we see personal attacks which is all the LNP is good at—personal, nasty attacks. Let me say this: QIC operates separately. Let me say this about Mr Jim Murphy. He is a respected former public servant and I am absolutely honoured that he has accepted the position as my chief of staff.

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Schoolteachers

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My second question is also to the Premier. Given the Deputy Premier's unusual personal involvement in the appointment process for a principal in her electorate, a matter that is still before the Crime and Corruption Commission, and with other principals now appearing in political campaign videos with Labor MPs and Labor council candidates, can the Premier guarantee that her government has not compromised the independence of Queensland teachers?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. There is no compromise because we respect the principals in this state and the mighty job that they do.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: If members opposite want me to talk about education, I am more than happy to talk about education and the great work that our principals do. In fact, with eight new schools opening we have eight new principals. They want to make sure that our children get the very best start when it comes to education in our state. We know the LNP's track record when it comes to education and health in this state.

Ms Trad: For sale.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We know how much they cared about education. They had education land up for sale.

Ms Trad: Sack public servants.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They wanted to sack public servants. That is how much they cared about education in this state. Let me say this: I back our teachers, I back our principals, I back all of the workers—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I back all of the workers in our schools because it takes the whole school community to make a good school operate. Let me say it again: eight new schools have been delivered in 2020—

Mr Powell interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK:—and there are more to come because we back education in this state.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Glass House.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is what Labor governments do.

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

Ms PALASZCZUK: Under the LNP—you had the list; you had the long list and the 'for sale' sign. There is not a 'for sale' sign the LNP did not love. It came to our schools, it came to our ports and it also came to our electricity system.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana. Premier, I ask that you come back to the question as asked.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am absolutely proud of our record when it comes to education in this state. Let me say to those opposite: it is only going to get bigger and better each and every year.

Weather Events, Recovery Assistance

Mr STEWART: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on the recovery efforts following last year's devastating monsoonal events in the north and Far North?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Townsville for that question. I also pay tribute to and thank all of the Townsville MPs for their work, especially with the recovery efforts following the monsoon that went through Townsville one year ago. I also thank the members in the north-west. I know that many of the regional MPs also worked very hard when it came to dealing with the crisis of the cattle as a result of the north-west floods.

I am very proud that, one year on, although the road to recovery is long and hard, there has been substantial progress. We cannot say that everything has been completed, because we know that still some people are not back in their homes due to some insurance issues, but we will continue to work with those insurance companies and urge them to fast-track any work that is needed to get people back in their homes. We also know following on from the floods that schools were substantially damaged. The fact that students were able to attend alternative schools so quickly and then return to their school so quickly is a testament to the education department, especially with the school that had to close for a short period of time.

When I was in Townsville recently for the flag-raising ceremony, it was good to see all local MPs there for that very significant event. It was great to have that flag-raising ceremony in Townsville to start the year because it says that we acknowledge and appreciate the Townsville community as being a very large centre.

Mrs Frecklington: That is why I was there.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I acknowledge that the Leader of the Opposition turned up this year. Unfortunately, from memory, I do not think there was any representation from the LNP the year before.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I present the facts. I will continue to present the facts that contrast the LNP with the Labor government.

We know of the mighty effort in terms of transport—accelerating the rebuilding of that railway line and also building back more resilience. Of course, it is not a laughing matter. There is the mental health of many residents who were impacted. We need to ensure that we continue to provide assistance to them, because it had a detrimental impact on people. Having visited those communities firsthand, I know that many people will take a long time to recover. You cannot just make that recovery happen overnight.

I want to thank all of the agencies involved. Retired Major General Stuart Smith led the recovery effort. He went around and visited all of those communities—as did many of my ministers—to ensure they come back better and stronger. We can always do more—and we will—and we learn from each and every natural disaster. Let us hope that we do not have more this year.

(Time expired)

Murphy, Mr J

Mr MANDER: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer explain why just over a year ago Jim Murphy's employment contract as Under Treasurer was terminated, slugging taxpayers nearly \$300,000 in a termination payout? Will this money be refunded given his return to the government payroll as chief adviser to the Premier?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Everton for the question. As the Premier has already responded, the Queensland government is very privileged and honoured to have Mr Jim Murphy back working for us. At the time Mr Murphy chose to cease his employment in Queensland and go back to Sydney, where his family were living, to spend more time with them, that was made clear and public. As the Premier said, we now are very privileged and honoured to have Mr Murphy back.

Schools Infrastructure

Mr WHITING: My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier update the House on how Queensland's eight new schools, including Mango Hill State Secondary College, will cater for our growing communities and on how important investing in our education facilities is for our children's future?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Bancroft for that question. When I travel across the state, this is what Queenslanders talk to me about. They talk to me about education, health and jobs. They do not talk about personal attacks or about gutter politics. They talk about real issues that matter to real people and real families.

I can tell members in this House about the many delighted parents and students I met when I had the honour of going with the members for Bancroft and Murrumba to the brand-new Mango Hill State Secondary College. Hasn't education come a long way since we were at school, Mr Speaker? In the library there are not many books, but the iPads and the digital library are testament to the way in

which our education system is evolving. I was excited to see students, including two sets of twins—Elisha and Owen, and Lilly and Emma—and their parents at the school. Along with the Minister for Education, we were given a sneak preview of the \$64 million brand-new secondary college that we built. We even had the opportunity to speak to the apprentices and the workers. How proud they were of their work in delivering a world-class school here in Queensland! I commend them for their efforts, because when we build new schools we also support jobs in the local economy.

Calliope's new multimillion dollar high school in Central Queensland is opening. I look forward to visiting for its opening with the member for Gladstone. In opposition we campaigned to save that school. The land was up for sale.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The opposition does not like the facts, and that is a fact.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Who could forget the Fortitude Valley State School on which the LNP closed the doors and put up the big 'for sale' sign? The former president of the P&C, Michael, was there the other day. He almost had tears in his eyes, because he said to us that he put his trust in us and we delivered. We said that we would save that school and build a brand-new school, and that is exactly what my government delivered. It was a very proud moment for me to see those children walking into a brand-new school built by a Labor government.

Mr Janetzki interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is the first inner-city school built in 50 years—a \$100 million investment. It was a very proud day and one that those students will not forget for the rest of their lives.

Aurukun, Public Safety

Dr ROWAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier. While the Deputy Premier was recently skiing in Whistler, there was a riot in Aurukun following a fatal stabbing, causing hundreds of Queenslanders to flee from their homes. What warnings did the Deputy Premier receive about sly grogging in the weeks and months leading up to this public safety crisis from Minister Farmer, the member for Keppel and/or the director-general of the department for state development, who are the government's champions for Aurukun?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Moggill for the question. I place on record my sympathy to the community of Aurukun for the incredible distress that it has experienced since 1 January this year. It was a terrible event. I am conscious that there is still sorry business and that a funeral is still to occur in Aurukun. There are a number of people still displaced from that community in many other communities.

I want to place on record my thanks to the member for Cook for all of the work that she did over that period of time and so many other individuals right throughout the cape—from the mayors in Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw to Dion Creek from Coen to the mayor of Cairns. I want to acknowledge that I met with the mayor of Cairns and the member for Cairns and the member for Cook recently to talk about how we can support those Aurukun families who have been displaced and now reside in communities outside Aurukun.

Let me come back to the issue at hand, and that is in relation to sly grogging. This government has zero tolerance for sly grogging in dry communities. It is Labor governments that have in the past introduced alcohol management plans to make sure that the quantity and the strength of alcohol in communities are either non-existent so communities are dry or they are at a manageable level, and we have seen a turnaround because of those AMPs in a whole range of communities. We have seen school attendance increase. We have seen a reduction in violence, particularly in domestic and family violence. As I travel around communities we do know that sly grogging is a problem and we do know that illicit drugs are a problem. That is why this government has an agenda around tackling not only alcohol fuelled violence but also ice in regional communities right throughout Queensland, not just in Indigenous communities.

Let me place on record that I have had no briefings in relation to the escalation of the events on 1 January in Aurukun and no briefings in relation to sly grogging. I do note that the mayor of Aurukun had a community meeting in order to lift the alcohol management plan limits for an event and the

community wholesaley rejected that. That is where the community's position rested in relation to alcohol, but this government is resolute in relation to supporting those members in Aurukun and those members from Aurukun—

(Time expired)

Electricity Supply

Ms McMILLAN: My question is to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on Queensland's commitment to producing affordable, reliable, sustainable electricity and is she aware of any other approaches?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Mansfield for the question. It is a terrific question and of course it is very topical right now—probably a little less topical than the leadership spill in the National Party which is now done and dusted, and I want to congratulate Michael McCormack on his return to the leadership position of the National Party federally.

Ms Palaszczuk interjected.

Ms TRAD: He is quite pleasant; I take that interjection. He is actually quite pleasant to deal with, as the transport minister can attest. He is very professional and very nice to deal with.

The Queensland energy sector is the backbone of the national energy market. We are the backbone. We have the most efficient, youngest fleet of coal-fired power generators in the nation and our state is the only state to have accelerated the opening up of gas for domestic reserves. We are implementing more wind, solar and pumped hydro throughout Queensland, including through our government owned renewable energy company, CleanCo.

Late last week I was very interested in the announcement by the federal Liberal National Party government and the New South Wales Liberal National Party government around a significant \$1 billion grant to the New South Wales government to open up more gas and to put more renewables in its system. I note that, despite all of Queensland's hard work in this sector—I want to acknowledge the Minister for Energy and all of the great work that he has done in this space—despite Queensland having opened up gas reserves and now exporting more than Qatar and despite the fact that we are one of the national leaders in terms of renewable energy in that we are the only state to have established a publicly owned renewable energy company, we get not one single cent from the Commonwealth—not one single cent. New South Wales gets a billion dollar blank cheque and Queensland gets zero.

I wrote to the Prime Minister asking for our billion dollars. I wrote to the Prime Minister—and I table a copy of the letter I sent to the Prime Minister asking for the billion dollars—and I even identified where he could get that billion dollars from—a billion dollars from the underperforming NAIF.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 3 February 2020, from the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Hon. Jackie Trad, to the Prime Minister of Australia, Hon. Scott Morrison, regarding the allocation of funding in relation to working with the federal government towards reducing emissions, lowering energy prices and strengthening grid reliability [\[150\]](#).

We know how terrible NAIF has been for Northern Australia development. There is money lying there doing nothing. We only ask the same for Queensland as it was prepared to give to New South Wales—a billion dollars, most of which is grant money, given to us to further develop renewable energy in our state. We know that with this money we can get more power on the grid, cheaper prices and continue to drive down prices and grow jobs in regional Queensland. That is what we want—the same terms and conditions as New South Wales.

(Time expired)

State School Principals, Appointment Process

Mr BLEIJIE: My question is to the Deputy Premier. On 28 November last year the Deputy Premier told parliament that she had met with at least two candidates for the principal position of a new high school in her electorate but claimed that she had not interfered in the recruitment process. If that is the case, can the Deputy Premier outline what was discussed between herself and the two candidates and is she aware of any other MPs in this place meeting prospective principals during the application process?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for Kawana for the question. Before going to the substance of his question, I just want to make a minor correction to my earlier ministerial statement. I said '39 consecutive quarters of growth'; rather, it was 39 consecutive months of employment growth in Queensland—still a great story.

To return to the member for Kawana's question, I note that it was in fact the member for Kawana who announced through the media that he had referred this matter to the CCC. As is convention, we will allow the CCC to do its work.

Coronavirus, Response

Mr KING: My question is to the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning. Will the minister please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government is working to assist the Queensland community to address the impacts of coronavirus and is he aware of any other approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Kurwongbah for his question and his interest in ensuring that Queensland contains and responds effectively to the challenge of coronavirus. Our government is taking every possible action and precaution to prevent the further spread of coronavirus, and in that regard the Premier has led from the front, convening the cabinet and coordinating key and leading officials across the Queensland public sector to ensure a coordinated and rapid response to the situation. On Sunday the Premier wrote to the Prime Minister asking that the outbreak be recognised as a natural disaster under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. This is a critically important step that is required.

DRFA is an agreement between federal, state and territory governments to ensure all governments share the load when it comes to responding to major disasters that strike our nation. Queensland is now faced with growing costs. Our agencies will be faced with significant additional costs associated with the collection, transportation, accommodation, treatment, repatriation and overall management of persons identified to be at risk of carrying the illness and there will be significant impacts to the state's economy. The Premier is convening a business and industry forum to hear from key stakeholders about the impacts on the economy, particularly in our major tourism areas. Our community will of course come through this. We face many disasters in Queensland and we always come through them, but we need DRFA to be extended. We need it to be extended to ensure that state agencies and local government authorities get the support they need from the Commonwealth.

The Prime Minister should act immediately to update the DRFA to ensure that this international health emergency, as it has been described and declared by the World Health Organization, is considered a disaster for the purposes of DRFA. Today we read that last night the Prime Minister was busy hosting drinks. He was hosting drinks for Bridget McKenzie and Michael McCormack. Our message to the Prime Minister is this: stop the party, pick up the pen and approve the extension of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements for Queensland. To members of the federal government we say this: stop arguing with yourselves, stop worrying about your jobs and your positions and focus your attention on what our state and nation needs because our nation is facing a real and continuing crisis. I urge the Prime Minister to agree immediately to our Premier's request and include the coronavirus public health emergency under DRFA requirements.

Murphy, Mr J

Mr POWELL: My question without notice is to the Premier. The Deputy Premier has just told the House that Jim Murphy resigned as Under Treasurer of his own accord to move to Sydney. Will the Premier explain why Jim Murphy received a mere \$300,000 termination payout when, according to the Deputy Premier, he resigned on his own terms and was not terminated?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. The payout was in terms of the contract.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the Premier had ceased her contribution. There is not another opportunity to re-prosecute that unless you wish to make that the subject of the next question asked by the opposition.

Electoral Donations

Mr POWER: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice.

Government members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my right, I ask for silence during questions being asked. That goes for all members. Member for Logan, please restart your question.

Mr POWER: My question is for the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice. Will the Attorney-General update the House on the ECQ's real-time disclosure system, the community outreach programs and any other developments in other jurisdictions?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Logan for his question. As we know, the Electoral Commission of Queensland plays a very important role in our state's democratic system. This year is a very big year. I acknowledge the tireless work of our commissioner and Electoral Commission staff in planning for the local government elections in March, the state general election in October and now also a by-election in Currumbin. I acknowledge the work that the ECQ does in maintaining the real-time disclosure system, but also the work they are doing in outreach and education in our community. They have recently released a Guide to Democracy program to help kids better understand our democratic system and the nuances of elections and how the system works. I think that guide might be helpful for some others, not just our school kids.

It will be important to look very closely at the real-time disclosure system, which the Palaszczuk government brought in, to ensure that everyone is being transparent around their donations. Recent reports have shown that Clive Palmer spent more than \$80 million in the federal election which came from his own corporate entities. At last count over \$15 million in the last week of the federal election alone. More recently we have seen him splashing around big donations—a \$400,000 donation—to a single candidate in the local government election. There is also a very close relationship between Clive Palmer and the LNP. In fact, during the federal election Clive Palmer funded a social media ad for the federal LNP candidate in Lilley. He is already providing money to the LNP to support their campaigns. Now we have the LNP president on the payroll of Clive Palmer.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders. Member for Broadwater, you are warned under the standing orders—both for continual interjection.

Mrs D'ATH: We have already heard the member for Maroochydore, who is standing up for her community, state that the two roles are not compatible: president of the LNP and on the payroll at Coolum resort for Clive Palmer. The question is: what is the view of the Leader of the Opposition? That \$80 million did not go to the workers of Queensland Nickel to repay them and it did not go to the workers at Coolum resort or the community to rebuild that resort and support jobs. The voters said they did not want a LNP-One Nation coalition last election. The question is do they want a LNP-One Nation-Clive Palmer coalition after the next election.

(Time expired)

Opposition members interjected.

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

Gas Industry, Royalties

Mr LAST: My question is to the Treasurer. I refer to the Treasurer's decision to outsource her job to Labor mate Jay Weatherill to conduct a review into gas royalties after the Palaszczuk government jacked up royalties by 25 per cent without consultation. Will the Treasurer table the Weatherill report and explain why taxpayers were slugged \$100,000 for a Labor mate to do her job?

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for his question, although I completely reject the imputation within that question. When I sat down with representatives from the gas industry last year to nut out how we would conduct the review—

Mr Mander: After the announcement.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Everton, you have been previously cautioned. You are warned under the standing orders. As I hear it, the Deputy Premier is being responsive to the question asked.

Ms TRAD: I will take that interjection, because it was not after the announcement. When we sat down with the industry they proposed that I replicate the model that we had pursued during the mining rehabilitation legislation consultation process where there was a dedicated person who was working day in, day out to achieve technical compromises to the legislation that we had put forward to industry. They said it was a very good process and I suggest that those opposite should go back and have a look at the comments put on the public record by members of the QRC and by members of the mining industry around the process that we undertook around consultation for the mining rehabilitation and financial assurance process. They requested of me a similar process. Names were provided backwards and forwards and they were very pleased with the suggestion of Mr Weatherill.

An opposition member: I bet he was, too!

Ms TRAD: I am pretty sure that Peter Costello was very happy with the call-up by the member for Clayfield when he was Treasurer to come to Queensland and prepare a hit list of assets to sell. I am pretty sure those opposite did not have a problem then. It is the case that Mr Weatherill has been a member of the Labor Party and a leader in South Australia who has presided over a significant increase in resources.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left, the Deputy Premier is being responsive to the question asked. I ask you to hear the answer.

Ms TRAD: The members of the gas industry who have been part of the consultation process have been very glowing of Mr Weatherill's involvement and his leadership around this. I want to place on record my thanks to Mr Weatherill for his fantastic contribution. The gas royalty review report will be made public in due course.

Coronavirus, Tourism Industry

Mr HEALY: 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 impact of coronavirus on Queensland's tourism industry?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for the question. Can I use this opportunity in the House to acknowledge the great work of the member for Cairns since not only before the coronavirus hit but also on the back of the devastating bushfires that, whilst they have been in southern states, have had repercussions for the tourism industry across the country, including his home town of Cairns. The member for Cairns likes a yarn at the best of times, but my phone has been ringing hot by the member for Cairns and I want to thank him and the member for Barron River for their representation on behalf of their communities.

The honourable member is absolutely right. We are under no illusions about the impact this will have on our industry. The federal Treasurer has said he expects around a \$13 billion hit to Australia's economy. We know that will hit hardest in communities like Cairns and the Gold Coast. Sixty-five per cent of Chinese tourists come through Cairns in group bookings. All of that has been cancelled. We have been working around the clock with our tourism industry. Next week I will be in Cairns again and will meet with industry. As the Premier has announced today, tomorrow we have a joint meeting with industry groups to talk about recovery. We need a national approach when it comes to the recovery of Australia's economy.

This is something that will be felt for months and I will continue to work with all industry representatives to do that. One of the things that we have felt immediately has been bed cancellations in Queensland. Accommodation providers are seeing bed cancellations in hotels right across our state. That is why our message, which we have already gone live with, is that the best thing you can do for Queensland right now is to stay. Stay here in Queensland! That is what we are saying, not only to Queenslanders but to all Australians. We are telling them to have a vacay here in Queensland.

I say this to the member for Mermaid Beach: when you send out your next invitation for a holiday that you are dressing up as work, why don't you do it on the Gold Coast? Why not stay here in Queensland? I call on the LNP, all those opposite, Captain Snooze over there—

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Minister, I ask you to please put your comments through the chair and address members by their correct titles.

Ms JONES: I say to the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP that, if you are going to have a junket, have it here in Queensland. Guess what we have in Queensland? The hotels in Cairns have king-size beds! We have seen a king-size rort. If you want to support the tourism industry, stay in a king-size bed in Queensland. That is not a lot to ask. And maybe pay for it yourself, instead of slugging taxpayers.

Mr SPEAKER: Before calling the next questioner, I send a general reminder to all members that comments will come through the chair. There are reasons that is to occur and they have become very evident.

Ingham, Flying Foxes

Mr DAMETTO: My question is to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts. Residents of Ingham do not intend to live with flying foxes. On 21 January 2020, a Department of Environment and Science spokesman stated to the *Herbert River*

Express that DES would provide technical and financial support to the Hinchinbrook Shire Council to investigate roost relocation. Will the minister inform the House if those funds will be made available through the \$2.7 million package to improve the management of urban flying fox roosts and when?

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, your question is bordering on having a lengthy preamble. The question will be ruled in order.

Ms ENOCH: I thank the member for the question. Of course, the Department of Environment and Science has been working very closely with the council on this. They have made it very clear that they are providing technical and financial support. That is still being negotiated. I am happy to have some conversations outside of this place with regard to any further details. Right now we have a system in which the former LNP government made amendments to the flying fox management framework and, as a result, a council has as-of-right authority under legislation to disperse flying fox roosts if it chooses to do so. Of course, sometimes we do see these unexpected influxes of flying foxes.

I want to congratulate the school and the Department of Education in terms of the work that they have been doing with the Department of Environment and Science to work through these very local issues and, in particular, what it means for schoolyards. We are ensuring that the school community understands the kinds of actions they need to be taking to ensure that schoolchildren do not touch the animals et cetera. Certainly the department continues to be committed to working with the council on this. We have committed to other councils where we have seen these influxes and we will do that in Ingham, as well.

TAFE

Ms SCANLON: My question is of the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development. Will the minister outline how the Palaszczuk government is investing in TAFE and is the minister aware of any alternative approaches?

Ms FENTIMAN: I thank the member for the question. I know that the member for Gaven is a huge supporter of TAFE on the Gold Coast and a huge supporter of our policies to help get more Queenslanders, particularly young Queenslanders, into training to get them the skills they need for the jobs of the future. The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to making sure that Queenslanders get the opportunities they need to get the skills they need to build their dream career. That means we are unashamedly supporting TAFE.

This is not just about making sure that Queenslanders can afford to get a first-class TAFE qualification; it is also about investing in our wonderful TAFE facilities, because Queenslanders deserve world-class training facilities. That is why we are investing \$105 million to revitalise our TAFE campuses. That is on top of free TAFE for year 12 graduates, and free apprenticeships and free traineeships for Queenslanders aged under 21.

Labor backs TAFE and we are absolutely proud of rescuing and supporting TAFE. Before the LNP came to power, TAFE Queensland delivered training to nearly 200,000 Queenslanders every year. However, under the LNP, with the member for Nanango right beside Campbell Newman, they went about absolutely gutting TAFE. They slashed \$170 million from the TAFE budget. More than 2,000 TAFE teachers were sacked. Tens of thousands of Queenslanders could not get a TAFE qualification. The LNP simply priced out Queenslanders from being able to go to TAFE.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am sorry, Minister, but please resume your seat. Member for Southport, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked you repeatedly to cease your interjections.

Ms FENTIMAN: Many Queenslanders, particularly young Queenslanders from regional Queensland, had nowhere else to go after the LNP proposed selling off TAFE campuses. Thirteen campuses were earmarked to be sold off. Twelve more campuses were earmarked to be merged. It was not just slashing TAFE funding. It was not just selling TAFE campuses. At the last election, they also planned to slash \$42 million from Skilling Queenslanders for Work.

What have we heard from the shadow minister for training? Has she been out there standing up against the Leader of the Opposition and their terrible TAFE policies? We have heard nothing! However, she has decided to stand up to the Leader of the Opposition about the LNP's president now working for Clive Palmer. It seems that the member for Maroochydore has a backbone, which is more than we can say for the member for Nanango, but won't she stand up for young Queenslanders to get access—

(Time expired)

Seqwater and Sunwater, Class Action Appeal

Mr JANETZKI: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Why is the Treasurer extending the misery and uncertainty of 2011 flood victims by not issuing a direction to Seqwater and Sunwater, government companies under the Treasurer's ministerial control, ordering them not to appeal the flood victims' class action ruling?

Mr Ryan interjected.

Ms TRAD: I thank the member for the question and I take the interjection from the Minister for Police. The member for Toowoomba South is, in fact, a lawyer and should understand that, as government owned corporations, those entities have insurance policies. Their insurers expect those policies, which are enshrined in contracts between the insurance companies and the government owned corporations, to be abided by. In relation to that matter, I direct the member who asked the question to the fundamentals of contractual law, which come to play in this matter.

I will be abundantly clear: the Palaszczuk Labor government has made it very clear that we will not be participating in an appeal. We understand how profoundly people's lives were impacted for a whole range of reasons, including the most extreme where loved ones were lost during that event. We are incredibly aware of the devastation that the event cost Queenslanders and we have determined absolutely not to join any appeal proceedings.

We have written to our government owned corporations and made clear the government's views in relation to this. It is now up to these GOCs to engage with their insurers around the best possible outcome. We maintain that, first and foremost, the interests of those Queenslanders who have been devastatingly impacted by this huge event are put front and centre with regard to any considerations going forward. That is what the Palaszczuk Labor government has done and that is what we expect others to do.

Infrastructure Projects, Apprentices

Mrs LAUGA: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister update the House on the opportunities offered to apprentices and young workers to develop careers building our state's major infrastructure?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. She is a very strong advocate for apprentices and roads in her electorate. This government has record investment of \$23 billion in road and rail infrastructure across Queensland. We have seen a record four out of five infrastructure budgets. We are seeing the largest ever rollout of roads in Queensland in 2020.

We are seeing investment in young workers and graduates as part of that commitment so that they learn new skills, develop their careers, get a job and have a chance to work close to where they live. Right now apprentices and graduates are working on the two M1 upgrades—one at the merge with the Gateway and one on the Gold Coast; the Ipswich Motorway upgrade; the Mackay Ring Road, in the member for Mackay's area; the Rockhampton northern access upgrade; the Warrego Highway upgrade; and the major Bruce Highway upgrades on the Sunshine Coast, around Townsville and south of Cairns. These projects employ thousands of Queenslanders. Our commitment to rail jobs in Maryborough is resolute with 12 apprentices working on the NGR rectification program there.

We believe in Queensland workers and Queensland jobs on our roads and on our rail infrastructure. The next generation of road builders are our apprentices in RoadTek. They are installing and maintaining new road technologies as technology changes. They are a very important part of this state. Those young apprentices will feel confident in the Palaszczuk Labor government's investment in them as opposed to the \$600 million in cuts by those opposite—the cuts to RoadTek and the cuts to TMR. There is not a single new dollar for the M1.

Those opposite are very flat today. They are as flat as some of our roads. There are also apprentices at theme parks in Queensland. Perhaps opposition members would prefer to spend their money in Queensland for the benefit of Queensland workers rather than go to Luna Park in New South Wales. Instead of taking Queenslanders for a ride and instead of taking rides at Luna Park, why do they not support Moreton Island or Green Island and not Coney Island? Why do they not go out and support Straddie instead of Sydney? Why do they not stop taking rides at Luna Park and stop taking Queenslanders for ride as well?

We support Queenslanders travelling around this state efficiently. That is what we do. We do not support members of the Queensland LNP using their allowances to travel interstate to go to Luna Park—living it up on the taxpayer dime. That is their priorities. We will get on with upgrading the M1. We

will get on with upgrading the Bruce Highway. We will get on with upgrading the road and rail infrastructure in this state. The priorities are very clear: we are for Queenslanders and they are for New South Wales.

(Time expired)

Shark Control Program

Mr PERRETT: My question without notice is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries. The minister attacked SMART drumlines saying they would not work, they would put swimmers at greater risk, they were too expensive and wildly suggested fisheries officers could be bitten by sharks. Given the fisheries minister has been embarrassingly overruled and the government has adopted the LNP plan for SMART drumlines and drones, will the minister explain how he got it so wrong and opposed our sensible measures to keep swimmers safe?

Mr FURNER: I thank the member for his question. For the benefit of those opposite, I will go back to how this all unfolded. If they recall, it was a decision of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. It was a Federal Court decision that amended the permit for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park—a federal government permit for the state government to operate the Shark Control Program in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

It would have been of benefit to the member for Gympie or anyone opposite to get a briefing on this so they have a better understanding of this and not come in here and embarrass themselves about how this program operates.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left.

Mr FURNER: Let us reflect again on 18 September last year when the Administrative Appeals Tribunal handed down that decision. Since that time we have been working with the federal government to have them amend the permit that is applicable to the operation of the Shark Control Program within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

There are members opposite and sometimes those in federal parliament who are either naive or have no idea or are clueless about how the Shark Control Program operates. I have been fortunate enough to have had many occasions on the water with these brave contractors, both men and women, who work within the Shark Control Program and I have seen how they use the equipment. We took a decision, subject to what was handed down in the Federal Court, that the current permit was not applicable and could not be used safely by those contractors. That is one of the reasons the negotiations and discussions with the federal government took some time.

Our priority is human life; it is paramount. We will always take that position. That is why the program has been strong since 1962. There have been no recorded fatalities in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and only one outside that area. We will continue protecting our valuable tourism industry. We will continue protecting our swimmers who frequent our beaches, whether they be within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park or outside the GBR. We will not adopt the LNP's policy of implementing SMART drumlines in areas like Surfers Paradise and other areas on the Gold Coast. If their policy is to put SMART drumlines in then go ahead and do that. If you want to put tourism and our valuable tourism dollars that come to our state at risk then go ahead with your not smart program.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, I remind you to put your comments through the chair. I remind members who are on warnings that there are to be no interjections otherwise you will find yourselves being removed from the chamber.

Medical Research

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister update the House on what the government is doing to support medical research for Queensland kids?

Dr MILES: It is indeed a good question from the member for Greenslopes. I know that he is personally very interested in health care in Queensland and in medical research, particularly where we can take better care of sick children. I am pleased to advise the House that this week the Queensland Children's Hospital will host its first national scientific symposium to showcase Queensland research into managing children with rare neurodevelopmental disorders.

The symposium will run over two days and has attracted more than 130 doctors and researchers from across the country. It will highlight the progress of groundbreaking Queensland research in improving the care and health outcomes for children and young people with neurodevelopmental disorders such as epilepsy, autism and rare genetic disorders. It has been made possible by the Palaszczuk government's investment of \$3.6 million. The Centre for Clinical Trials in Rare Neurodevelopmental Disorders is located at the Queensland Children's Hospital and, I am proud to say, is the only one of its kind in Australia. While these disorders are individually rare, together they form a significant proportion of neurodisability in children across the country.

Since the centre's inception three years ago, Queensland researchers have completed more than 10 clinical trials for children with rare neurodevelopmental disorders, and there are more underway. Current treatment approaches focus on helping to reduce symptoms. However, discussions are currently underway around the feasibility of expanding this to include curative gene therapy trials later this year with researchers from the United States.

This is exciting news and puts Queensland at the forefront of world-leading paediatric research. In a very short space of time the Queensland Children's Hospital has established itself as a favoured destination for research into paediatric neurodevelopmental disorders both here and overseas, attracting the world's best researchers here to Brisbane where they can take care of Queensland children.

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of the team and the support of this state government, a solid foundation has been created in Queensland for future clinical trials. I congratulate them on their work and the inaugural symposium and thank them for the difference they are making to the lives of children and their families in Queensland, across Australia and the world.

Water Security

Ms BATES: My question is to the Premier. Given the ongoing concerns about water security and the failure of the Palaszczuk Labor government to build and upgrade dams, will the Premier rule out requiring South-East Queensland residents to drink recycled sewage?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for the question. I reject some of the assumptions in it. From memory, we have spent—

Mr Lister: From memory, you haven't stumped up for Emu Swamp Dam yet.

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat, Premier. Member for Southern Downs, welcome to 2020. You are warned under the standing orders.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Let us talk about that interjection. It is the Palaszczuk government that is actually looking at drought proofing and providing water to Stanthorpe. It appears that those opposite have forgotten that.

Mr Lister interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Southern Downs, you were just warned. You are interjecting. You can leave the chamber for one hour. That did not take long.

Whereupon the honourable member for Southern Downs withdrew from the chamber at 11.11 am.

Ms PALASZCZUK: He is no Lawrence Springborg. I will say that.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Sorry, he was the leader of the opposition once.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The Premier has the call.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Mudgeeraba, I had not even taken my seat. You are warned under the standing orders. Members, there is three minutes of question time left. I ask that you listen with respect.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I was in Warwick and of course I have been in Toowoomba. I have met with both mayors to discuss the extension of the South-East Queensland pipeline from Toowoomba to Warwick because I believe that the people of Warwick need some certainty in relation to—

Mr McArdle: Sounds like Traveston.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No. It is a pipeline. It goes from Toowoomba to Warwick. I just want to make sure—it is a pipeline. Please do some homework.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

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

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, you are warned under the standing orders. When I call the House to order I expect that the House will come to order and not simply wait for a break in conversation to make an interjection.

Ms PALASZCZUK: We are also providing \$225 million for water security in Townsville. In total I think about \$700 million or \$800 million has been allocated this year in relation to either upgrading dams or providing water security across Queensland. Of course we also have the Tugun desalination plant in operation which is helping.

We know that the monsoon period has been late. The monsoon period is upon us now. We are not even at the stage of severe water restrictions in relation to South-East Queensland's water supply. In fact, the bureau has been predicting that there will be another week of rain. At the end of March or April we will look at the capacity of the South-East Queensland water grid. By all accounts we will not need to move to any water restrictions. Of course we will monitor that, as good governments do.

It was also a former Labor government that droughtproofed South-East Queensland. The governments that build the infrastructure in this state are Labor governments. We build the schools, we build the hospitals and we build the dams that are needed and the water infrastructure—

Ms Jones: And the roads.

Ms PALASZCZUK: And the roads; that is right—and of course the pipeline out to Warwick.

(Time expired)

Mr SPEAKER: The period for question time has expired.

MOTION

Business Program



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

1. That the following government business will be considered this sitting week, with the nominated maximum periods of time as specified:
 - (a) the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill, a maximum of 4.5 hours to complete all stages;
 - (b) the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill a maximum of three hours to complete all stages;
 - (c) the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill a maximum of three hours to complete all stages; and
2. The following time limits for the bills listed in 1 apply:
 - (a) consideration in detail to be completed by three minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours;
 - (b) question on third reading to be put by two minutes before the expiry of the maximum hours; and
 - (c) question on long title to be put by one minute before the expiry of the maximum hours.
3. If the nominated stage of each bill has not been completed by the allocated time specified in 2, or by 5.55 pm on Thursday, 6 February 2020, Mr Speaker:
 - (a) shall call on a minister to table any explanatory notes to their circulated amendments, any statement of compatibility with human rights or any statement relating to an override declaration;
 - (b) shall put all remaining questions necessary to either pass that stage or pass the bill or motion without further debate;
 - (c) may interrupt non-specified business or debate on a bill or motion to complete the requirements of the motion; and
 - (d) will complete all stages required by this motion, notwithstanding anything contained in standing and sessional orders.

In moving this motion, I want to take the opportunity to welcome all members back to the House for 2020, a year which I am sure will be a very busy one, particularly for the Palaszczuk government as we continue to deliver for the people of Queensland.


The motion which has been circulated speaks for itself. The intention is to debate three bills this week with times allotted for the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill, the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill and the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The government has listened to the views of the opposition and the crossbench in drafting this motion. I thank the members of the Business Committee for their constructive discussions last evening at the meeting.

While I am on my feet I would like to update the House on some interesting statistics of the work of the House for 2019. I have been advised that in 2019 on the government bills approximately 964 individual contributions were made—46.6 per cent were government members and 58.4 per cent were non-government members. This is very similar to 2018.

I have also been advised that, compared to the previous parliament, to date, on a review of *Hansard*, on average the second reading length is up one hour and 16 minutes—in other words, we are having more debate on the second reading. On average the time taken in consideration in detail is up eight minutes and the average number of speakers is up approximately 12 members. In summary, more time is being spent debating legislation in this House and more members are making a contribution. In short, this proves that the system is working, that the business model is working. We are getting legislation debated and passed in this House so that new laws are implemented and making a difference for all people in Queensland.

I have no doubt that we will hear from the opposition in a moment who I note continue their opposition to the business program. We hear time and time again the rhetoric of members being guillotined and not being given a right to speak, having their democracy taken away from them. The fact is that that is just not true. Members are getting to speak on bills. Contributions are being heard. They are being recorded. The people of Queensland are seeing work being done in this parliament, as it should be. I thank members for their ongoing contributions to these important debates.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Members, before I call the member for Kawana, the following members have been issued a warning. They are the members for Glass House, Toowoomba North, Broadwater, Toowoomba South, Everton, Southport, Mudgeeraba, Kawana and Coomera.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.18 am): I say to the Leader of the House: never assume that I will always object to this motion. There may come a day when I surprise the Leader of the House and support her on this motion, but today is not that day. For very serious reasons, I and the Liberal National Party opposition will be objecting to this motion because it is anti democratic, it takes away the rights and liberties of members in this House, and it denies Queenslanders an opportunity to have their say through their hardworking member of parliament, as we see week in, week out.

The Leader of the House says that we always go on about people being guillotined, but it happened last sitting week during the debate on the health bill when none other than my good friend, the member for Hervey Bay, was guillotined in the middle of his contribution. As everyone in this House knows, never knowing what the member for Hervey Bay is about to say I was looking forward to the rest of his contribution, as I do on every occasion the member for Hervey Bay makes a speech in this House. The speaking list shows that the member for Hervey Bay was guillotined whilst he was on his feet speaking. I note it is two-sided and that Labor members who were scheduled to speak also lost the opportunity. In fact, I do not think the minister even had an opportunity to sum up the debate because he was guillotined on his own motion. I table a copy of the speaking list.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, speaking list titled 'Health Bill' [[151](#)].

We then had the holidays bill, which was rushed in because Minister Grace had to do some union's bidding and amend it. As we have seen time and time again, to keep the shoppies' union happy the minister has to amend the holidays bill before Christmas and Easter to create more public holidays. We can see that lots of members were not given an opportunity to speak on the holidays bill. I table a copy of that speaking list, which shows that 10 to 12 members were not given the opportunity to speak on that bill.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, speaking list titled 'Holidays Bill' [[152](#)].


Worse still, during question time today the health minister's chief of staff told the opposition office that the minister will introduce a bill dealing with coronavirus today, and it is going to be declared urgent and it has to be debated and passed by Thursday. Guess what? It is not even in the business committee motion we are debating. The Business Committee held a meeting yesterday.

Mr Mander: It was in the *Courier-Mail* this morning.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition: it was in the *Courier-Mail*. The health minister sits on the Business Committee. We talked about the issues of the week. He would have known that he was going to move a bill that he would have had drafted, and he did not have the decency and courtesy to tell the meeting that he planned to introduce a bill, to have it declared urgent and have it passed by Thursday. He sat there in silence. We know the arrogance of the health minister; he cannot even look up now as we are speaking about him. Oh, now he does.

Let him get up and explain why the business committee motion we are debating today does not mention his bill. Did he know about the bill yesterday when he was sitting in the Business Committee meeting? I suggest he did. In fact, I bet it had been to cabinet, it had been approved, and he sat there silently scribbling and squirming like he always does and he did not have the decency to tell the crossbench and the opposition that they are going to move a bill. Why didn't they put it in the business committee motion? This is why I always say that the Business Committee is an absolute joke, because the government will just amend the agenda on the day as they see fit.

The health minister is essentially going to vote on a proposition this week that does not include his bill. Is he saying that he does not want to do his bill this week? That is not what his chief of staff is telling the opposition office. If he wants to debate his bill this week, why aren't we debating the times now in the business committee motion? It will be a waste of another opportunity later. When he introduces his bill he will have to move a motion declaring it urgent because he cannot manage his own portfolio. This is why this government has to be changed. This is why in October 2020 the good people of Queensland are going to get rid of Anastacia Palaszczuk's government and have a proper government that will govern in the interests of all Queenslanders.


 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (11.24 am): If Queenslanders ever needed to be reminded of the arrogance of those opposite and how their votes are taken for granted they should listen to the member for Kawana. He has already appointed the member for Nanango premier nine months before Queenslanders even get to have a say. I hope the Clerk puts aside money for bigger beds, because if that is ever the case we will need to make sure there are king-size beds all around.

Of course I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the House. The member for Kawana does not need to worry: we are not expecting any surprises from him anytime soon, just as we have not seen any surprises from those opposite on the first day back to parliament in 2020. They have nothing more than the same old personal attacks. They have no plans: nothing other than negative, sniping personal attacks. That is all we have seen this morning, and that is because we never see surprises from the LNP and we do not expect any further from you, member for Kawana. But if there was something that was a bit surprising it was that we did not get any questions about Currumbin. That by-election campaign has already thrown up a few surprises. LNP branch members were a bit surprised that the candidate had been selected. They were a bit surprised they had not met her before. They were a bit surprised she had not been to a branch meeting yet.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Minister for Health, I ask you to come back to the business motion, please.

Dr MILES: I am responding to claims made by the member for Kawana. The member for Kawana also raised questions about the lengths our government is going to to ensure that our health officers—particularly the Chief Health Officer—have the powers they need to respond to the current novel coronavirus public health emergency. This situation has evolved rapidly over the last week, and we are constantly receiving advice all day and all night about how we can best respond to this situation. We make no apologies to those opposite or the member for Kawana that, as soon as the advice was available, we could and should pass laws through this House. That is why this morning I offered a briefing to all MPs on both sides of the House about the current situation and about why those laws are important. If the member for Kawana avails himself of that briefing I am sure that, with the interests of his constituents at heart, he will understand the urgency of that bill and support it. At least, I hope so.

The Leader of the House has already outlined how business motions have delivered very efficient procedures for debates in this chamber over recent years and will continue to do so. I welcome the opportunity to support the motion.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.28 am): I rise to speak on the business program motion. As we start a new year, the final year of this parliament, it is worth going back and revisiting why we are even having this debate, which we have in every parliament. When the Palaszczuk government was re-elected on this occasion, they did not have to worry about a hung parliament. They did not have to worry about the support of the then Independent member for Nicklin. Because of that, all appearance of democracy was thrown out the window. Because they no longer needed the support of the member for Nicklin they introduced a number of different procedural changes which I think decrease the democratic process.

I will outline some of those things. What has happened now is that the hours of the day have been truncated for the first time in living memory—probably ever—in this parliament. This happened under the guise of being family friendly hours, when we all know on this side of the House that they are

not family friendly for those people who need to travel from the country and need to now come down a day early rather than being able to travel down on Monday morning. That was the first thing they changed.

The second thing they changed was they removed the ability for the opposition to have private members' statements before question time. That was a great opportunity to air the issues of the day and allow members to talk about those issues that were worrying Queenslanders. I thought it added incredibly to the democratic processes that we had in this parliament.

Then there is the substance of this business program debate that we have every week, which is about limiting the amount of time that members have to discuss the bills of the day. As the Leader of Opposition Business has already said, what the Attorney-General said is blatantly wrong. People are guillotined, sometimes mid-sentence, when they are trying to be part of the debate of the day. Not only that, and this may be lost on some people, when the shadow minister wants to have further debate during consideration in detail, great calculations have to be made beforehand to work out when we need to stop the debate so there is enough time for the shadow minister to investigate, examine, challenge—

An opposition member: Question.

Mr MANDER: And question some of those very substantive issues. It really is a blow to the democratic process of this place. The Attorney-General can quote as many statistics as she likes. The principal argument is that any member should be able to speak on a bill if they so desire, and that ability has been removed.

If some of those things were still in place, we would not have the troubles that this government is currently facing. If we had had the chance to debate more or to raise issues in those statements before question time, we would not have had the backflip that has taken place on the drum lines. The government would not have been embarrassed because we would have had more opportunity to test, examine and challenge that. However, because that did not take place, the government has done this major backflip and embarrassed itself.

If we had more time to debate these issues, we would not have had the Extinction Rebellion protesters out there today chaining themselves to the fence and gluing themselves to the road because the laws that this government brought in would have covered that. They tried to claim that those laws would solve all the problems with Extinction Rebellion, but of course they are out there again today causing disturbances and that will happen time after time leading up to the next election.

If I can just say briefly, Mr Deputy Speaker, if you will allow me this one small bit of indulgence because of what the health minister brought up about Currumbin, what we are all waiting for is to see the Deputy Premier and Treasurer down in Currumbin promoting her candidate—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order! Member for Everton, I pulled up the Minister for Health on the same issue. I am going to do the same to you. Come back to the business program motion, please.

Mr MANDER: All I can say is: bring on Currumbin. We cannot wait.

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

AYES, 48:

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

Ind, 1—Bolton.


NOES, 36:

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

Resolved in the affirmative.

CO-OPERATIVES NATIONAL LAW BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.38 am): I present a bill for an act to apply a national law that regulates co-operatives, to amend this act, the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and the acts mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes, and

to repeal the Cooperatives Act 1997. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Co-operatives National Law Bill 2020 [\[153\]](#).

Tabled paper: Co-operatives National Law Bill 2020, explanatory notes [\[154\]](#).

Tabled paper: Co-operatives National Law Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[155\]](#).

Cooperatives are democratically controlled, jointly owned enterprises created for common economic, social and cultural needs and goals. Cooperatives, when compared to corporations, have a distinct governance structure because their ownership, democratic structure and use of funds is for mutual benefit, rather than for the benefit of individuals. In Queensland, cooperatives operate in a diverse range of industries and endeavours, including agriculture and fishing, dairy, water supply, child care, health services, grocery and hardware supplies, community housing, recycling, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts.

The Palaszczuk government recognises the substantial contribution Queensland cooperatives make to our economy and communities. The Palaszczuk government also appreciates the importance of ensuring that the structure of a cooperative continues to be a viable, alternative business and enterprise model which offers a number of unique features compared to other types of corporate structures. To this end, the bill aims to modernise and improve the regulatory framework for cooperatives in Queensland through nationally harmonised cooperatives legislation. The bill supports Queensland's cooperative sector, particularly in regional Queensland, by reducing regulatory costs and better ensuring the ongoing viability of an alternative, yet important, business model.

The main objective of the bill is to repeal Queensland's current Cooperatives Act 1997 and in its place apply the CNL and its regulations as a law of Queensland. The CNL is template legislation developed by the states and territories to modernise and harmonise the regulatory framework governing the formation, registration and operation of cooperatives. The CNL is broadly based on the Queensland Cooperatives Act 1997. It is consistent with the principles underpinning cooperatives and is intended to protect the interests of cooperatives, their members and the public in the operation and activities of cooperatives.

More specifically, the bill simplifies the financial reporting and auditing requirements for small cooperatives, reduces costs for small cooperatives, modernises directors' and officers' duties, provides a new way for cooperatives to raise funds, allows for automatic mutual recognition and updates references to the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001.

Before further outlining these specific amendments, I would like to briefly outline the administrative framework governing the CNL: the Australian Uniform Cooperative Laws Agreement. The aim of the agreement is to preserve the uniformity of the CNL. The agreement provides that future amendments may be made with the approval of the national ministerial Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs of which I am a member. Under the agreement, New South Wales is the host jurisdiction of the CNL and its regulations. All other states and territories have signed the agreement and have applied the CNL as a law of their own, respective jurisdiction.

In the case of Western Australia, their legislation has been updated to substantially correspond to the CNL. As the registration of cooperatives is a matter for the states and territories, the Commonwealth is not a party to the agreement. I am pleased to announce that Queensland has also become a party to the agreement. This allows the Queensland parliament to consider this bill which implements key reforms that are strongly supported by Queensland cooperatives.

A significant reform contained in the CNL, which will assist the majority of cooperatives in Queensland, is to simplify the financial reporting and auditing requirements for 'small cooperatives'. The CNL includes a tiered system of financial reporting whereby most 'small cooperatives' will no longer need to submit an audit or financial report to the registrar. Under the cooperative national regulations, hosted by New South Wales, a cooperative is defined as 'small' upon meeting two of the following three criteria in a given financial year: consolidated revenue of less than \$8 million; consolidated gross assets of less than \$4 million; or fewer than 30 employees. These simplified reporting requirements will reduce costs for small cooperatives. The CNL also includes updated directors' and officers' duties and responsibilities more consistent with modern requirements under the Corporations Act 2001.

Another initiative of the CNL is the introduction of raising funds through the issue of cooperative capital units, or CCUs. CCUs are a unique and flexible financial instrument that can provide cooperatives with a means to raise funds to finance their operations without diluting member control and ownership. CCUs can be issued to members or non-members. The introduction of CCU provisions in the CNL greatly increases the capacity of cooperatives to raise funds from external sources.

In terms of mutual recognition, at present any interstate cooperative that wishes to carry on business in Queensland must register in Queensland and pay a fee to trade as a 'foreign' cooperative. Passage of the bill will mean that existing 'foreign' registration provisions that create red tape for cooperatives wanting to trade across borders will be replaced by automatic mutual recognition provisions. The mutual recognition provisions of the CNL make it easier for cooperatives to trade interstate by removing the fees and registration requirements.

The final reform of note in the CNL is the updated referencing of the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001. Like other states and territories, the Queensland Cooperatives Act 1997 applies sections of the Commonwealth Corporations Act 2001 to cooperatives in circumstances such as insolvency, liquidation and winding up. Over time this created a situation of the Corporations Act 2001 being referenced differently in each jurisdiction and was further compounded by legislative updates, which led to diverging requirements in different states and territories. The bill includes important reforms that support the ongoing viability of Queensland cooperatives, particularly smaller cooperatives, cooperatives in regional Queensland and cooperatives trading across borders. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (11.45 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.


Bill read a first time.

Referral to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

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

MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (11.45 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006, the Explosives Act 1999, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Regulation 2016, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Act 2018, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Mineral Resources Regulation 2013, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, the National Energy Retail Law (Queensland) Act 2014, the New South Wales-Queensland Border Rivers Act 1946, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and the legislation mentioned in schedule 1 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 [\[156\]](#).

Tabled paper: Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes [\[157\]](#).

Tabled paper: Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [\[158\]](#).

The Mineral and Energy Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020 delivers on three significant government priorities. First, the bill strengthens safety culture in the resources sector through introducing industrial manslaughter provisions and requiring that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations must be an employee of the coalmine operator. Second, the bill implements legislative changes that support the Palaszczuk government's ongoing reforms to the mine rehabilitation and financial assurance laws. Third, the bill progresses amendments that align with

our election commitment to improve the regulatory efficiency of the resources sector. The bill also includes minor and technical amendments to improve the operation of legislation within the natural resources, mines and energy portfolio.

First, I will deal with matters pertaining to resources safety and health. On 10 July 2019, I committed to finalising three expert independent reviews into how Queensland's resources industry can work towards being free of fatalities and serious harm. I am pleased to inform the House that these have been completed on time, as committed. I will table these documents on Thursday.

In addition to the reviews, the Palaszczuk government is acting now to enhance our regulatory framework. This bill introduces industrial manslaughter offence provisions into resources safety legislation, as well as other amendments to resources safety legislation. The industrial manslaughter offence will apply to employers, senior officers and corporations in cases where their criminal negligence causes the death of a worker in the resources sector. It will bring the conduct of senior officers and corporations clearly into focus in relation to safety in resources sector workplaces.

The amendments are similar to amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 made in 2017 and will provide consistent treatment of the worst cases of criminal negligence that cause the death of a worker across all workplaces in Queensland. These serious cases of workplace fatality caused by the criminal negligence of senior management will have significant penalties applicable, namely, 20 years imprisonment for an individual and 100,000 penalty units for a corporation. This equates to a fine of up to \$13.3 million.

The bill proposes to amend the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 in order to protect the safety and health of workers by requiring that persons appointed to critical safety statutory roles for coalmining operations must be an employee of the coalmine operator. The bill also amends the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999 and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 to validate costs orders made by the Industrial Magistrates Court in relation to proceedings for an offence under these acts and to provide for the lawful making of future costs orders for proceedings under these acts.

The bill amends the regulation-making powers under the Explosives Act 1999 to allow regulations to be made about conditions and other requirements that apply to a security clearance and about the keeping of a register of authorities and security clearances, including the disclosure and publication of information in the register. These amendments build on recent legislative reforms to improve the safety and security of explosives.

I now turn to the second key area of reform in the bill. The bill also supports the Palaszczuk government's ongoing reforms to the mine rehabilitation and financial assurance laws. These reforms stem from the Queensland Treasury Corporation's 2016 review of the state's financial assurance framework which found that the framework could be improved to achieve better protections of the state's financial risks while also supporting the continued growth of the resources sector. The review made a number of recommendations, many of which we have already delivered on. This bill represents the Palaszczuk government's next step for the financial assurance reforms and follows on from the passage of the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Bill 2018, which commenced on 1 April 2019.

With resource companies transitioning into the framework, we have ensured there will be funding available to cover the costs of rehabilitation if a company cannot meet their rehabilitation or environmental management obligations. The new requirements for the planning and delivery of progressive rehabilitation of mined land under the Environmental Protection Act 1994, which were installed through the Mineral and Energy Resources (Financial Provisioning) Bill 2018, also commenced in November 2019. This bill includes amendments that continue our financial assurance reforms through changes to the resources acts and follow on from public consultation with stakeholders over the past two years.

In response to stakeholder feedback, the bill progresses a number of reforms to increase the state's oversight of a resource authority holder when there is a change in ownership. When there is a proposed change in ownership of the resource authority through a transfer of the authority or a share in the authority, which is characterised under the resources acts as an assessable transfer, the proposed transferee currently needs to demonstrate that they possess the financial and technical resources to comply with the conditions of the authority. The bill expands this criteria to also include that the proposed transferee will need to satisfy the decision-maker that they will have the financial resources to undertake the estimated rehabilitation for the project. The other situation is when there is

an indirect transfer which happens behind the corporate veil and outside the control of the state. If the new entity poses an increased risk to the state, the bill establishes a process by which the resource authority may be amended to mitigate the heightened risk.

The bill will also support efforts to undertake active tenure management of sites that enter care and maintenance by requiring significant mineral mining leaseholders—in line with petroleum and coal tenure holders—to prepare and comply with development plans. If a site proposes to enter care and maintenance, they will likely need to submit a revised plan, which gives the state a decision point to consider whether the proposed care and maintenance is appropriate.

The bill also broadens the state's powers for remediating abandoned mine sites to make them safe, secure, durable and, where possible, productive. In addition to expanding the list of remediation activities that may be undertaken on an abandoned mine, the bill also inserts powers into the Mineral Resources Act 1989 to allow the government to run competitive tenders to recommercialise abandoned mine sites. This will create opportunities for companies to generate jobs and revenue from what would otherwise be an abandoned mine.

In addition to these reforms, the bill also introduces disqualification criteria for tenure applications to strengthen the state's ability to assess an applicant's suitability to hold tenure in Queensland under the resources acts. The introduction of the disqualification criteria will reduce the risk that tenure could be granted to a person or entity that has a serious history of noncompliance, criminal or dishonest conduct, or corporate mismanagement. The criteria will be considered at the application stage, and procedural fairness is built into the provisions.

I now turn to the third key area of reform in the bill which delivers improvements to the efficiency of the resources acts in line with our government election commitment. Following consultation and stakeholder feedback in late 2018, several proposed amendments included in the bill will improve the administration and effectiveness of resource assessment processes. The bill proposes amendments that will create a dispute resolution framework to resolve commercial disputes for overlapping tenure applications or activities. This framework allows for the grant of overlapping tenure applications when it is in the public interest to do so and will require the companies involved to negotiate a coexistence plan or to seek arbitration to resolve particular disputes.

The bill implements changes to consolidate conference provisions throughout the resources acts into one framework under the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014. This amendment removes duplication across the resources acts and provides a consistent framework for resource authority holders and landholders to meet with authorised officers to discuss relevant concerns. The bill also allows the amalgamation of tenures when they are transitioned from the Petroleum Act 1923 to the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004. This amendment improves administrative efficiency by streamlining two separate application processes into one.

Other key reforms include the removal of a requirement for unnecessary coordination arrangements when the same entity will hold both the petroleum and the mineral tenure; and allowing granted petroleum leases to count towards the requirement to relinquish land, which will also provide consistency across the resources acts.

The bill includes a range of minor and technical amendments to legislation within the natural resources, mines and energy portfolio which I will now briefly touch on. The bill includes a minor amendment to the national energy retail law in Queensland to maintain an existing customer protection which bans certain fees and charges on standard retail energy contracts such as late payment and paper-billing fees. Minor amendments to improve the operation of the Energy and Water Ombudsman Act 2006 are also included in the bill.

There are some minor amendments to water legislation. These include an amendment to provide greater transparency and public availability of information on water and sewerage related infrastructure charges levied and collected by the distributor-retailers.

The bill also includes amendments to clarify provisions relating to full-supply levels for dams under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008. This amendment provides clarity concerning the interaction between reducing full-supply level provisions for flood mitigation or safety needs and requirements under a dam owner's resource operations licence.

The bill also proposes the appointment of a Queensland controlling authority to ensure proper performance of the commission's functions within the framework of the New South Wales-Queensland Border Rivers Act 1946 and the Border Rivers Agreement and to otherwise satisfy the requirements of the Border Rivers Act.

The resources sector is a critical industry for Queensland, both now and into the future. The Palaszczuk government is committed to creating a regulatory environment where the sector can succeed while also ensuring that workers' safety is paramount and financial risks to the state are managed. This bill delivers on many of the Palaszczuk government's significant commitments to Queenslanders about the resources sector and contemporises regulatory frameworks within the natural resources, mines and energy portfolio. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. AJ LYNHAM (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (11.58 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.


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

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

RESOURCES SAFETY AND HEALTH QUEENSLAND BILL

Resumed from 4 September 2019 (see p. 2638).

Second Reading

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy) (11.59 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 establishes a revised regulatory framework for resources safety and health in Queensland. The bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to a regulatory framework that strengthens worker trust, ensures independence and transparency, and achieves increased accountability and oversight of regulatory performance. The bill was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for review, and I thank the committee for its consideration of the bill. I note that the committee tabled its report on 18 October 2019 and the government tabled its response to the committee's report on 8 January 2020. The committee recommended that the bill be passed. The committee also made three other recommendations, which I will address.

The bill establishes the resources safety and health regulator as a statutory body—Resources Safety and Health Queensland, RSHQ. As a statutory body, RSHQ will not be part of or subject to oversight from an administering department such as the mining department. This will ensure the function of protecting workers is separate from the government's function of growing and facilitating mining and exploration projects and the resources sector as a whole.

RSHQ will comprise the coalmines, mineral mines and quarries, explosives and petroleum gas inspectorates. RSHQ will also include the Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station, Simtars, and the Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme. RSHQ will be overseen by a CEO who will be appointed by the Governor in Council and report directly to the minister. The CEO will have regulatory and operational oversight of RSHQ and will be responsible for ensuring effective performance of RSHQ's functions. As the officer accountable for the body's governance, the CEO will be responsible for establishing internal control structures and a governance framework necessary to meet the obligations under the Financial Accountability Act 2009 and the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982.

In its report the committee recommended that the CEO have appropriate resource industry qualifications and experience. The government accepts the committee's recommendation and will move amendments to the bill during consideration in detail to give effect to this recommendation. The amendments will provide that, to be appointed as the CEO, a person must have a professional

qualification relevant to the resources industry and professional experience in the resources sector. This is similar to provisions in the bill regarding the appointment of the new Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health position.

The bill also establishes a new independent Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health. The commissioner will have functions across all resources sectors, not just mining. The role of the commissioner will include providing advice to the minister about safety and health matters; monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the performance of RSHQ's functions; and being the chairperson for existing statutory advisory committees. The commissioner role will be independent to and separate from RSHQ. The commissioner will not have operational responsibilities or regulatory functions under the bill. Specifically, the commissioner will not have a role in prosecution action or investigations. This is because the involvement of the commissioner in regulatory and compliance activities would have the potential to impact the commissioner's independence in monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of regulatory activities.

The commissioner may engage staff to assist the commissioner in the performance of their functions. The bill enables the commissioner to arrange for the services of officers or employees of a government agency to be made available to work for the commissioner, in agreement with the chief executive of an agency. This includes the RSHQ employing office. The commissioner may also enter into contracts or employ staff if it is necessary or convenient for the performance of the commissioner's functions.

The minister will approve the budget of the commissioner. In preparing the budget the commissioner must consult with the CEO of RSHQ. The minister may still approve the budget where there is not agreement between the commissioner and the CEO. The budget will provide for the costs related to the commissioner's functions, including costs associated with chairing the statutory advisory committees.

The bill also requires the commissioner to prepare and give to the minister an annual report which must include, amongst other things, the details of the functions performed by the commissioner during the financial year including monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the performance of RSHQ's functions. The report must also include details of any directions given by the minister and the action taken by the commissioner because of the direction.

The bill states that the commissioner must, as soon as practicable after it is given to the minister, publish the annual report on a Queensland government website. In its report the committee recommended that the commissioner's annual report be published on the websites of RSHQ and the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. The government has tabled an erratum to the explanatory notes to the bill which clarifies the intent that the annual report will be published on the commissioner's website and the RSHQ website. This is to ensure separation from the government's function of growing and facilitating mining and exploration projects. It is not proposed that the commissioner's annual report be required to be published on the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy website.

The bill also enhances the functions of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee. The intent of the bill is that the advisory committees take on a strategic role by focusing on critical and emerging risks. In doing so, it is open to the advisory committees to advise the minister about any and all appropriate measures to address risk, which may include legislative and other measures.

The bill also provides for the independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor, established under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, to bring proceedings for serious offences under the resources safety acts. Other offences may be brought by the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor or the CEO of RSHQ. Serious offences are defined in the bill to include offences causing a single or multiple deaths, grievous bodily harm and bodily harm. Serious offences will also include contraventions involving exposure to substances likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm.

Similar to existing provisions under the Work Health and Safety Act, the bill will enable any person to request the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor bring a prosecution for a serious offence. In deciding whether to prosecute, the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor must have regard to any guidelines issued under section 11 of the Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1984. Fundamental to the guidelines is a two-tier test that prosecutions should only be initiated when there is sufficient evidence and the public interest requires prosecution. Utilising the Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor will offer independent prosecutorial decision-making, transparency and legal expertise.

The resources safety and health regulatory framework is funded through industry sourced safety and health fees and other fees and charges. These revenue streams will continue to fund the regulator when RSHQ is established. The government is in the process of finalising options for a long-term sustainable funding model. As recommended by the committee in its report, it is proposed that the department or RSHQ, if established, will provide a briefing to the committee in mid-2020 on the finalised funding model for RSHQ.

The bill reflects extensive stakeholder engagement with industry, workers and the community. I thank all parties who contributed to the important reforms reflected in this bill. The Palaszczuk government has invested \$26 million to deliver reforms to improve the safety and health of our mineworkers. All coal workers now receive mandatory chest X-rays and lung function tests when they enter the workforce, when they leave and regularly when they are working. Since July 2016, 49,573 chest X-rays have been dual-read by the University of Illinois, Chicago. The government has now fully transitioned to Queensland based B-reader provider Lungscreen Australia. I am advised that leading expert on mine dust lung disease Dr Bob Cohen from the University of Illinois has commented—

While there is always work to be done to ensure the system continues to deliver its improved performance, Queensland's health surveillance of coal miners is now the envy of the world and other jurisdictions, including the United States, should strongly consider adopting these changes Queensland has led.

This bill will make a real, positive difference to the safety and health of all workers in Queensland resources industries.

I now table the explanatory notes to the amendments that will be moved in consideration in detail, along with a statement of compatibility with human rights for the amendments.

Tabled paper: Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019, explanatory notes to Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments [159].

Tabled paper: Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019, statement of compatibility with human rights contained in Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham's amendments [160].

As I have outlined, amendments will be moved in relation to the qualifications and experience of the chief executive officer of Resources Safety and Health Queensland, RSHQ. Amendments will also be moved to correct a minor drafting error in the bill. The bill currently prescribes the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor as an entity to which the CEO of RSHQ may disclose certain information. The term 'WHS Prosecutor' is not defined in the bill. The bill will be amended to include a definition of 'WHS Prosecutor' as established under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

This bill also includes a vital amendment to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to facilitate works on Paradise Dam. While Paradise Dam is safe under normal circumstances, urgent work is required to protect the people of Bundaberg and the surrounding region from a dam failure in an extreme one-in-200-year weather event. As Sunwater announced in September last year, the Paradise Dam spillway needs to be lowered as soon as possible to meet safety standards. This urgent amendment to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 ensures that spillway modification work can occur. The chief executive of my department may apply safety conditions to Paradise Dam to require lowering of the spillway. This amendment will mean that Sunwater will not be required to obtain any other approvals for the purposes of undertaking activities to comply with that condition. Working with the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Sunwater will closely coordinate with relevant agencies over the coming months.

This is an urgent, time limited action. It is being taken only after much consideration. It recognises that reducing the height of an existing dam wall does not have the same environmental and land issues associated with constructing a new dam or raising the height of an existing structure. Simply put, the Burnett River at this site is already significantly modified. This action reduces the time required to deliver the dam modification project by waiving the requirement for applications to be prepared and assessed. Sunwater will exercise its best endeavours to understand and manage the impact of the work as would otherwise have occurred. These approvals exemptions are necessarily broad and include, for example, impacts on fisheries, traffic, air and noise. Sunwater will continue to consult and work actively with local stakeholders as its work to make this dam safer advances.


The amendments will not apply to any other referable dam in Queensland. Sunwater is not exempted from its safety obligations when undertaking the works, such as under the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011. Importantly, reducing the height of the spillway is just part of our response to addressing issues at Paradise Dam. Future long-term upgrades may be carried out on Paradise Dam following receipt and consideration of the Building Queensland report. To deliver these long-term upgrades, we will follow the usual planning and approvals processes. This amendment maximises the construction window prior to the 2020-21 wet season, enabling contractors to mobilise on site in March.

It is important to note that Sunwater has no choice but to act. The independently peer reviewed technical investigation by GHD calculated the safety risk that informed Sunwater's decision to undertake essential works on Paradise Dam immediately. This work will mitigate the safety risk and the safety of Bundaberg is paramount. Sunwater's numerous investigations include 13 national and international experts, including six independent experts on Sunwater's technical review panel, three independent Gutteridge Haskins & Davey experts, two independent international experts who reviewed the reports, the dam safety regulator and the chief engineer. All of these experts agree with Sunwater that urgent action is required because of the potential risk to downstream communities.

In relation to current dam risk and stability assessment, the key third parties retained by Sunwater are Gutteridge Haskins & Davey for the preliminary and detailed business cases and overall dam stability assessment, Hydrology and Risk Consulting for the hydrology component of the June 2019 Paradise Dam failure impact assessment, and the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation for its geotechnical investigations. The expert advice of the 13 experts who have assessed the issues in detail and reviewed the reports has led to a decision that work is required immediately.

Separately, we also need to understand what has occurred in the original construction of Paradise Dam and learn from it. To that end, on 29 November 2019 I announced an independent commission of inquiry into Paradise Dam. The inquiry is focusing on the root cause of structural and stability issues. It will explore whether governance, processes and systems involved in the design, construction or commissioning of Paradise Dam contributed to that root cause. The commission of inquiry will have all of the resources necessary to conduct a thorough investigation, including public submissions, to determine the root cause of structural and stability issues identified in the engineering and technical studies into Paradise Dam. Executive Council has empowered the commissioners to seek submissions, interview witnesses and call public hearings, with no time limits other than to report back on 30 April 2020. We will learn more about the issues at Paradise Dam over time as long-term upgrades are investigated, planned and delivered.

The Queensland government is committed to ensuring water security for the Bundaberg region, which is why Building Queensland is undertaking an accelerated assessment on options for the future of the dam. As part of this it is exploring alternate water supply options to ensure future water security for the region, including the final revised spillway height and the final full supply level for the dam. This assessment will take into account the region's needs and demand for water and is scheduled for completion in the first quarter of this year. In the meantime, the need to take action is clear to reduce risks to the community of Bundaberg and surrounding areas before the 2020-21 wet season. We cannot afford delays. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.15 pm): I rise in my capacity as shadow minister for natural resources and mines to contribute to the debate on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. It is worth noting that this bill is of particular importance in my electorate of the Burdekin, where much of Queensland's natural resources are found. I state at the outset that the LNP will not be opposing this bill. I also want to acknowledge the resource workers who have been injured or paid the ultimate sacrifice in the industry and their families and friends.

Earlier today I spoke with Brian Gerdes from Baralaba. Brian is the father of Jack Gerdes, who tragically lost his life in a mining accident at the Baralaba coalmine on 7 July last year. Brian likened the safety issues that exist within the Queensland resources industry to the coronavirus outbreak which poses a real and ongoing threat to our country at the present time. He calls the issues around safety within the mining sector a mine safety virus that is being fed by greed. We cannot bring Jack back, but here today we can make a giant step forward in terms of improving mine safety.

The LNP will not be opposing this legislation because we place the health and safety of our natural resources workers as the highest priority for that industry. We find the government's refusal to fully inquire into the causes of accidents, injuries and deaths in the resources sector a matter of great concern, but the LNP is above playing politics with worker safety and we want to get to the bottom of it. Make no mistake: this government is on notice. The implementation and the results of Resources Safety and Health Queensland will be subject to intense investigation and, in the interests of the miners and the quarry workers, those of us on this side of the House will hold this government to account on the implementation of this bill.

Before I speak to the issues that I want the minister to clarify, it is important to have some background on this bill. The resources sector provides one in every eight jobs in Queensland and contributed almost \$63 billion to the Queensland economy in 2017-18. Put simply, without the resources sector Queensland does not work. Despite all of the safety and technological advances, the resource industry can be a dangerous one. In 18 months we saw eight deaths in Queensland's mines

and quarries and that is a huge burden for families, communities and our state to bear. Rightly, Queenslanders demanded and still want answers. They still want to know why there were 500 fewer mine safety inspections last year than there were four years ago. They still want to know why we have vacant mine safety inspector roles and they still want to know why gender requirements prevented the meeting of the Mine Safety Advisory Committee.

In July last year Minister Lynham announced two separate independent reviews into Queensland's mine safety. These reports were meant to be finalised by the end of 2019. However, they are yet to be tabled, and that is simply not good enough. The LNP moved a motion in this House for a full parliamentary inquiry into these and the other issues that contributed to deaths and injuries in Queensland's mines and quarries. Frankly, the way that this government dismissed that inquiry was an insult to resource industry workers and their families across this state.

At no time did the LNP ask for mine safety resets to be halted, as the minister implied. For a member of parliament from Central Queensland to question the cost of an inquiry into saving lives is something that this House should hold as abhorrent. I remind members that this parliament has previously united in the interests of health and safety for our resource workers. The fact that the committee report into this legislation refers to and draws from the report of the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee proves that the LNP's motion for a parliamentary inquiry into safety in our mines and quarries was not only warranted but that it is essential.

When the committee charged with examining this legislation quotes phrases including 'massive systemic failure' and 'an absolute failure by the DNRM, its Mines Inspectorate, Simtars and its Health Surveillance Unit', you have to think that the situation that led to eight deaths in 18 months may, in fact, deserve complete oversight. However, that was not to be, because those opposite would rather play politics than work cooperatively to overhaul mine safety laws in this state.

It is not only the opportunity for a full parliamentary inquiry that this minister and those opposite refused. I draw to the attention of the minister and the House part 12 of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act—existing legislation. This section expressly provides the minister with the power to establish a board of inquiry into 'a serious accident'. The question that the minister needs to answer is why did he not exercise this power? Workers in the resources industry deserve to know the response to that question.

Part 12 states that the inquiry must be held in public. What does the minister not want the public of Queensland to know? Part 12 empowers the board of inquiry to call witnesses, receive evidence on oath, seek documents and offer witnesses the same protection as a witness in a proceeding in the Supreme Court. Despite these powers and widespread calls from throughout the resources sector, this minister did not act. Queensland's resource workers deserve the truth. Why did the minister not act and what guarantees do Queenslanders have that the minister will get it right this time round?

The LNP is standing shoulder to shoulder with our miners on this important issue because we know they deserve the truth and they deserve answers. We also know that we must do whatever is needed to give answers to the families of those eight victims and we must take action to ensure their loss was not in vain. As I mentioned earlier, the LNP will not be opposing this bill because we value the resources sector and the men and the women who work in it. However, the proposals put forward in this bill must be implemented properly. Given this minister's repeated failings I am seeking clarification on several issues with regard to the legislation because it is abundantly clear that the minister has no intention of answering the questions that I have already put to him.

Firstly, let us concentrate on ensuring Queensland's resources industry receives fair treatment and is allowed, where approvals are met, to operate and grow. In part 2 of the bill there is explicit mention of the power to charge an entity a fee for services. Naturally resources companies have a responsibility to contribute fairly to programs that will ensure the health and safety of those who work for them. However, due to the contribution that this industry makes to the Queensland economy, we need to ensure that this is not another hidden tax that will impede Queenslanders. I would like the minister to provide an assurance in this House in his reply that these fees will be based on the actual services provided and that these fees will only increase in line with the cost of actually delivering the services.

Turning to the amendments proposed in this legislation to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act, the proposed amendments to section 76 of that act are cause for concern. Whilst I can see the intention to ensure that workers and their families are protected, we must bear in mind the recent efforts of groups to disrupt this and other industries. Those on this side of the chamber, the resources industry and its workers need assurances from the minister that the use of broad terms such as 'any person' will not

result in the relevant committee being bogged down by activist groups, third-party campaigns or the like. It must be made very clear that this legislation is about protecting workers, not providing excuses for this government to add an extra burden or more red tape to the resources sector.

With regard to that same section of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act, those of us on this side are reminded of the failure of the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee to meet in the lead-up to those fatalities in Queensland. Whilst we fully support the need for the right balance on committees, there should be no excuses for committees that advise on health and safety not to meet. I would ask the minister to give serious consideration to including mandatory regular meetings of this committee and other relevant committees to ensure we get this right. Workers in the resources industry deserve a safe workplace, like all Queenslanders, and they deserve the unwavering focus of the health and safety regulators on their industry. As is often said with regard to the law, the job does not only need to be done, it needs to be seen to be done.

Whilst there is no need to reiterate this government's track record when it comes to conflicts of interest, there is an unquestionable opportunity in this bill to minimise any such conflict when it comes to the health and safety of the resources industry. Division 3 of the bill refers to the minister's discretion in allowing the CEO of Resources Safety and Health Queensland to engage in paid employment outside the responsibilities of the office. It also refers to the minister's discretion to allow the CEO to actively take part in the activities of a business or management of a corporation. As we saw in the Premier's own department, this is a recipe for disaster.

When it comes to health and safety we must draw a line in the sand. For such an important function we must ensure that there is a 100 per cent commitment to the functions of this entity and I call on the minister to ensure there are adequate safeguards in place to ensure the integrity of this office can never be brought into question. The CEO's sole focus must be on making our resources industry safer, not on trading real estate or creating smartphone apps. This is simply too important a task to take risks with.

The section of the bill entitled 'conflicts of interest' also requires strengthening. Again I refer to the conflicts of interests we have seen under the current government and implore the minister to take firm action on this. In the interests of ensuring the health and safety of Queensland workers, I would like to see any conflicts of interest disclosed publicly and firm time frames placed around such disclosure. Again, Queensland workers deserve to know that the CEO of RSHQ is focused on their health and safety as his primary goal.

I note that the amendments tabled by the minister will ensure that the CEO will be appropriately qualified to discharge their duties. That is a vital component of that role. We need someone who understands the industry and who has experience in the industry so that they bring that knowledge and credibility to the role going forward. I acknowledge and welcome the requirement for the commissioner to have appropriate qualifications or experience. Whilst I understand the difference between the two roles, I believe RSHQ would be strengthened by the additional practical knowledge and experience at the CEO level.

Moving on to staffing of the entity, I am sure we all agree that it is an absolute necessity to ensure that RSHQ has staff with appropriate skills and knowledge. Given the importance of roles within this entity I would like assurances from the minister that while secondments and service provision from other government agencies may be necessary, that these will be short-term measures only. In short, RSHQ needs the expertise to improve health and safety in the resources sector within its own walls, not on secondment for extended periods.

With regard to the annual report that must be prepared by the commissioner, I believe it is imperative that the number of inspections and audits conducted throughout the state be included in this report. Queenslanders deserve transparency and Queensland resource workers deserve the truth. As we have seen in responses from the minister recently, there are issues with the types of investigations being undertaken and the number of investigations being undertaken. Currently the scheduled numbers are simply not being met. Surely it must be a key performance indicator of both the CEO and the commissioner that adequate and appropriate investigations into health and safety practices in Queensland's resources industry are undertaken. After all, resource workers have a right to know.

Just as we saw in the *Black lung white lies* inquiry, the truth is what is needed to address serious issues that are affecting workers, their families, their friends and their communities in concerning and tragic ways. It is time for this government to act. Whilst the LNP will not be opposing this legislation here today, it does not change our stance on the fact that this industry, its workers and their families, friends and communities deserve the truth.


It is a sad day for Queensland when, despite too many failings to count, this minister will not provide the truth. It will be another sad day if this minister and this government fail to implement this legislation correctly. It will be yet another sad day if this minister refuses to accept the feedback provided from those on this side of the House and pushes ahead blindly due to cheap political points scoring. This must be done properly. The time for failings is over. For once, provide Queenslanders with the answers to their questions. For once, the minister should take on board the suggestions of members of this House who want our resource workers to go home safely after every shift. It is the least that the minister can do, because it is what Queensland workers deserve.

I want to leave members with the words of Brian Gerdes, to whom I spoke earlier today and who best sums up the importance of mine safety and health in this state. He said—

There are eight families who want answers; who want to change the safety conditions on Mine Sites. These eight deaths, and all that fell before, have caused heartache which will remain with us for the rest of our lives. Please stop the carnage by FIXING the problem.

The sole focus of this legislation must be to improve safety for our Queensland resource workers. We owe it to them and to their families.

Before I finish I will touch on the amendments tabled by the minister today regarding Paradise Dam. I know a lot of our members have some deep concerns about those amendments and will certainly talk about that during consideration in detail. We have amendments before the House today when the results of the inquiry have not even been released and I think that says it all.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (12.31 pm): I rise in support of the bill. When we talk of mine safety today—and we have heard the minister say this before—we want to see everyone on a mine site come home safely every day. This bill and the new body are part of the reforms that aim to see that happen. I will make five points about the bill, but firstly I want to cover some of the things that the member for Burdekin has said.

The member for Burdekin said that the opposition would stand shoulder to shoulder with the resource workers regarding safety. Tellingly, he made this qualification: there must be no hidden tax and there must be no more red tape for mining companies. Miners need to know if this is going to be a caveat on their commitment. The member for Burdekin wanted to hear assurances from the minister on a number of things. I want to hear an assurance that, at the end of the day, their judgement on this matter will fall on the side of the workers and not the mining companies.

As I said, I want to talk about five issues in the bill. In the CWP inquiry, one thing that we covered—and it is very specific—is that everyone missed it. As was correctly noted before, the select committee said that there was a ‘massive systemic failure’ and a ‘catastrophic failure of the regulatory system’. As part of improving or replacing that regulatory system, we will have the establishment of the independent body, Resources Safety and Health Queensland or RSHQ.

Under this bill, RSHQ will be taken out of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and will become a standalone authority. It will not be embedded in a long chain of departmental reporting structures. It will report directly to the minister. Importantly, it will have a CEO; it will not have an executive director from the department. It will be an independent office and it will take independent action. Under this model, the CEO will be able to launch a prosecution as part of the new and enlarged powers of the unit.


Thirdly, as we know there will be a change of role for the Commissioner of Mine Safety and Health and a changed role for the boards, as well, all of which will now provide strategic direction and advice to the minister. RSHQ will report to the minister and not the parliament. The minister will put reports from the commissioner and the boards on websites for everyone to see. The commissioner will also monitor RSHQ. Under this bill, the commissioner will have more specific roles. Under the current act, the commissioner advises the minister on health and safety matters, and monitors and reports on those matters to the minister. Under the new act, the commissioner will chair the committees, give advice to the minister if requested and, once again, monitor and review RSHQ. Through this bill, the commissioner’s powers will be extended and specified more so than they have been.

Fourthly, I note that the bill will mean a growth in the ability of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor to take prompt and independent action on mine safety. The prosecutor will still sit outside RSHQ. Under the current act, the prosecutor can recommend that the commissioner takes action. Under the new act, the WHS Prosecutor will take on serious offences. As we have said, other offences can be prosecuted by the CEO of RSHQ or the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. I find that to be a substantial improvement. I believe that it will help deliver better workplace health and safety outcomes for Queensland workers.

Fifthly, and this is a crucial part of the reforms, we are amending the definition of ‘serious offence’. A serious offence is now spelt out. When a person has an obligation to make sure that everyone gets home safely and they fail that obligation, resulting in a death, injury or exposure, that is a serious offence. This brings resource safety legislation into line with the Work Health and Safety Act. It means that mine workers will have the same level of safety protection as other workers under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. That raises and reinforces the standards that mining companies and everyone on a mining site must reach.

In conclusion, I have to say that, in light of the eight deaths at mine sites since July 2018 and in light of the terrible toll of CWP, it is clear that we need change. This minister is delivering that change. This bill is an essential part of that change and regulatory reform. It is clear that we need a regulatory body with substance and impact. The system needs to change. The point is, how do you make that change without creating structural change? The old regulatory framework did not prevent CWP deaths, so why would we persist with it? As the minister said, we need the best regulatory framework so that workers can get home safely every day.

I will make a couple of points on the amendments regarding Paradise Dam. It is very clear that these amendments will allow the works on the dam to happen without having to go through the rigour or the length of time that they would under that legislation. I point out—and this is very pertinent to this bill—that obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 will still apply. It takes a long time—a year or maybe two—to get approvals for that kind of work. Quite simply, I do not think we have that kind of time. I believe that we need the works done by the next wet season. Under these amendments, we will be ready to start that work as soon as possible. As I said, the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 will still apply, but the important thing is that with these amendments we can get that important project happening as soon as possible, which will benefit all of Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.38 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee. At the outset, I thank the secretariat for all their hard work in putting this report together.

The Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 was introduced into the Legislative Assembly and referred to the committee on 4 September 2019. The committee was required to report to the Legislative Assembly by 18 October 2019. According to the explanatory notes, this bill is in response to the finding of the Coal Workers’ Pneumoconiosis Select Committee which was established in 2016 by the 55th Parliament after a number of cases of coal workers’ pneumoconiosis had re-emerged. The CWPSC’s report made 68 recommendations.

At the time the Palaszczuk government said that they supported or supported in principle all 68 recommendations, but they have been painfully slow to accept and implement those recommendations. One of those findings was that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy did not administer the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999 and the Coal Mining Safety and Health Regulation 2001 to protect the safety and health of persons at mines with respect to respirable coalmine dust. The purpose of this bill is to address that finding.

The explanatory notes state that the bill establishes an independent statutory body responsible for regulating safety and health in the state’s resource industries. RSHQ will comprise the coalmines, mineral mines and quarries, explosives and petroleum and gas inspectorates. RSHQ will also include Simtars and the Coal Mine Workers’ Health Scheme. RSHQ’s main function will be to administer the resource safety acts: the Coal Mining and Safety Act 1999; the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999; the Explosives Act 1999; and the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004. The bill removes the resources safety and health function under DNRME and places it into a standalone entity.

Whilst most submitters were generally supportive, the Queensland Resources Council questioned if this would deliver the desired outcome. It stated:

The factors leading to those systemic failures would still have existed under the legislative framework proposed by the Bill. It is unreasonable to attribute what is fundamentally a failure in the risk management process to the structure of the regulator model, and there is no reason to think that a statutory regulatory body would have led to a different outcome.

The Project Management Office, which was established to examine and develop key recommendations of the CWP Select Committee, likewise stated—

Structural changes do not, in themselves, protect workers from risks to their safety and health. The management and control of workplace risks involves, amongst other things, targeted intervention coupled with robust monitoring and review, directed at continuous improvement.

Some industry bodies such as the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association did question how they would fit under the new legislation as their industry is vastly different to the mining and quarrying industries. APPEA stated that the petroleum and gas industry is not as labour intensive as mining and has a very good safety record. The explosives industry also questioned why they have been included as they already operate under the work health and safety legislation as well as the Explosives Act 1999. In response to these concerns the department stated—

To begin with, the co-location, if you like, of the explosives regulator with the mining and petroleum regulator is not new. That has existed for some time within the current division of the department. In a sense it is a continuation of the status quo ... the mining industry is one of the biggest consumers of explosives products and ... when explosives are used on a mining lease, they come under the jurisdiction of the mining legislation.

The appointment of the CEO to this new regulator was also the subject of much debate. There was a very strong view put to the committee that the CEO needs to have real life experience in the resource and not just be an appointed bureaucrat. Likewise, the same applies to the qualifications of the commissioner. A number of submitters emphasised the importance of relevant professional qualifications for the commissioner. They said that they definitely believe that the commissioner needs to have relevant industry experience and typically Queensland based experience on how the coalmining industry or the resource sector works in Queensland. For the coalmining industry, they definitely believe that the chief inspector needs to hold a first-class ticket of competency and a lot of inspectors need to hold the mine manager's certificate of competency as well.

Similarly, Mr Sleigh from the Mine Managers Association highlighted the need for industry specific experience. He stated—

We think from a coalmining point of view it is important that the person in the position of commissioner has an understanding of (a) the Queensland mining industry and (b) the highest risk aspect of the resources industry, the coalmining industry.


Several submitters raised concerns that a funding model for RSHQ had not been finalised and provided to stakeholders for consultation prior to the bill being considered. Ms Bertram from QRC noted—

There presently is a levy ... Normally if there are additional costs there is a reason for that in that improvements are going to be delivered. We have been calling for a RIS so that we can see where those improvements are needed and are to be delivered and what the costs associated with that are.

Given that the safety and health fee is calculated on the number of workers in the industry, some submitters raised concerns with regard to the use of the safety and health fee based on full-time equivalents to provide a stable funding source for the RSHQ. The committee made a recommendation along those lines. The committee recommended that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy or Resources Safety and Health Queensland, if established, provide a briefing to the committee in mid-2020 on the finalised funding model for Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

As the shadow minister said, we will not be opposing this legislation. On the back of the eight tragic deaths in the mining industry recently, this needs to be addressed. We heard concerns, as I outlined, that this legislation does not automatically fix the flaws that have led to those deaths. If the laws are introduced they need to be enforced. We need mine managers and open-cut examiners on the ground who understand the industry working on the safety of miners. It was raised by a number of submitters, particularly the CFMMEU, that there is a chronic shortage of skilled people to fill those positions. That is something the industry needs to address.

I could not finish without mentioning that it is not just deaths and pneumoconiosis that affect the mining industry. We also need to look at the issue of mental health. I think that needs to be addressed. In my area of Condamine I have a coalmine where that is a significant issue because people's jobs are on the line every day. They do not know whether they will have a job in the next couple of months. The minister has the power to take that issue out of their lives. The minister has the power to address that. The community of Oakey is screaming out for that. New Acland is looking for the approval for stage 3 to guarantee the employment of these workers. I would ask that the minister address that issue and ease the mental health issues that those people have.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (12.47 pm): As a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee I rise to speak in support of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. The objective of the bill is to establish a revised regulatory framework for resource safety and health in Queensland that engenders workers' trust, ensures appropriate independence and transparency and enhances independent oversight of the performance of the regulator. Minister Lynham said in his introductory speech delivered on 4 September 2019—

The re-identification of coal workers' pneumoconiosis and the six mining and quarrying fatalities that have occurred in the last year highlight the need for continuous monitoring and improvement of the regulatory framework ... As the minister responsible for resources safety and health, I am committed to maintaining the most effective regulatory framework possible to ensure every worker in Queensland's resources industries goes home safe every day.

The bill establishes Resources Safety and Health Queensland, otherwise known as RSHQ, as a statutory body ensuring genuine independence of the regulator—which was at the core of the select committee's recommendations and the government's response. The bill has arisen from the recommendations of the independently led Project Management Office, the PMO, which was established by the Queensland government to examine and develop for implementation key recommendations of the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee, otherwise known as the CWP Select Committee.

The CWP Select Committee was established by the 55th Queensland parliament on 15 September 2016 to conduct an inquiry into the reidentification of CWP in Queensland. The CWP Select Committee report No. 2, *Black lung white lies: inquiry into the re-identification of coal workers' pneumoconiosis in Queensland*, made 68 recommendations, some of which concerned the structure of the regulator. The Queensland government has supported in principle all 68 recommendations.

After the tabling of the bill, it was referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, and the committee tabled its report in October 2019. The committee recommended, firstly, that the bill be passed. Secondly, the committee recommended that the chief executive officer of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland have appropriate resource industry qualifications and experience. Thirdly, the committee recommended that the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy or the Resources Safety and Health Queensland, if established, provide a briefing to the committee in mid-2020 on the finalised funding model for the Resources Safety and Health Queensland. Finally, the committee recommended that the annual report of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health Queensland be published on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland and the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy websites.

On 3 August 2019, I was pleased to attend the Southern Region Rescue Challenge, hosted by the New Hope Group's Jeebropilly coalmine at Amberley. I was a proud uncle watching my nephew Nathan Thompson, a fitter at the mine, participate in the challenge. His sister, my niece, Cara Thompson, works at the South Walker Creek mine in Central Queensland—so safety in mines is very important to me personally and is very important to my family.

The Jeebropilly Mine opened in 1982. Although it was considered a small mine, the mine went on to produce 32 million tonnes of coal product in its 37-year history. It was my sad duty to once again attend the Jeebropilly Mine on 18 December representing the state government for the official closure of the mine. The mine's general manager, Trent Knack, stood before the dignitaries and employees past and present to thank those who made the mine, which he described as 'not just a coalmine'. As he said—

You see Jeebropilly isn't a location, it's not a place, it's not even in a mine—Jeebropilly is its people. The real value of a mine like Jeebropilly isn't measured in dollars, it's measured in spirit, a spirit that has flowed into our communities through our local workforce since 1981.


Such is the importance of the mining industry in Queensland many miners at the Jeebropilly Mine are third-generation miners. In Nathan Thompson's case, his grandfather worked at coalmines in the Marburg area, making him a fourth-generation miner. The closure of the Jeebropilly Mine saw the closure of the last large-scale mine in the Ipswich area. Coal was first discovered in Ipswich at Kholo in 1825, and the first coalmine was established at Redbank in 1843 by the Petrie family, whose company built the House that I make this speech in.

Since 1843 mining has provided employment and put bread on the table for the families of thousands of Ipswich men and women. Many learnt the mining trade in Ipswich and then moved on to other mines in the state. So I was saddened to hear that an Ipswich miner was killed in a mining accident at Curragh mine at Blackwater on 12 January 2020—just three weeks ago. Donald Rabbitt was killed in a rock fall during mining operations. The death marked the eighth death at Queensland mines and quarries in the past 20 months and follows a 'safety reset' for the mining industry last year that was triggered after the mining death toll hit six.

Prior to Mr Rabbitt's death another Ipswich man, Brad Duxbury, died on 25 November at the Carborough Downs mine site at Coppabella, 120 kilometres south-west of Mackay. Prior to that in July, 27-year-old Jack Gerdes died at the Baralaba North coalmine in Central Queensland after being caught between an excavator and safety stairs. I would like to extend my sincere sympathies to the families and colleagues of Mr Rabbitt, Mr Duxbury and Mr Gerdes, as well as the other five miners killed in mining accidents over the last 20 months.

I agree with the comments made by Queensland's CFMMEU Mining and Energy Division President, Steve Smyth, who said the death was a continuation of the recent 'carnage' in the mining industry and that this situation cannot continue. That is why I support the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019, as it will establish an independent resources and health safety authority, which is a key to avoiding accidents in our mining industry, particularly fatal accidents.

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow members of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, chaired by the state member for Murrumba, Chris Whiting; the committee secretariat led by Jacqui Dewar; the submitters; the relevant government departments who assisted the committee; and Hansard. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (12.56 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. At the outset, like my colleagues, I note that the LNP will not be opposing this legislation because we place the safety of the more than 54,000 Queensland mining and resources workers as our highest priority.

This bill is the government's response to some of the recommendations of the Project Management Office, which was established to develop a path to implement the key recommendations of the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee. Some of these recommendations related to the structure of the regulator and sought to ensure that the resources safety and health regulatory functions were separate from the government's industry facilitation functions. To achieve this, the bill proposes the establishment of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland, or RSHQ, as a statutory body independent of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

As a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee tasked with reviewing this bill, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of my fellow committee members—the members for Bancroft, Condamine, Bundaberg, Ipswich West and Mount Ommaney. I would also like to thank the committee secretariat who are always professional and diligent in supporting the work of the committee. I would particularly like to thank management and staff from New Hope's Jeebropilly coalmine for facilitating the committee's visit on site and for their frank feedback in relation to the efficacy of current mine health, safety and compliance actions.

I found the site visit to Jeebropilly informative, particularly as we had the opportunity to speak with mineworkers and management to hear their views. I echo the sentiments expressed by the member for Bundamba during the committee hearings about the need for better engagement with mineworkers across the state, not just in the south-east corner. I believe it would have been beneficial for the committee to hear from workers in places like Central and North-West Queensland, as I know their issues and concerns are as diverse as those expressed by the miners we did have the chance to speak to.

This bill follows the tragic death of eight young men in Queensland mines and quarries over the last 18 months, so it seems self-evident that Queensland's resources health and safety system is not currently working. The committee received a diverse number of submissions from a number of industry groups and unions. The majority of submissions were broadly supportive of the proposed changes. However, reservations were expressed in relation to some aspects of the bill. I would like to touch on one of those issues raised in my contribution today.

The Queensland Resources Council raised the issue of the independence of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health. I note that the minister addressed the role of the commissioner in his contribution today. However, I believe the issue of the independence of the commissioner has not been adequately addressed. In particular, the fact is that the commissioner does not have a separate staff and is reliant on RSHQ for staffing to fulfil their role. Such a structure compromises the commissioner's independence, and one could foresee a situation where the actions or inactions of RSHQ are of interest to the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health but he or she would require the support of RSHQ to provide additional resources just to enable the commissioner to conduct inquiries.


The LNP shares the concerns of many Queenslanders in relation to mine safety. That is why we fully support the establishment of a parliamentary select committee into the effectiveness of the Queensland government's mine safety regime.

Debate, on motion of Mr Mickelberg, adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm.

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

2020 State Election; Gerber, Ms L

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): The next state election is just 269 days away, and 31 October will decide whether Queensland builds a stronger economy to reach its full potential or whether it will fall further and further behind under Labor. The future of our schools and hospitals will be decided at that election. The LNP is determined to win it because Queensland cannot afford another four years of this Labor government: another four years of high unemployment; another four years of falling education standards; and another four years of hospital waitlists blowing out. My team is determined to clean up after Labor's failures. We have the plan, we have the energy, we have the people to get Queensland working again and we have hit the ground running in 2020.

Last month I announced I had a 10-point plan to protect Queensland against bushfires. New South Wales, Canberra and Victoria have endured horrific conditions this fire season, but Queensland is a bushfire-prone state as well and we have had our fair share of tragedies recently. Bushfires devastated Central Queensland in 2018 and the last bushfire season has been just as fearsome: 6.6 million hectares of land was scorched and 49 homes destroyed. The bushfire season can be relentless and it can be deadly, and that is why an LNP government will do whatever it takes to keep our communities safe. Those opposite slashed bushfire prevention, but we are determined to ramp it up.

An LNP government will introduce new measures, including: a one-stop shop for mitigation applications; a 98 per cent completion target for hazard reduction activities; automatic approvals for permits after 15 days; and monitored grazing in state forests. I went to Bundaberg last month and joined with the member for Burnett to announce our support for rolling out traditional burning techniques practised by Indigenous rangers. The 10-point plan is a practical response to get Queensland bushfire ready. The plan is about being proactive, not reactive, to save both people and property. It is in stark contrast to those opposite, who failed to even give our rural fireys the masks they were promised over a year ago. Where are those masks? Those opposite failed to provide basic resources to our hardworking firefighters. They need to respond to a bushfire with the best protective equipment available, no ifs and no buts. The LNP will build a stronger economy so we can give our firefighters the resources and funding they need to do their job.

Time and time again those opposite failed to learn from emergencies, but they sure try to profit from those emergencies. Who would forget the member for Woodridge carrying the dinner bell from the fire ravaged Binna Burra Lodge? Just last week the Premier chose to be the only premier or first minister in this nation to score political points over the coronavirus health emergency. Something is seriously wrong with this government when the leader is so focused on cheap shots and not the health and safety of all Queenslanders. The Premier points the finger at the federal government with alarming regularity, which shows the Premier is unable to take responsibility and is obviously out of her depth. The state government should work with federal and local governments during times of emergency, but this Labor government only works for themselves.

The interests of Queenslanders will always be the priority of an LNP government, and that is why I called for an emergency assistance package to support our tourism industry. Coronavirus could be as damaging as a flood or cyclone so we need a disaster level response. The LNP would support interest-free loans, local economic development plans and marketing campaigns to boost both domestic and international visitors. China is Queensland's most crucial international tourism market. Last year half a million Chinese tourists visited our shores and injected over \$1.5 billion into the domestic economy. The loss of this market will have a major impact on the state of Queensland, so the LNP's focus is on getting our tourism sector through this challenge. Businesses and jobs from the cape to Currumbin depend upon it. It is clear that it is only the LNP that has the energy and the plans Queensland needs.

We know that it is less than nine months until the next state election and the LNP is ready for that fight, but the first round will be in the Currumbin by-election. On behalf of the Liberal National Party I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jann Stuckey for her dedicated service to both Currumbin and Queensland. Jann courageously revealed her struggle with mental illness and has decided the time has come to step down from public service after 16 incredible years. I want to thank Jann and I wish Jann and her husband, Richard, all the very best for the next chapter of their lives.

Last week I had the pleasure to announce Laura Gerber as the LNP's candidate for Currumbin. Laura is a local, a mum and a successful lawyer. She worked at the Queensland Health Ombudsman and was previously a federal prosecutor—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, Mr Speaker made it very clear this morning that when he calls order it is to bring the House to order. There were two attempts made before I had to get to my feet. Let me assure you that will be the last time before I start warning people.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is clear that those opposite are worried about the LNP's candidate for Currumbin, Laura Gerber. Laura is a local, a mum and a successful lawyer. Laura Gerber worked at the Queensland Health Ombudsman and was previously a federal prosecutor, helping convict smugglers and child exploitation offenders. Most importantly, Laura Gerber knows what matters to the Currumbin community and the people of Queensland. The Currumbin by-election will be a referendum on who can build a stronger economy. Laura Gerber and the LNP will build a stronger economy so we can provide better health services, better schools and higher paid local jobs for people in the Currumbin electorate. Those opposite on the Palaszczuk benches cannot deliver for the people of Currumbin because they have broken the economy with higher taxes, more debt and fewer jobs.


Currumbin is like so many other electorates in Queensland. It misses out because the Labor government has run out of money. The exception of course is the electorate of South Brisbane. Building a strong economy will allow the LNP to air-condition each and every state school classroom in Currumbin. It will also allow the LNP to cut hospital waiting times, to create more local job economies and, very importantly, to fix the M1.

The LNP has the right policies and we have an outstanding candidate in Laura Gerber. The voters of Currumbin will decide if their community is held back for another four years under this incompetent Labor government or if they will move forward with the LNP and our strong local candidate in Laura Gerber. The LNP is taking the people of Currumbin seriously. Laura Gerber takes the people of Currumbin seriously. She is a local. She was born on the Gold Coast. She got married under Elephant Rock. Her little girl, who I met on the weekend—

Ms Bates: Lily.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, Lily. Lily started prep last year at Elanora State School. Laura Gerber and her husband have made the Currumbin electorate their home. They are proud to be locals there. I for one am looking forward to having Laura Gerber join us on our side of the parliament.

Liberal National Party, Travel Expenses

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (2.10 pm): The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition have serious questions to answer in regards to their travel expenses, which are funded by the taxpayer. We already knew that 10 LNP members attended a function at Sydney's Luna Park known as the COSP—the Council of State Parliamentarians. We already knew that costs totalling \$23,000 were charged to taxpayers for travel and accommodation for those MPs, but what we did not know until this week was that an additional \$3,500 was also charged to taxpayers for the travel and accommodation expenses of both the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and their partners. What we did not discover until this week is that the invitation to this three-day function was issued not by a third party or even an independent function organiser. The invitation to LNP members and their partners was in fact issued by one of their colleagues from the Gold Coast, the member for Mermaid Beach.

There needs to be a serious investigation into whether it was appropriate for these members to charge taxpayers for their travel and attendance at this event. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition need to cooperate in that investigation to clarify whether the 2018 trip meets the requirements for taxpayer funded travel for MPs and their partners. Is it appropriate that LNP members, including the opposition leader, effectively invite themselves to a get-together? Does the Leader of the Opposition agree that an invitation must be formally issued by the person or organisation

hosting the event—not merely one of her colleagues and backbenchers? Is it appropriate that the Leader of the Opposition ensured that taxpayers footed the bill for every expense—including, might I add, the \$11 charged for the upgrade to a king-size bed?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BROWN: I take the interjections from those opposite. The Leader of the Opposition likes to talk about buying her clothes from Target, but then she demands a king-size bed because the queen-size just would not do. It needed to be a king-size. The Members' Remuneration Handbook for the Legislative Assembly of Queensland says in relation to spouse travel—

Where a Member travels on Parliamentary Business and:

that Member's spouse is formally invited to attend a function with the Member; or


- b) the spouse accompanies the Member to a community or parliamentary function, then the cost of the spouse's travel may be met from the Member's GTA.

Where spouse travel is claimed in relation to a formal invitation to accompany the Member, a copy of the invitation must be provided with the claim. For the purpose of this section, "formal invitation" does not include generic written or electronic invitations distributed to the broader public.

My reading of the provision—and certainly what appears to be the spirit of the requirement—is that the invitation must have been formally issued by the person or organisation hosting the event. Clearly, the Leader of the Opposition needs to clarify whether these rules were adhered to. I trust that the Leader of the Opposition will satisfy Queenslanders that their tax dollars were being legitimately used by cooperating in an investigation into whether claims by herself and the other MPs have been properly acquitted in accordance with the handbook.

I would also like to add that we should take note when the member for Maroochydore gets up and says that she has deep concerns about the head of the LNP being on the payroll of Clive Palmer. What the member for Maroochydore has raised is an important issue and I believe the Leader of the Opposition should investigate this. She should stop being a weak leader and actually listen to those senior members, including the member for Maroochydore, and investigate whether the head of the LNP is on the payroll of Clive Palmer.

Queensland Economy

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): I rise in the House to once again comment on the economic situation in our state, which unfortunately is not very good news. Since we have been away from parliament, the Treasurer brought down the Mid-Year Fiscal and Economic Review and again it was very, very bad news. We get report after report from lobby groups and business groups that keep talking about how bad the Queensland economy is going. Unfortunately, this midyear review just confirmed that once again.

What were some of the 'highlights' of this midyear economic review? The No. 1 thing is that the debt that was forecast over the forward estimates will now go out to \$91.8 billion. That is an extra billion dollars more than was forecast just six months earlier in the budget. What does that mean? That means that we have interest payments over the forward estimates period of about \$13 billion. That is \$13 billion that is just being gushed down the drain. It is wasted money because of the interest payments that we have to pay on such a huge debt.

There was also a royalties blunder by the Treasurer who underestimated royalties—coal royalties and gas royalties in the main—by \$1.3 billion. How do you get a figure so wrong in such a short period of time of just six months? That is another \$1.3 billion hole in the budget.

Then I get to the unemployment rate. In the last couple of years, we have fluctuated from having either the worst unemployment rate in the country or the second worst unemployment rate in the country. There is great celebration in the Treasurer's office when we go from the worst to the second worst in the country, but those 170,000 people on the unemployment queue are not rejoicing because the new forecast now says that the unemployment rate will not be six per cent but 6.25 per cent. Economic growth has also been revised down 0.5 per cent to 2.5 per cent this financial year.

Then we had the great economic plan to pay down the debt. That economic plan to pay down the debt was to develop what the Treasurer has called a future fund. Where does the Treasurer get the money from for this future fund?

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Scenic Rim. She will get the money for the future fund from the surpluses in the defined benefit scheme of public servants.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: From the future; that is exactly right. The Treasurer will pull another \$3 billion and add in the \$2 billion that was already committed by the previous treasurer, treasurer Pitt, to use as a future fund.

Gene Tunny, one of the well-known economists in this country, said that this is not an economic strategy; this is a political strategy. What would people think the No. 1 objective of a government that had such a huge debt would be? It would be to repay the debt, to pay down the debt, but what is this Treasurer doing? She is simply swapping money from fund to fund thinking that that will deceive the public.


Dr Rowan: Smoke and mirrors.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection from the member for Moggill. It is smoke and mirrors, but people will not be sucked in by it.

Then the Treasurer was asked, 'How much will you get from this fund each year?' She stumbled a bit in her answer. Eventually she said, 'Around \$400 million.' Even if that were right, it would take 230 years of that return from that fund to pay this debt down.

The midyear economic review showed very, very clearly that this Treasurer has lost control of the economy, that the debt is out of control and that they have no plan whatsoever. In the meantime who suffers? Everyday Queenslanders suffer as our unemployment rate increases, as the number of bankruptcies increase and as confidence in the business community plummets. It is Queenslanders who suffer because of this Treasurer's incompetence.

Thuringowa Electorate

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.20 pm): We have kicked off the year 2020 in far better shape than our start in 2019 following the flooding monsoon that affected thousands of people in Townsville. We have a long way to go in terms of making sure that people get back into their homes, but it is happening. We also need to make sure that people like Bobby and her son, whom we met in Heatley just recently, have the mental health support they need after they moved four times in temporary accommodation before finding their new home in Thuringowa with the help of the disaster recovery health team and The Oasis Townsville who renovated their unit.

I want to share some of my 2020 vision for Thuringowa with the House today. Let's start with the job-generating infrastructure projects such as the recent funding announcement of the Townsville Ring Road stage 5 being increased to \$230 million. That major project will create over 200 jobs and it is the final piece of the 22-kilometre ring-road that runs through the very heart of Thuringowa. It will include on and off ramps to Beck Drive, which is extremely important because that is a catalyst for a half a billion dollar residential development called Riverstone which we know will create even more jobs.

Those ramps will provide improved connectivity to JCU, the Townsville University Hospital and the nation's large defence base, Townsville's 3rd Brigade at Lavarack Barracks. Those three institutions alone employ more than 15,000 people. I was able to secure state funding of \$36 million for the ring-road in the 2017-18 state budget. As usual, it took a federal election to get the feds to come to the table. However, it has happened and I look forward to the hundreds of jobs it will create when the tender is awarded in the coming months.

This year I will keep delivering for our schools with my current MP petitions calling for funding for both Thuringowa State High School, a new hall, and Weir State School, a security fence and a new tuckshop in one of our city's oldest schools built in 1898.

Our Kirwan Ambulance Station is currently empty as officers have temporarily moved to Hervey Range Road. The old station will soon be demolished as the contractor, RCQ Projects, has been awarded \$5 million that I was able to secure. It will be completed this year. We will also open up the new Round Mountain Rural Fire Brigade. I take this opportunity to thank the 150 QFES Northern Region staff for their dedication to service as they helped our interstate colleagues through the devastating bushfires that continue to pose serious risks to communities.

We opened up the Upper Ross police facility in November. I have regular contact with the local officer in charge, who reported decreased calls for service in the Upper Ross with the now 10-strong crew—increasing from two—having a natural deterrent effect through increased patrols. There are not too many MPs who can say they have opened up a police, fire and ambulance station in their patch. I am proud to say that I will achieve that in 2020.

Of course, I could not mention Thuringowa without mentioning Riverway Drive. Last year we opened up the stage 1 duplication and in 2019 I was able to get funding for planning and surveying works for stage 2, which is well underway. Throughout January I have been out doorknocking for support to get stage 2 actually built. I have had hundreds of conversations and a 100 per cent success rate for people signing my MP led petition.


In 18 days we will have the opening of the Queensland Country Bank Stadium. It will be open for 'people's day'. It will be an exciting event. We will also look after the tradies with an event to help every one of those hard workers who have helped build our new stadium. Together, the people of Townsville have seen this \$290 million job-generating giant piece of infrastructure literally come out of the ground over the last two years. It has seen over 2,000 people inducted on the site, created hundreds of local jobs and supported over 500 local businesses through the supply chain.

On 29 February we will have Sir Elton John singing *Crocodile Rock* and entertaining North Queensland in our brand-new Queensland Country Bank Stadium that was truly built for North Queensland by North Queenslanders. Our stadium has become a catalyst for development of the \$40 million North Queensland Cowboys Centre of Excellence, which will be built on the stadium site along with the Hilton Hotel, creating even more jobs.

In 2020 there is a genuine sense of excitement and prosperity in Townsville as new restaurants and microbreweries have opened. That is a direct result of that catalyst project that has brought millions of dollars of private investment into our city and it will create even more jobs.

There is only one more thing to say, and that is on Friday, 13 March we kick off the Cowboys season when we verse the Broncos. All I am going to say is: go the mighty North Queensland Cowboys in 2020!

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Ministerial Travel Expenses

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (2.25 pm): Nothing amuses me more, having been in this place for 11 years, than to see the Labor Party send in the lemming to do their work without doing a full homework check and fact check. If the Labor Party want to talk today about travel, let's talk about travel. Honourable members would not think that 18 ministers would have anything to hide, would they? How wrong they are and how wrong the member for Capalaba was with his little speech. We would think that 18 ministers would have nothing to hide, but how wrong they are, because they are hiding.

As I said, if Labor want to talk about travel today, I am going to talk about travel, and let's start with the ministers. The opposition office have RTI-ed all the Cabcharge expenses of the ministers and all the travel associated with the Palaszczuk Labor government ministers. I am going to table the decision letters.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 January 2020, from the Acting Manager, Right to Information and Privacy, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Ms Megan Lederhose, to the Office of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Peter Coulson, advising of right to information application decision [\[161\]](#).

Let's look at the first one dealing with the Cabcharge. The information officer from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has provided full access to 514 documents in relation to ministerial Cabcharge expenses. However, the information officer then goes on to say that 12 third parties have objected to the release of the information. The letter states—

As such, and in accordance with section ... of the RTI Act, access to the Cabcharge statements relating to the 12 Ministerial Offices and the monthly Cabcharge statements for Ministers cannot be provided to you until the review rights of the 12 third parties ...

Twelve Palaszczuk government ministers are hiding the Cabcharge expenses. Why do they not want the Queensland public to see the Cabcharge expenses? I table a copy of the RTI information.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 12 December 2019, from the Acting Manager, Right to Information and Privacy, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Ms Megan Lederhose, to the Office of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Peter Coulson, advising of right to information application decision [\[162\]](#).

Further, with respect to ministerial travel, the information officer from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has come back and said that there are over 3,000 documents available of which they were going to release 345 documents in full and allow partial access to 2,768 documents relating to Premier Palaszczuk's ministerial travel, but guess what? It is deferred access. The letter states—

As detailed above, all third parties have objected to the release of all documents in issue.

As such ...


They will not be released. Twelve Labor ministers do not want the public to see their Cabcharge expenses and 18 ministers, including the Premier's office, do not want the public to see their expenses. They will go on in here about an \$11 fee for a bed, but they do not want to talk about the Cabcharge expenses or the ministerial expenses.

I see Minister Hinchliffe shaking his head. His office has refused to release the information. If this is wrong, then he should correct the information officers. Why should the opposition be granted access to over 3,000 documents but then because of third-party objections—that is, 18 minister's offices—we are not granted access to the rest? They are hiding their travel. They are hiding something.

Everyone knows—and the media knows—that under our general travel allowance provisions members of parliament publish and report our travel; ministers do not. They are under separate rules with respect to ministerial travel. They are hiding their own travel while trying not to excuse the travel of other members of parliament. If you want to play fair, play fair and release all the information. Release the Cabcharge expenses. Release the ministerial travel. Why is the Premier hiding the expenses of her ministers? There is only one answer: they do not want people to know what the expenses were. It is not a good look, and they have obviously looked into it. What are they hiding? I call on them to withdraw their appeal.

They even went to extraordinary lengths to hide Labor ministers' travel by putting in a submission and appealing it to the Information Commissioner. That means they do not want the information to be publicly available. If members of the Labor Party want to talk travel, let us talk travel but let us do it on a fair basis where everyone in this place is equal. Until they release their Cabcharge expenses and ministerial travel, what they assert is not fair.

Queensland Country Bank Stadium

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.30 pm): I have great pleasure in rising today to update the House about the progress of North Queensland stadium. This is the North Queensland stadium built by locals for locals. Some 85 per cent of those involved in building that stadium were local contractors who shop locally, whose mums and dads were involved and whose children attend local schools. As the member for Thuringowa said, that \$290 million project has such a huge flow-on effect back into our city. We have seen shops open, businesses expand and smiles on traders' faces, because we are getting that flow-on effect. When we open for business with the greatest stadium in north Australia, we will see that flow-on effect again and again. There is no pressure whatsoever on the Cowboys to win the premiership.

Dairy Farmers Stadium was built by locals from an old trotting track. We heard stories of Cowboys players turning up for training in their very first season being given implements to go out and chip weeds. Their training program consisted of chipping weeds and levelling the playing field. If that is not a great investment in their own stadium, I do not know what is. In recognising that, the owner of Meridian Helicopters volunteered his helicopter, time and fuel to fly a square metre of turf from the old Dairy Farmers Stadium—the 1300SMILES Stadium—to the new stadium to be planted not on the playing pitch, the hallowed turf, but out in the stadium. This is really the connection of old and new. This is the connection of what this means to the people of Townsville, the people of North Queensland, to be a part of the old stadium and to be invested in the new stadium. This is absolutely brilliant. Some 25 years ago, Dairy Farmers Stadium welcomed our North Queensland Cowboys for their first game.

Queensland Country Bank Stadium has naming rights for our North Queensland stadium for the next six years. This is a company that started as the North Queensland Credit Union in Mount Isa in 1971. This is a great story. This is about North Queenslanders backing North Queenslanders. We are proud to say that the Queensland Country Bank Stadium will welcome each and every competitor, visitor and spectator to our great stadium.

Those who may have seen photos recently say that the seats, all depicting the Cowboys star, have been installed. The turf was laid just in time before the rains started falling. The combination of rain, fertiliser and our lovely humidity at this time of the year has really encouraged that turf to take, like a duck to water. The parking plan has been released, with 1,100 more car parks than the 1300 stadium had, plus the additional 3,000 car parks right throughout our CBD. Balfours Consulting has been running sessions with its CBD traders to ensure they maximise the opportunities available to them at each and every event.


We have a line-up of some great, outstanding events that we will see in our stadium. First, there is the contractors afternoon to celebrate their works. On 22 February we will invite every single contractor, every single person involved in building that stadium, to return to their stadium to celebrate

what they have built. They built this for North Queenslanders. Straight after that, we will welcome North Queensland Cowboys members to come and find their seats and to locate where they will sit to watch each and every one of those Cowboys home games.

We have an open day on 23 February, the very next day. This is where we are opening up the stadium for local people to come and see this jewel of the north. As the member for Thuringowa said, there is an Elton John concert on 29 February. The Cowboys versus Broncos first home game is on Friday the 13th, Black Friday. What a great game that will be! I am predicting a 10-point win to the Cowboys. We will also see the North Queensland Games in April. The North Queensland Games is a fantastic event held every two years in North Queensland. From memory, it has been operating for about 30 or 35 years. We will see an Aussie Rugby League test match as well as an Aussie Rugby Union test match played in North Queensland.

When in Townsville recently, many members commented about what a great stadium we have. If you are going to come up, book your tickets and book some accommodation because everything is starting to sell out quick.

Shark Control Program, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

 **Mr PERRETT** (Gympie—LNP) (2.35 pm): I congratulate Minister Furner and the Labor Party for finally adopting in principle the LNP's SMART drumline policy, designed to keep Queenslanders safe. In the end, the right decision was taken to implement some sensible shark control programs in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. It is disappointing that the federal government had to drag this government kicking and screaming to do something. Five months ago, in September last year, the LNP committed to putting SMART drumlines in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. We have announced \$15 million over three years to do the job and call on the state Labor government to immediately match the commitment. We understood that urgent action was needed to protect the community.

For 134 days Annastacia Palaszczuk and her ministers attacked the LNP's plan, playing politics with swimmer safety and putting tourism jobs at risk. I commend Minister Furner on his statement in the House this morning, where he ate humble pie and accepted the adoption of SMART drumlines. The complete turnaround comes after continual claims that our plan would put lives at risk. In fact, Minister Furner is on the record more than 10 times, from as late as November last year, criticising the LNP's policy of SMART drumlines.

Some of his greatest hits in trashing the very policy he is now trumpeting in newspapers across the state include: on 25 September in the *Townsville Bulletin* Minister Furner said that he did not believe that SMART drumlines were appropriate in the Great Barrier Reef, even though they were being trialled in other states; on 3 October in the *Mackay Daily Mercury* the minister said that the LNP catch and release was the wrong approach within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; on 4 October in the *Australian* the minister again said that SMART drumlines are not appropriate or suited to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park; on 25 October in the *Courier-Mail* Minister Furner referred to the 'so-called' SMART drumlines as being ineffective, the same SMART drumlines he has now signed up to; on 30 October in the *Courier-Mail* the minister doubled down, saying that it would be 'near impossible' to operate shark drum lines throughout the Whitsundays, going further to say that he had 'no desire' to deploy drum lines in the Whitsundays; on 31 October in the *Courier-Mail* Minister Furner and Minister Jones criticised the federal government and the Prime Minister for 'having blood on their hands' in relation to its drum line policy; and on 4 November in the *Courier-Mail* Minister Furner went even further in response to the LNP policy, saying—

Let me be clear, we will not support alternative technologies that don't work or provide a sense of false protection. We will not implement something that science tells us won't work.

On 9 November in the *Morning Bulletin* Minister Furner said that the LNP's catch and release policy would mean towing sharks away from one popular beach to another. He said our policy would put in danger the lives of not only beachgoers but also Shark Control Program staff and contractors and that the government had legal advice that staff could be liable to prosecution if they were unable to meet the new conditions.

The minister repeated his claims in statements to this House in September and October. In the last 24 hours we have seen an extraordinary turnaround. The minister's judgement has again been exposed as unsatisfactory and incompetent. The minister is completely out of his depth. The truth is that, after abruptly removing the drum lines in September last year, Minister Furner never wanted to put back any form of shark protection.

The court did not order removal of the drum lines, only that they not be fatal. Despite this, the minister cynically seized the opportunity to shirk his responsibilities. He used baseless claims to cynically dodge responsibility. Minister Furner has now been dragged kicking and screaming to complete the most basic of his ministerial responsibilities. The minister should come into this House and apologise to Queenslanders for cynically delaying and obstructing this commonsense solution and for his outrageous and relentless grandstanding.

The LNP welcomes the initiative shown by the federal government by principally adopting our Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Shark Control Program. Only the LNP understands and has a plan to safeguard and support Queensland's tourism industry. Only a Deb Frecklington LNP government can be trusted to deliver SMART drumlines. Only the LNP can be trusted to implement sensible and pragmatic shark control measures to protect humans and local tourism jobs.

Borallon Training and Correctional Centre



Mr MADDEN (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.40 pm): I am proud to have the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre located in my electorate of Ipswich West because it is the only training and correctional centre in Queensland and it is one of two TAFE campuses located in the great city of Ipswich. It is a truly innovative correctional centre.

Borallon prisoners are provided with access to training opportunities to improve their skills so as to increase their chances of employment when released. We know that employment is the key to reducing recidivism. TAFE programs delivered at the centre include certificate I in automotive underbody technology, certificate I in construction, certificate I in engineering, basic welding skill set, intermediate welding skill set, advanced welding skill set, certificate II in kitchen operations, certificate II in rural operations and certificate II in horticulture.

With the TAFE partnership, as a community project prisoners produce nest boxes, animal homes, dog boxes, puppy training stairs, cubbyhouses and trailers. With its Throughcare model, centre staff assist prisoners with their transition to the community upon release. Prisoners can be linked with housing and employment providers, Centrelink, Medicare, mental health service providers and other non-government agencies.

In 2018 the centre launched the Grid entrepreneurial program, a work restart initiative. The centre has also partnered with Max Solutions, which has an office onsite. They provide employment programs and a specialised program for our First Nation people. Modules include anger management, stress management, drug and alcohol counselling, interview skills and resume writing. Max Solutions also provides our First Nation people, through its Healing through Art program, with culturally specific activities such as the men's yarning circle, Murri dance and digeridoo playing. It also engages an Indigenous elder to provide its Positive Futures program to our First Nation people.

TAFE and Max Solutions are only two of the parties the centre has partnered with. Other partners provide a range of programs. A range of substance abuse programs are delivered by Decisions40+. The Kicking Habits program for prisoners up to the age of 25 is delivered by yourtown. The Straight Talk higher intensity program, which will commence shortly, is delivered by Gallang Place. The Healthy Minds program, delivered by Prison Mental Health Service of Queensland Health, concentrates on mental health wellness and practical coping strategies. The Build Don't Break resilience program, which will shortly commence, is delivered by centre staff. The Circuit Breaker program is currently delivered by centre staff through a local agreement with Hosanna Logan City. This program assists with emotional regulation and conflict resolution. Through the workRestart program the centre staff have developed a number of industry partnerships providing employment skills for the prisoners. This is all part of the centre's 'earn and learn' model.


Australian Framing Solutions have based a production facility at the centre. They manufacture lightweight steel framing for residential and commercial premises and provide training for prisoners. The centre has partnered with Golden Bone Bakery to provide training for prisoners to produce dog biscuits. The Barbed Design Studio is based at the centre. The studio employs a select number of prisoners who are provided with training in a range of graphic design applications. The Barbed Design Studio is the only graphic design studio in Australia operating from within a correctional centre.

The Borallon Training and Correctional Centre is also working with the Logan, Somerset and Ipswich council communities with the Connecting Communities native seed project. Over 2½ million native plant seeds have been collected from bushland at Yarrabilba, a new supersuburb of Logan, to produce plants to be planted in parkland in that suburb. So far residents, school students, farmers, contractors, conservationists, recreationists and government from these three regions have all been

involved with the program. Over 31,000 native plants have been propagated at the Borallon Training and Correctional Centre, in partnership with TAFE via a certificate I in rural operations and certificate II in horticulture.

The Borallon Training and Correctional Centre is clearly a world-leading correctional centre, and I commend its staff, its partners and its general manager, Peter Henderson. They are doing everything they can to reduce recidivism and improve prisoners' skills so they can increase their chances of obtaining employment.

Bushfires, Land Management

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (2.45 pm): I rise to put on the record the LNP's sympathy for the victims of the current bushfires in Queensland and across Australia. Since the current fire season started in Queensland last September, the courage and kindness displayed by ordinary Australians responding to an extraordinary public disaster has been inspiring. Lives have been lost, houses and property have been destroyed and hundreds of thousands of hectares have been reduced to ashes. It is a public tragedy. For the victims it is also a deeply personal tragedy and one that is ongoing.

There is no doubt in anyone's mind that the severe and prolonged drought has contributed to the size and speed of these fires. As the LNP has been saying since last year, poor land management regimes over many years have also been a major contributing factor. Australia's ecology is a fire based ecology. This means it requires constant management. Otherwise, make no mistake, we are living with a time bomb that is bound to go off. Queensland has always had climate cycles of wet years, when vegetation grows like crazy, followed by dry years, when the vegetation transforms into fire fuel. Climate change will only make these cycles more extreme.

In Queensland we no longer seem to have any system in place to monitor fuel loads or manage cool burning locally. Under Labor there has been far too much centralisation and very little transparency. Once upon a time, most of this was locally coordinated, bringing together local fire wardens, the local council, departmental representatives and Queensland Rail, Main Roads and even national parks and forestry. If we accept that our cool burn season is going to be shorter, then we need to reinstate these tried and true approaches, and we need state government departments to do their duty.

Last Friday the *Australian* reported that Queensland's department of forestry simply does not concern itself with bushfire in nearly four million hectares of state forest it is in charge of managing. I table this article for the House.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Australian*, dated 31 January 2020, titled 'Forestry staff not trained to face bushfire crisis: expert' [163].

These forests represent a major public asset which earned \$17 million in royalties last financial year. That is nothing compared to the threat these unmanaged areas of land represent to neighbouring landholders.

Questions have also been left unanswered concerning fuel management in Queensland's national parks. Western Australia's south-western corner has experienced a 30-year decline in rainfall. This beautiful part of the world is a biodiversity hot spot of global significance and is home to world famous forests. The Western Australian government now sets KPIs for fuel management in three key forests in terms of the age of the fuel on the forest floor. They aim to ensure no fuel is older than six years.

By contrast, Queensland is leaving years of cyclone and flood debris to decay on the ground in our regions. We are seeing the results in spots like Eungella and Deepwater National Park. We have also been allowing eucalyptus to encroach into rainforest and calling that eco-friendly. Indigenous people always burned the fringes of the rainforest to prevent this, because eucalyptus is explosive. Now we pretend it is climate change that is bringing fire to the rainforest when it is our own poor land management. In contrast, the Northern Territory has instituted Indigenous burning regimes across the entire cycle of the year. It has revolutionised the management of fire risk in areas such as Kakadu National Park. Queensland needs to adopt this regime in the savannah lands.


We have been told continuously since the 2018 fires that landholders are free to conduct their own bushfire fuel hazard burns. The minister says that the laws have not changed in 20 years. This is simply not true. If members want proof of the impact on bushfire risk management, they need look no further than the recent decision of the Queensland Court of Appeal.

The Court of Appeal upheld a \$1 million order on penalties and costs against a Queensland grazier for illegally clearing native vegetation while constructing firebreaks. Lawyer Dan Creevey said that the decision is a stark warning to all landholders that vegetation management laws do apply and that the penalties are severe. The results of these policies are there to see. If we are to do better,

kindness and courage are not enough. We also need honesty and intelligence as well. We have to ensure that we have the right procedures in place to ensure that landholders have the ability to protect their land. We also have to ensure that state government departments right across the Queensland government do their job to reduce fuel loads in state forests and national parks. When fires in Queensland do start and they hit the national parks, basically the fire explodes and gets worse and worse and it is then volunteers, rural firefighters and firefighters right across this state who have to defend. There is a saying in Queensland at the moment—

(Time expired)

Calliope State High School

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (2.50 pm): This afternoon I rise to talk about a truly fantastic event that happened last week in an electorate next to mine—that is, the opening of the Calliope State High School. Calliope used to be in the Gladstone electorate and the Gladstone electorate continues to help and support that community just down the road from my electorate office. Last week it was an absolute honour to be beside the new principal of Calliope State High School, Pete Stansfield—or, as the students call him, Mr Pete, because that is the way they are running the school—and welcome some of the first students coming into the new high school. This fantastic \$66 million school had over 165 year 7 and 8 students starting last week who will be taught by nine brand-new teachers who are now teaching in Queensland schools who in turn are supported by 17 staff. As we heard this morning, that is what this government is doing with regard to the eight brand-new schools that started up in Queensland last week.

Ms Grace: All on time.

Mr BUTCHER: They are all on time and all on budget, and I acknowledge the fact that these are the best schools for the best outcomes for these kids. Those numbers will continue to grow in Queensland because the Palaszczuk Labor government supports these full-time jobs in these schools and will continue to do so. I want to thank the principal, Mr Pete, for his hard work in connecting with the local community, and we certainly know the work that went in over many years to try to get this high school off the ground. He has hit the ground running with that fantastic high school in Calliope and I know that he and all of the teachers there will do a fantastic job for that community.

It is no secret that the opening of this school has been a long time coming for the wonderful community of Calliope. When I ran for the great seat of Gladstone in 2015 I pledged on that day that if the Palaszczuk government was elected we would stop the sale of the land that had been set aside and put on the market by the Newman LNP government. I made a pledge with community leader Linda Ninness during that time and I pledged that I would save that land. As a Labor government we went one step better and delivered a brand-new high school for that community. There was a growing need in that community for a high school to service the over 350 students travelling into Gladstone and Tannum Sands every day just so that they could get to school.

Since 2013 the community has been led and championed by Linda Ninness—a truly amazing woman for that community. She has been fighting to save that high school land and to get some acknowledgement that a school was necessary for that community. As I said, not only did we save that land; we now have a \$66 million investment on that block of land. To tell members the truth, after going through that school I can say that it is state of the art. It is one of the best schools that I have ever seen. I would have loved to have gone to that school as a student.


On Tuesday of last week standing in a world-class education facility that was built in just 12 months was simply outstanding and incredible to be part of. The construction of the new school supported over 180 local jobs on this project. I went out to the site on many occasions—I went out there with the Minister for Education and I went out there with the Premier—and every time I visited the site there were local contractors on the ground. There was Calliope Plumbing doing the plumbing works and early works. There was Cutuli Electrical doing all of the electrical installations and many more Gladstone companies that were doing the civil works and the concreting works on this fabulous school. After talking to the principal last week, I know that 75-plus per cent of work that was done was done by local contractors in Gladstone.

I was very impressed by the quality of the learning spaces and the expanse of the green areas, particularly the Rugby League footy field. I also note that the new principal is now a member of the local football club, making sure that those students get every possible chance to get active on the wonderful fields that have been supplied. Last Tuesday was a big day for the state government and state education in Queensland because, unlike those opposite, the Palaszczuk government is committed to investing in our education system and is proud to have delivered, as I said, eight brand-new state

schools—an investment of nearly half a billion dollars in this state. Those opposite said that Calliope did not need a high school. That is shameful for them. I cannot wait to watch this school grow into the future, because that community deserved a high school and that community got one delivered by this fantastic Palaszczuk Labor government.

PUBLIC HEALTH (DECLARED PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (2.55 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Public Health Act 2005 for particular purposes. I table the bill, the explanatory notes and a statement of compatibility with human rights. I nominate the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Public Health (Declared Public Health Emergencies) Amendment Bill 2020 [164].

Tabled paper: Public Health (Declared Public Health Emergencies) Amendment Bill 2020, explanatory notes [165].

Tabled paper: Public Health (Declared Public Health Emergencies) Amendment Bill 2020, statement of compatibility with human rights [166].

In December 2019 and January 2020 a new coronavirus known as novel coronavirus, or 2019-nCoV, emerged in Wuhan city in the Hubei province in China. The World Health Organization Emergency Committee has declared the viral outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. The World Health Organization also recommended that all countries prepare to address the spread of the virus through containment measures, including active surveillance, early detection, isolation and case management. As of 4 February 2020, the World Health Organization has reported that there are 20,604 confirmed cases of 2019-nCoV globally with, sadly, 427 deaths. Of these cases, 20,416 are from China. Outside of China, there are 188 confirmed cases in 26 countries. Australia has 12 confirmed cases. Of course these numbers change throughout the day and daily.

In Queensland there are currently two confirmed cases of novel coronavirus. Both cases have been quarantined and are receiving the very best care at the Gold Coast University Hospital. The Palaszczuk government has been swift to act and certain of its commitment to protect the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. We have followed the advice of our experts given the virus's pandemic potential and the potentially significant public health implications if we are unable to prevent its spread here.

On 29 January 2020 as Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services I declared a public health emergency for all of Queensland under the Public Health Act 2005. This declaration permitted the appointment of emergency officers who can exercise emergency powers to assist in managing the public health emergency. These powers include the ability to enter places to save human life, prevent adverse effects on human health or do anything else to relieve suffering or distress. In this case, the declaration of a public health emergency empowers emergency medical officers to detain people who may have the novel coronavirus. These powers will be used with care but will likely prove essential to preventing the spread of coronavirus in Queensland. For this reason, the declaration will remain in force until the situation stabilises and we can be confident that Queenslanders, particularly the most vulnerable in our community, are protected.

Ordinarily, once declared under the act, a public health emergency ends after seven days unless it is extended by regulation. As the public health emergency declaration was made on 29 January 2020, the declaration will expire at midnight on 5 February 2020 unless extended. Under the relevant provisions of the Public Health Act 2005 as it is currently drafted, it is only possible to extend the declaration by making extension regulations on a weekly basis until the declaration of a public health emergency is no longer required. It is anticipated that the risks associated with the novel coronavirus will continue for some time this year. To provide certainty and significantly streamline the process to extend the emergency declaration, the Public Health (Declared Public Health Emergencies) Amendment Bill 2020 will seek to amend section 325 of the Public Health Act 2005 to allow a regulation to extend a declared public health emergency for a period of up to 90 days.

The amendment is broadly consistent with interstate approaches to dealing with public health risks, such as section 7 of the New South Wales Public Health Act 2010, which also provides for a public health declaration to be made for a period of up to 90 days. If enacted, the bill will remove the need to make regulations on a weekly basis to extend the declared public health emergency. However, it will not change the existing process where once I, as the Minister for Health, declare that the public

health emergency has ended, the extension provided for by the regulation also ends. The amendments will give emergency officers and the Queensland community greater certainty about the anticipated need for a public health emergency declaration to continue for a particular period of time, allowing the government to communicate with certainty about the emergency arrangements that are required into the future to manage a public health emergency.

To allow for the declared public health emergency relating to the novel coronavirus to be extended for a longer period than seven days, the amendments are considered urgent and need to be debated by the Legislative Assembly as a matter of priority. For that reason I foreshadow I will move a motion requiring the remaining stages of consideration of this bill be considered during this sitting.

Given the immediate need to make these amendments to the act and in acknowledgement of the human rights and fundamental legislative principles implications associated with the use of the broad statutory powers available to emergency officers, the bill will include a sunset clause which provides that the effect of the amendments expires after 12 months. Further consideration can then be given to the appropriateness and effectiveness of these amendments to address future public health emergencies.

By making these amendments to the Public Health Act emergency officers will be able to continue their outstanding work in managing the public health threat of novel coronavirus without the need for the Governor in Council and government to make weekly extension regulations to ensure they have the powers necessary to protect Queenslanders. I thank members who attended the briefing with myself and the Chief Health Officer in the lunch break and thank all members, including the opposition, for their consideration of this matter. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. SJ MILES (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (3.02 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.

Declared Urgent

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (3.02 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That—

1. under the provisions of standing order 137 the Public Health (Declared Public Health Emergencies) Amendment Bill be declared an urgent bill and not stand referred to a committee;
2. the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services and the Leader of the Opposition or nominee be permitted to speak during the second reading; and
3. the bill pass through all remaining stages during this week's sitting.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (3.03 pm): I rise on behalf of the LNP in relation to this urgency motion. The LNP understands the vital importance of the need to detect and contain the novel coronavirus as quickly as possible and to protect the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders first and foremost. We appreciate that this is an international public health emergency and action needs to be taken to prevent the spread of this new disease. Given that it is a new disease, in many respects we are dealing with the unknown and that is why prevention is so important. State and national health agencies have been working together with other agencies to protect the health and wellbeing of all Australians. In Queensland we have two cases of the disease, both being treated at the Gold Coast University Hospital.

We appreciate the opportunity to be briefed on the legislation and the need for its urgency and we will not be opposing the need for urgent passage of this legislation. Patient care, indeed the health of all Queenslanders, should always come before politics and there seems no reason why this legislation should not be debated this week. While the committee process is important and fundamental to the democracy of our state, these are the reasons why urgent legislation is allowed and why these types of motions are rarely used.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

RESOURCES SAFETY AND HEALTH QUEENSLAND BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from p. 48, on motion of Dr Lynham—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.05 pm): All members of this House would agree that something needs to be done urgently to address safety in our resources sector, particularly our mining industry. Eight Queensland workers have lost their lives in the last 18 months. That is eight workers—in this case eight young men—who have not returned home to their families and to their communities. It is worth noting that the average age of mining employees is about 30 years old and that the industry is still male dominated. It is incredibly sad for these families—the mums and dads, the partners and spouses and the sons and daughters—who have had a loved one go onto the worksite and not come off the worksite that day. It is important as we debate this bill that we do not lose sight of what we are fighting to protect: the right of employees to come home off the worksite safely. These men should have been planning for the future of their young families, not having their young families plan their funerals.

The Labor Party has always been the party of the worker and it is with that proud legacy in mind that I stand in support of this legislation here today. Establishing Resources Safety and Health Queensland as a statutory body ensures that the role of protecting workers in the resources sector is separate to the role of growing the mining and resources sector, which is as it should be. It is critical that the role of growing the sector is held at arm's length from the role of upholding best practice safety standards right across the industry.

This bill enhances the functions of the existing Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee. The bill provides for a more strategic focus of the advisory committees, including the functions of developing a five-year strategic plan and identifying and prioritising critical health and safety risks. Those can be both immediate and more long-term as we have seen with the terrible re-emergence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis. The advisory committees will also have the function of reporting to the minister on how effectively the RSHQ has performed its functions.


One of the key outcomes of this bill is the creation of a safety and health regulator with coverage of all of the mineral and energy sectors. It will include an inspectorate for coalmines, mineral mines, quarries, explosives, petroleum and gas as opposed to just the mining industry which is essentially covered under the existing provisions. The RSHQ will have its own CEO who will report separately to the minister and be responsible for ensuring effective performance of the organisation's duties. It will allow for enhanced functions of the advisory committees.

The bill establishes the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health to supersede the existing Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health. They will be required to prepare and provide an annual report about the operations of the commissioner for each financial year. This report will then be published publicly on the Queensland government website and tabled in parliament. The advisory committees will be chaired by the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health and the existing arrangements relating to appointments and memberships of these advisory committees will continue.

I understand that at one time during the sitting of the 55th Parliament the idea was floated to move the regulator to Mackay and to base all of the operations of the role out of that region. However, the fact is that the workforce is spread right across Queensland and a lot of the roles are already regionally based. I think that that is important, as it allows inspectorates to be close to their respective sectors, ensuring that equal attention is paid to areas right across the state of Queensland, from the gas fields in the Surat Basin to the very important North West Minerals Province. The resources sector is based not just in Mackay, as much as they might like us to believe it. It is based throughout Queensland and we need inspectorates located in the most responsive and appropriate locations possible.

I finish by acknowledging the tragic re-emergence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis, also known as black lung disease, amongst mine employees. That sleeping threat has re-emerged in recent years. I know that every member of this House wants to see it stamped out. In his speech, the minister noted that, since detecting cases in Queensland, we have conducted almost 50,000 scans of workers to better detect the horrific disease. Of course, in this day and age it is unacceptable that the disease continues in our coalmining communities and we need to stamp it out. As I said earlier, in the mining sector the average age of employees is just 30 years. Those workers have a lot of living left to do. Not just as a

government but also as a parliament, we need to do everything that we can to ensure that workers not only come home each day but also do not bring that insidious disease with them. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BATT** (Bundaberg—LNP) (3.11 pm): I rise as a member of the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee to make a contribution to the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. I thank the secretariat staff for their invaluable assistance. I also thank my fellow committee members for the work done on examining this very important bill. In the time I have today I will talk about the importance of the bill and its main objectives.

The Queensland resources sector is worth \$62.9 billion to our state's economy, that is, approximately \$1 in every \$5. The resources industry directly employs 54,000 full-time employees and another 262,000 employees throughout the supply chain. That means that one in every eight Queensland jobs is reliant on the resources industry. Unfortunately, recently Queensland has seen a devastating spike in workplace fatalities occurring in our mines and quarries, with eight workers tragically losing their lives in the past 18 months. As all speakers so far have said in the House today, that is eight too many. We must take immediate action and ensure that the safety of workers is the highest priority. That is why the LNP supports the passing of this important legislation. The bill was established following the devastating number of deaths and the critical revelation that the number of mine safety inspections has fallen year on year from 1,781 inspections in the 2015-16 financial year to a figure of over 500 fewer than that in the 2018-19 financial year.

Everyone knows someone who works or is involved in our resources industry, including within my community of Bundaberg. Queensland miners, their families and our communities deserve to know what is happening in our mines and what has gone wrong and led to those accidents. This debate is not about casting blame. It is about making changes to ensure that Queensland's mine safety policies are right, so that we can move forward and ensure that lives are saved and that worker safety is never compromised.

The bill before us today seeks to establish the Resources Safety and Health Queensland or RSHQ as an independent statutory body responsible for regulating safety and health in the state's resources industries, separate from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. RSHQ will oversee coalmines, mineral mines, quarries, explosives, petroleum and gas. The bill also seeks to create a regulatory environment for workers and operators, managed by an independent regulator, with advice, direction and oversight provided through an advisory council and a commissioner.

As part of our inquiry process, the committee visited the Jeebropilly Mine. During discussions at the mine, committee members were told—

Safety is about not protecting resources sector workers from something.

Safety is about protecting resources sector workers for something.


We obtained a public briefing from the department on Monday, 16 September last year and held a public hearing on Wednesday, 25 September at which we heard from varying stakeholders from across the industry. It was interesting to note the comments of several of the stakeholders, including Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia, CCAA, which supports the bill but noted that there were concerns that the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor may shift focus towards prosecution rather than non-punitive mechanisms to improve health and safety outcomes, which is more like how it is today.

The Queensland Law Society supports the bill, but had similar concerns to those of the CCAA. The society requested improvements to require the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor to seek and have regard to the views of the commissioner on the public interest in prosecuting an individual matter, due to the commissioner's role and specialist knowledge. The QLS also raised concerns about the ambiguity of the definition of 'serious offence', stating that currently even a minor injury could lead to the consideration of a serious offence, which could only be prosecuted by the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. It would be interesting to hear the minister's thoughts on the QLS's concerns about the definition of 'serious offence'.

It was also interesting to hear the thoughts of the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association Ltd, which does not support the inclusion of the petroleum and gas industry within the bill and would prefer the continuation of the existing consultative processes for petroleum. The association has concerns that the petroleum industry would be cross-subsidising safety regulations in other industries.

The sole focus of this legislation is to improve safety for Queensland workers. One death is too many, but to have eight deaths in the past 18 months means immediate action needs to be taken. The LNP shares the considerable concerns of many Queenslanders about mine safety, which is why we support laws that protect miners' legal rights to a safe work place.

I need to mention the rushed amendments to clauses 4 and 5 that were brought into the House this morning by the minister and that will be debated later. I am very disappointed with the minister's decision to tear down Paradise Dam and to tear down the parliamentary process in the meantime. There will be no committee hearings about that. There will be no chance for the community to have their say on it. I will have further to say when we debate the matter later.

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.16 pm): I rise to speak on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill. I am relieved that finally some action is being taken with regard to mine safety. I am frustrated that it has taken the deaths of eight Queenslanders in 18 months to get the government's attention and to have this matter debated in the House. Frequently matters of importance to many Queenslanders are relegated to the bottom of the *Notice Paper*, but mining safety should not have to beg for the government's proper attention. Apart from the human toll inflicted due to injury and fatality, the mining industry at every level is highly conscious of the fact that its ability to operate requires a social licence.

While noting that eight deaths have gone unaddressed for 18 months in an industry that is worth \$62.9 billion to the Queensland economy, it should also be noted that, even as we hold this important debate today, we are still waiting for the public release of the findings of not one but two internal Labor reviews into mine safety. The internal review is another political ploy of the Labor government. We have seen it in response to Queensland's bushfire crisis and we are seeing it applied to the crisis in mining deaths. An internal review enables government to whitewash. The content of public submissions can be kept secret in an internal review. As a result, what the public knows and when it knows it can be manipulated for political reasons. Mining safety is too important to be used for petty politics.

Furthermore, as the member for Burdekin has pointed out, even when those reports are tabled there is no guarantee that we will see a timely legislative response to any recommendations. With very few sitting days before the election date, any new laws could lapse when the 56th Parliament is dissolved. I have to say that this approach is just not good enough. As a Bowen Basin member of parliament representing places such as Blackwater, Emerald, Springsure, Rolleston, Tieri and Capella, which are all mining towns, I have watched the rising death toll with horror. The loss of people such as Allan Houston and Donald Rabbitt is shattering for their families, friends, work mates and communities. Everyone in the Bowen Basin is talking about this issue. Their focus on the lack of action by the government has been intense, because there is no pattern in the types of fatal accidents that have claimed lives.

Mine safety is incredibly important. We need to take it seriously. The fact that important mine safety committees were not meeting and reporting on these matters was noticed and questions were asked. The committees were effectively dissolved or suspended because the membership did not meet the Palaszczuk government's gender equity guidelines.

It is also noted that there were 500 fewer mine safety inspections completed in 2018-19 than in 2015-16. This speaks volumes. Serious questions must be asked about why so many vital mine safety roles have been and remain vacant under the current administration. I will be standing shoulder to shoulder with mining constituents on this because it is truly a matter of life and death. The LNP will not be opposing this bill for that very reason.

I am a bit concerned that we should be talking solely about mine safety when it comes to this legislation when this morning we heard about the amendments that are to be moved with regard to Paradise Dam. If the government is bringing in legislative amendments with regard to Paradise Dam then we need to get out and meet the people who are affected by Paradise Dam. I am talking about the macadamia and avocado growers in the seats of Bundaberg, Burnett and Callide where Paradise Dam is located.

We need to get out and meet those people. We are talking about reducing water reliability for the most productive agricultural area in Queensland—Bundaberg. The town of Bundaberg relies on agriculture. Not only does it grow sugar cane but it probably has the best soils in Queensland when it comes to producing tree crops like avocados, macadamias and other fruit and vegetables. The economy in Bundaberg is reliant on water reliability. When water reliability is reduced it has an impact on farmers. Farmers have mortgages to pay and loans to pay back. They are also answerable to a bank manager who counts their water rights as a part of their valuation. When their valuation is affected it affects a whole line of things for those farmers.


I will be honest that I come from the Central Highlands which is a very productive agricultural area but we need to look at what Bundaberg produces in kilograms per hectare when it comes to macadamias, avocados and tomatoes. What we are doing here today by not allowing the amendments

related to Paradise Dam to go through the committee system is not allowing the minister, the department and, most importantly, the parliamentary committee—made up of members from the Labor Party, the LNP and the crossbench—hear the impact that this will have.

We are making a choice today about the impact of Paradise Dam. As a person who has grown up and been around water all my life, I know the value of water when it meets a property. If we are to reduce that, we need to go out and explain that and have a parliamentary process around that. We need to allow the parliamentary State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee to do that. Mr Deputy Speaker Weir is the deputy chair of that committee. He also understands the importance of making sure we are accountable and transparent when we make major shifts in terms of water policy in Queensland.

The minister needs to have open and transparent conversations with farmers through the parliamentary committee system. To bring in amendments today as we are debating this legislation, without taking them through the parliament committee system, is unfair on farmers, unfair on the agricultural industry and unfair to the Bundaberg, Burnett and Callide regions.

I can tell the House that there are farmers out there who are worried about what this is going to do to their tree crops and their ability to continue to produce what is essentially an important economic base for agriculture in Queensland. I beg the minister to take these amendments through the committee process so that the process is open and transparent for everyone.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (3.23 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019—a bill which will set up an independent body to protect the safety and health of Queensland's 70,000-plus resources sector workers. Firstly, I want to note that recent tragic incidents in mines and quarries in Queensland have been deeply disturbing. Families have a right to expect that loved ones will return home from work. It is every mining family's worst nightmare when their loved ones do not come home from work.

I want to offer my sincere condolences to the families, friends and co-workers of the eight men who have lost their lives on mine sites in Queensland in past the 20 months. The family and friends of Adam Malone, Connor-Shaye Milne, Allan Houston, Bradley Hardwick, David Routledge, Jack Gerdes, Brad Duxbury and Donald Rabbitt have had their lives torn apart because their husbands, their dads, their uncles, their fathers, their grandads have not come home from work. That is a real tragedy. That is why it is so important we are standing in this place today passing legislation which will make a difference to the health and safety of workers in our Queensland mines.

These deaths and injuries should not be happening and enough is enough. Over the past two decades 47 Queenslanders have died in the mining and quarrying industry, and that is plain unacceptable. The Palaszczuk government takes mine worker safety extremely seriously. As the member for the Keppel, I will always stand up and fight for improved safety for mine workers in Central Queensland.

Resources Safety and Health Queensland will form a new, independent safety and health regulator statutory body that will be a strong regulator with teeth and, importantly, be at arm's length from the industry it is regulating. Resources Safety and Health Queensland will include already independent mining inspectors as well as excising safety and health functions currently within the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. This separates the job of protecting the workers from the job of growing and facilitating mining and exploration projects and the resources sector as a whole. This is something that mine workers have been talking about for a long time and something that mine workers talk to me about regularly.

RSHQ will include Queensland's mines, explosives and petroleum and gas inspectors, the Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station in Redbank near Ipswich and the Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme that covers mine dust lung diseases, including black lung. RSHQ will be subject to monitoring and review by a separate, independent commissioner for mining and quarrying, petroleum and gas and explosives. The establishment of the independent body flows from the recommendations of the parliamentary select committee into coal workers' pneumoconiosis. The committee made 68 recommendations, all of which the government supported or supported in principle.

Over the last couple of months I have met with a number of former mine workers who suffer from coal workers' dust diseases. It is tragic to hear their stories. Tim, whom I met only a few weeks ago, is only 38 years of age. He started his mining career at the age of 17. He has only known working in mines and yet has multiple coal workers' dust diseases. His career in mining is over. He struggles to find employment. He is struggling mentally to deal with what has happened to him. His family has been completely torn apart by having to relocate after being diagnosed. It is horrible what is happening to him.


I am pleased that the government has supported those 68 recommendations, but there is still more work to be done. This bill is yet another in the suite of reforms the Palaszczuk government has put in place over the past five years to protect the safety and health of our resources sector workers. Our government has introduced reforms to enable the better detection and prevention of black lung and an improved safety net for affected workers, a \$35 million package to deliver reforms to improve the safety and health of our mine workers and a commitment to tighter controls on mine dust levels.

This bill represents the third major package of legislative reforms to mining safety and health in the past three years. Last year the regulator was given powers to issue fines without going to court for mine safety and health breaches. Maximum court penalties were increased to \$4 million. The government has also introduced sweeping changes to prevent and detect black lung disease among coal workers and provide a safety net for affected workers.

Our government has also invested \$1.2 million which will see a health service on wheels deliver vital medical checks to coal workers throughout regional Queensland. Talking to coal workers in my electorate and from further around Central Queensland I hear that they are very pleased about this commitment. It is an innovative way of delivering health services out in coalfields to the workers who need those checks done. The new mobile health screening service means respiratory health checks will be accessible to more Queensland coalmine workers. The mobile service, which is an equipped and staffed van, was recommended by the parliamentary select committee into coal workers' pneumoconiosis and will supplement existing regional specialist services.

These are more funds for more reforms to protect the health and safety of our 38,000 Queensland coalmine workers. The budget provides \$1.21 million over two years for the mobile screening service, which will help improve the detection of coal workers' pneumoconiosis, silicosis and other mine dust lung diseases. This bill was introduced weeks after a commitment by all mining and quarrying companies to improve safety culture, including safety reset sessions on all worksites statewide. I am incredibly proud that the minister has today introduced legislation to make industrial manslaughter an offence as it is in other Queensland workplaces. Queensland coalmine workers have told me that this is something that is important that this government needs to deliver on. I am pleased that we are.


The re-identification of coal workers' pneumoconiosis and the six mining and quarrying fatalities highlighted the importance of a transparent, independent safety and health body. At the time of the inquiry there were six mining and quarrying fatalities, but sadly we are now up to eight in the last 20 months. Queenslanders want to see a strong, fully independent regulator at arm's length from the industry it is regulating. That is what the RSHQ will deliver with a sole focus on the safety and health of our resources industries' workers. Mine worker safety is imperative and it is on all of us—government, industry and unions—to make safety our No. 1 priority to ensure Queenslanders come home safely to their loved ones. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (3.31 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill. The bill seeks to establish a revised regulatory framework for resources safety and health in Queensland that captures workers' trust, ensures independence and transparency, and enhances independent oversight of the performance of the regulator. The bill arises from the recommendations of the independently led Project Management Office, which was established by the Queensland government to examine and develop the key recommendations of the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee for implementation.

This bill is important to me personally, as I served on the CWP Select Committee. It was a privilege to be a member of the committee and to be in a position to finally recognise victims suffering from this terrible disease and their families and to effect changes to safeguard not only future coalminers but the entire resource industry. While on the committee I heard and saw firsthand the destruction caused to families of the victims of black lung disease from coalmining. The heartbreaking testimonies of victims of the disease and their families will continue to haunt many forever.

In 1984 the Coal Board published a report highlighting 75 suspected cases of CWP; however, over the following 33 years no black lung disease was diagnosed which, for some reason, never raised alarm bells with the government or departments. Consecutive state governments never thought it was strange that every other state that had coalmines still had black lung disease, yet for some reason Queensland was magically immune from the disease. Previous governments neglected and ignored the very people whom they should have been caring for and supporting. They showed no regard for the medical records which, the committee found, were stored away in shipping containers and broom closets.

The re-emergence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis was a shock to those responsible for monitoring the health of Queensland coal workers, but this was only because they would not listen to the many workers in the industry who had been reporting symptoms. For three decades those workers were told their concerns were baseless, as the disease had been eradicated. I would like to acknowledge the CFMEU for standing up for coalminers and for their passion and dedication in never giving up until the government recognised black lung and those who were affected. It is for those families and victims of black lung disease and the safety of those tens of thousands of workers in the resource sector that I support this bill. We must never see a repeat of this terrible period of history. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.33 pm): I rise to support the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill. I would like to start by acknowledging those people who have lost their lives or been injured in the mining industry and their families. Our entire society benefits significantly from mining, and those people have made significant sacrifices for the benefit of our society. I particularly want to thank all those workers and their families who were brave enough to share their stories with the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee, of which I was privileged to be a member. Many of the people who appeared before the committee did so under very physically, emotionally, socially and mentally difficult circumstances. Some of those people who appeared before us were very ill due to the impacts of CWP or other mine dust lung diseases. Some were in real fear of losing their jobs for speaking up. For many people in that situation the loss of a job means the loss of identity, the loss of a place to live or a house to live in, and it can mean the severing of your ties to a community that you and generations of your family have been part of. That is a very real fear, and those people braved that fear and gave evidence.

The things they said were quite shocking and the evidence our committee gathered was quite shocking to hear. In his contribution the member for Hill outlined some of the things we heard; for example, records stored in broom closets and health practitioners failing to do their jobs properly. Ultimately, all of that was driven by a regulatory system that completely and utterly failed. When I spoke on the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis) and Other Legislation Bill I made the following statement—

While it is great to have the compensation sorted out, our real goal and our enduring and fundamental goal should be to ensure that no worker is ever diagnosed with CWP again. The recommendations in the report lay out a way for that to occur, and I urge the government to implement those ...

This bill represents an important step in achieving the goal of implementing the recommendations of that select committee.

In the early 1980s a massive screening of every coal worker in Queensland was undertaken. Approximately 10 per cent of those workers were found to have some sort of coalmining related lung disease. Approximately one per cent had CWP. Amazingly, in subsequent years there were no cases of CWP detected or reported. Like most people in Queensland, I had given black lung disease very little thought. Like children down mines and pit ponies, I thought it was something from another age. Sadly, it was still with us.


When I did give it some thought and understood the nature and progress of this disease, it occurred to me that the scenario I have just described was impossible. It is impossible for a disease to be detected amongst one per cent of a workforce in one year and then be completely eradicated and disappear in subsequent years. It is not a disease that disappears because of a one-off screening program. You could imagine an infectious disease being eradicated quickly due to new antibiotics or a vaccine. Some cancers have reduced quickly when there are new detection processes or treatments put in place. However, this is a slowly-developing disease. There would have been people screened in 1984 who did not show signs of the disease until subsequent years. Since at that time no real changes to work practices were implemented and there would have been people continuing to be exposed to unsafe levels of coaldust who subsequently developed CWP, but these people would not have been picked up in local hospitals because the symptoms are close to other diseases.

We had a culture where people believed that we just did not have CWP in Queensland anymore, so nobody was looking for it. Indeed, nobody knew what to look for. It is a completely impossible scenario for this disease to have disappeared in Queensland, but collectively we all believed it—unions, employers, the government, health workers—and it is impossible to apportion blame to one individual group, department or employer. To the shame of this state, it has been a collective failure of all of those groups that stretched over three decades. There can be no doubt in my mind that, as the committee found, a huge part of that failure has been the lack of independent regulation and enforcement. Sadly, some of those workers have paid the ultimate price for that failure of regulation.

That regulation and enforcement should have focused on work practices, inspection practices and health screening. That failure to regulate and enforce independently stops with the passage of this bill. This gives effect to the goal of ensuring that no worker is ever diagnosed with CWP again. I know there will be many other positive benefits from this bill in other areas of safety, but I particularly wanted to focus on CWP. I spent time on that select committee and I saw what it means for those individuals, their families and communities. The state should be ashamed that we fell into a collective delusion that this disease had been eradicated.

I want to acknowledge the hard work of the minister. The minister dedicated his life prior to entering parliament and, I would argue, after it as well to maintaining and restoring health and to preventing injury and illness. When a person is injured or killed in the mining industry, it has a significant impact on the minister personally. This bill represents a real personal commitment by the minister to achieve that goal of ensuring that no worker is ever diagnosed with CWP again.

I want to finish by thanking and acknowledging those families affected by injury and death in the mining industry. I particularly want to thank those affected by CWP who were brave enough to appear before the select committee. They were no doubt ably supported by the CFMEU, representatives of which provided testimony and many appearances at the committee hearing, as well as much support to those people. I believe they support this bill. It is the people who are affected and their families that we should think about when we consider this bill. Without their bravery and their persistence, I doubt we would be having this debate today. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (3.41 pm): I rise in support of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. I want to recall my own experiences in the mining industry in speaking to this bill. In 2005 a young Nick Dametto decided after finishing his apprenticeship to get into the mining industry. It was an industry that was taking off and it provided a good opportunity for people to earn money in a trade where they probably would not be able to earn quite as much money in town.

I decided to get into hard rock mining because of the bad name that the coal industry had in 2005. We used to call pneumoconiosis the black lung, and that is what everyone in the mining industry still calls it so that is how I will refer to it today, or CWP. It had such a bad name in the Bowen Basin. The fact that it was not being reported in some cases and not being picked up does not mean it was not actually happening out there. There is a culture in the mining industry. People feel that sometimes they cannot report things like this, and that is what makes it very sad.

I commend this legislation coming through the House because it will help change the culture in the mining industry so that people will actually stand up. They will not only stand up to say they are sick or injured; they will stand up and say they have the right to be tested for this disease without being ridiculed. In the past, people were too scared to put their hand up for fear of retribution from a supervisor or a superintendent. Their supervisor would often say, 'This is your fault. You haven't been wearing your PPE,' or 'You've been underground and you've been doing something wrong in the coalmine and that's why you developed this disease'—even though it was through no fault of their own.

Hopefully, with the introduction of this legislation, parts of the coal industry will be tidied up. More stringent air testing and air quality requirements will ensure that, when a mine worker jumps on that plane or bus or drives to the mine site for that week or two of work, they will be in a safe environment and their families and the most important people in their lives will know that. This is one of the main reasons I put my hand up to become a member of parliament. Coming from this background, I felt I would be able to have the opportunity to speak on legislation just like this that was coming through the House. I thought I could stand up for not only my fellow mine workers but also coal workers whom I had never met or had the opportunity to work beside before.

The objective of this bill is to establish a revised regulatory framework for resources safety and health in Queensland that will help build trust in the industry among workers and ensure appropriate independence and transparency and enhance independent oversight of the performance of the regulator. Having more regulators and more mine site supervisors out there on the ground checking up on exactly what is going on in the mine sites will go a long way to helping people work in a safer environment. Like I said, it is all about changing the culture. When legislation like this is being passed, it does transpire on to mine sites where supervisors, superintendents and SSEs will stand up and say, 'Now we're being forced to do this.'

I have worked on a multitude of different mine sites from the North West Minerals Province to Western Australia's Pilbara region. I have worked on mine sites where safety has been paramount and is preached, as well as mine sites that maybe did not have the budget so the safety culture was not there.

Mr Costigan: Dumbed down.


Mr DAMETTO: I will take that interjection. Sometimes it has been dumbed down. This legislation has been pushed into the House and it has been forced by the workers. I must give credit to the CFMEU for the hard work they have done to work with the Labor government to get this legislation where it is today. This bill is not perfect and it will not always encapsulate everything that workers want, but it goes a long way to ensuring that mine sites will be a lot safer in the future.

A lot of credit needs to be given to the parliamentary committee that was set up in the 55th Parliament to investigate CWP amongst workers in the Bowen Basin and the coal basins of Queensland. Some terrible things have been brought up today. The member for Hill said that records were kept in places where they would never be found, like broom closets.

Mr Costigan: Shipping containers.

Mr DAMETTO: Yes, shipping containers. This was a disease that was going unnoticed. It may have been picked up but there were people who were not actually trained to look at the X-rays and medical reports to actually understand what they were looking at. This has now been brought to light. I must commend the committee for their hard work. I hope everybody on both sides of the House will support this legislation, and early indications say they will. This legislation needs to be passed and it will have the support of the KAP.

Before I finish, I want to echo the sentiment of the member for Lockyer in terms of the amendment that has been tacked on the end regarding Paradise Dam and the Burnett River. I think this amendment should have at least gone to a committee. It should have gone out to public consultation for the people in these areas, the people in the agriculture sector and the people affected by the reduction in the water holdings of this dam. I think it is wrong to be pushing this through as an amendment right now. We will be making sure we look at this in detail. We will be listening to the government's debate on this today during the committee stage. In light of that, I commend the first section of the bill to the House.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (3.48 pm): I rise to speak on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. My region has a long history with the Bowen Basin mining industry. Many in my community proudly earn a living from the resources sector. My father worked on the construction of the North Goonyella wash plant, and he also worked on the construction of the Hay Point coal terminal. Being directly involved as a miner or working in one of the varied service industries is a way of life for my community. My family is like many others today. We have a connection with the Bowen Basin. I have a brother who drives a coal train, another brother who services machinery and a nephew who is an electrical supervisor, and my son-in-law works underground.

As with the rest of my community, my family have skin in the game when it comes to mine safety. We all want to get it right. We want our family and friends to come home from work fit and healthy. It is not just my community that has a stake in the mining industry; we are a state rich in minerals. We have mines from the cape down to our southern border and from the coast out to the Northern Territory border. There are also thousands of Queenslanders who do not have a mine in their backyard and they fly in and fly out of our communities every week. This industry is truly a state industry.

We are good at mining. We do it sustainably. We also have the strongest safety laws in the world. However, that is not good enough. Workers have been injured and, even worse, some have not made it home. We must continually focus on our laws and our regulations to ensure we keep our mining industry modern and safe. Since 2015 we have seen a re-emergence of pneumoconiosis, or black lung. In the past 18 months we have also seen the tragic death of men in our mines and quarries. This is not good enough by any standard. That is why we are debating this bill today: safety and people before profits always.

It is necessary to establish a regulatory model which engenders workers' trust, ensures appropriate independence and transparency, enhances the independence and oversight of the performance of the regulator and is consistent with approaches to ensure that the risks in the resources industry are at acceptable levels. The independent statutory body, the Resources Safety and Health Queensland, RSHQ, will undertake regulatory and compliance activities under the existing resources safety and health legislation. It will establish an independent commissioner for resources safety and help to provide strategic advice to the minister; engage with the industry to promote safety and health; and monitor, review and report on the performance of the RSHQ. We need to have checks and balances in place to ensure every person involved in the mining industry is playing their part in a safe working environment for all.

RSHQ will comprise the coalmines, mineral mines and quarries, explosives and petroleum and gas inspectorates. The RSHQ will also include the Safety in Mines Testing and Research Station—Simtars—and Coal Mine Workers Health Scheme. In 2015 when the first cases of black lung were

diagnosed there were a lot of questions about who was responsible for workers' safety and who had responsibility for checks and balances on air quality safety monitoring. We cannot allow this situation to ever happen again.

As the resources safety and health regulator in Queensland, the RSHQ will administer the resources safety acts and further their purposes; protect the safety and health of persons in the resources industry; regulate the safety and health in the resources industry; monitor compliance and the effectiveness of the resources safety acts; and carry out commercial activities incidental to RSHQ's main functions, primarily in relation to the operation of Simtars and the government explosives reserves.


The model for RSHQ achieves the independence and accountability recommended by the parliamentary Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee by providing for a regulator functionally separate from the economic arm of government with an independent chief executive officer appointed by the Governor in Council. The model also provides for sector-specific independent monitoring and review of the performance of the regulator and report back to the minister.

The regulator will be based in Brisbane with inspectors based in regional centres like Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville and Mount Isa so they will be close to where the regulation resources are needed to ensure appropriate regulation across all mine sites. The government is building on its existing arrangements and has committed \$1.68 million over two years for 2019-20 to increase regional occupational hygiene inspectors for audit activities in Mackay and Rockhampton. Just recently three additional inspectors began work across Mackay and Rockhampton. This is on top of the already 17 inspectors working and based in the Bowen Basin.

Like other speakers, I would like to remember the workers who have been diagnosed with black lung. I speak of workers like Percy Verrall and Allan Whyte, who have a lifetime of work history in the industry, and also the young workers with a relatively short history in the industry who are living with the disease. They are very fearful for their future. Nobody should be compromised by going to work.

My community welcomed the announcement of the mobile health units. The units will go into workplaces. There will be no excuses for workers missing out on screening. Every worker is important. I would just like to touch briefly on a point made by the previous speaker. There are a lot of workers out there. They are not living with embarrassment because they have black lung; they are fearful that they will lose their jobs. They are fearful they will not be allowed to stay in the mines, because it is an industry they do love. The best thing we can do is bring in these regulations and ensure we keep every worker safe so they can stay in the industry they love.

I would like to also remember the families of the workers who have tragically lost their lives on the job. Their families will never be the same again. We have not forgotten any workers. This bill is for all of them. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.56 pm): Over the past 18 months our resources industry has been rocked by the loss of life on a scale unseen for 20 years. Over this period eight people were killed while simply doing their job. Eight people were killed working in mines in the resources industry in Queensland. In the same period 500 fewer mine safety inspections were completed than in the preceding 12 months. This Labor government's highly flaunted advisory committee on mining safety failed to meet for several months due to a failure to meet gender requirements. The mind boggles. In a period of unprecedented loss of life within Queensland's resources sector, how can a group tasked with monitoring and improving safety within the sector fail to meet simply because those opposite could not find the right gender mix of members?

Queensland's miners and their communities deserve better and they deserve answers. They need to know why this government sat idle, providing them with nothing but unfilled promises and assurances that changes were coming while their family members thought their working husbands and wives were safe. However, as we now know, more people perished.

I would like to take the time to recognise the lives lost and those families who have been left behind. Now is the time to give those families and communities the answers they have deserved for so long. Now is the time for change. That is why I stand today to make a contribution to this bill. The Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019 seeks to establish a long-awaited revised regulatory framework for the Resources Safety and Health in Queensland. This framework intends to engender worker trust, ensure appropriate independence and transparency and enhance independent oversight of the performance of the regulator.

This objective will be achieved through the establishment of Resources Safety and Health Queensland, an independent statutory body which will monitor, maintain and improve safety within our state's resources sector. We certainly hope that it does.

Like my colleagues in the LNP, I will not oppose this bill. The LNP holds the safety of Queensland resource workers as the highest priority and understands that change is desperately needed to keep our workers as safe as possible. I will, however, be raising a few concerns that have been raised upon contemplation of this bill by submitters. Before doing so, I thank the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, its secretariat and the submitters for their efforts in relation to the bill.

Any outside observer would be right to express some reservation upon seeing this bill front the House. Even a cursory glance at this Labor government's track record of anti-resources, anti-regions and anti-jobs policies would suggest that its members are probably not the ones most likely to fight for resource workers and their safety. In fact, in 2017 even one of Labor's biggest supporters, the CFMEU, called for the minister to resign over the insensitive and inadequate response to the Queensland inquiry into black lung disease. It is plain and simple that this Labor government has botched mine safety, and now we need to see how its latest attempt stacks up.

Queensland's resources sector and its over 250,000 employees account for one in eight jobs in Queensland and provide a \$62.9 billion boost to our state's economy. It is an industry we cannot do without. Ensuring the safety of its employees is paramount and must be its sole focus. While it is widely supported by submitters from the resources industry, several submissions raised concerns that need to be addressed.

Both the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Resources Council raised concerns over the role of the Workplace Health and Safety Prosecutor as outlined within the bill. Both the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Resources Council feel it would be beneficial to require the prosecutor to seek out and take regard of the views of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health before deciding whether to begin or progress a prosecution on an individual matter. It was felt by the submitters that, given the commissioner's role and specialist knowledge, it would be ideal for this person to provide advice on the public interest in prosecution. Similar concerns were raised by other unions that felt it critical the Workplace Health and Safety Prosecutor either personally hold or have a direct linkage to an industry expert with specific resources industry knowledge and expertise.


The Queensland Law Society also highlighted concerns over the bill's broad definition of a 'serious offence'. As defined within the bill, a serious offence is an offence where the contravention caused bodily harm, defined in the Criminal Code as any bodily injury which interferes with health and comfort. Under the bill's provisions, any such offence is required to be investigated and prosecuted by the Workplace Health and Safety Prosecutor. From my experience, that standard of bodily harm is very low.

While it is important that individuals injured at work maintain the right to justice and fair treatment, it would be simply ludicrous and a major waste of public resources for the prosecutor's time to be taken handling investigations into minor injuries which could be resolved through other avenues. Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia shared this concern in its submission, stressing the importance of ensuring that safety information and learning continue to be distributed free from delay and that positive performance and actions receive the recognition they deserve.

My electorate is home to several resources sector employers including Rock Trade Industries in Helidon, Withcott Quarries, Brooks Quarries, and Zanow's Concrete and Quarry. I know from speaking to Mr Allan Payne and his team at Rock Trade Industries that Rock Trade Industries and other industry leaders regularly set new standards of safety and innovation, after which the government plays catch-up. I can attest that Rock Trade Industries upholds the highest standards of safety possible and agree that its efforts to continue to improve and revolutionise safety practices in the resources industries should not be overshadowed by the poor performance and practices or failures of others.

When it comes to the safety of our state's resource workers, we have seen this government fail before, be it reducing the number of mine safety inspections completed, ignoring shortage of mine safety roles or dissolving the mine safety advisory committee until gender equity was restored. Labor simply is not working for resource workers in Queensland. Every failed policy or failure to act places lives at risk and leaves communities heartbroken, not to mention that it reduces the confidence of investors.

I join with my colleagues in the LNP to say to those opposite that, if safety is important, this bill could be the starting point of ensuring such and let us get on with the job. We will not stand in the way of the implementation of this bill but will watch closely as this happens and hold the government to account for any further decrease in mine inspections or the unfortunate event of further injury or fatality in our resources sector. Labor has failed before. Queenslanders will show Labor how they feel about its failing again when the election of 31 October 2020 comes around.


 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill 2019. This is an omnibus bill that covers three main areas: industrial manslaughter offence provisions; mine rehabilitation and financial assurance reforms; and regulatory efficiency improvements. Everyone in Rockhampton knows a miner. They are our sons and daughters, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, neighbours and friends. They deserve to come home safely at the end of each day. It is totally unacceptable that we have had eight fatalities over the past 20 months.

The health and safety of our 50,000 mine and quarry workers is paramount for the Palaszczuk government, and that is why we secured a commitment from mining and quarry chiefs to schedule a safety reset for workers. Last year, all workers across the state were required to complete extra safety training. Two independent reviews were also conducted, now recommending a number of changes. At the time of the safety reset, the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy said that the safety reset signalled the start of a number of legislative changes to come, and this is what the bill is about.

The Queensland government has been working closely with the unions and mining companies on a new offence of industrial manslaughter. In mining, we have worked together on these reforms to strengthen the safety culture on mine and quarry sites. There are a lot of mining families in my electorate who deserve to have their friends, family and loved ones come home safely after each and every shift, and that is why I support this bill. Industrial manslaughter offence provisions will ensure the consistent process of serious breaches of health and safety obligations by employers, corporations and senior officers that result in the death of a worker on a Queensland work site.

The inclusion of industrial manslaughter into the resources sector will ensure that senior officers and corporations put the safety of staff at the forefront of their operations. Constituents who are contractors at the mines talk about their fear of reporting health and safety issues. They are concerned that if they raise issues they will not get any more shifts and will become unemployed without severance pay.

How difficult would it be for contract statutory office staff to report safety concerns when they are in fear of not getting further shifts? This bill requires statutory office staff for the mining companies to be employees of that company. This will ensure the staff members can raise safety issues and make reports about dangerous conditions without fear of losing their jobs. The health and safety of all workers is paramount for this Labor government. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (4.10 pm): All speakers in the debate of this bill today agree that this is about making sure that miners who go to work and do their job come home at night. We want that for every one of our workers, whether they are in the mining sector or in the emergency services. We all want to make sure we look after our people.

I heard the member for Gregory talk about Springsure being a mining community. Back in the day, when I started my teaching career, it certainly was not a mining community; it was agriculture and beef. In recent years it has gone into mining. I imagine that a number of the students I taught back in the day—that is going back several years now—would be working in those mines. They would have families too. I want to make sure that we in this House do everything possible to protect the kids I taught who are now men and women with their own kids going to Springsure State School—to ensure that those people go to work each day, do their job in a safe environment and come back home to their kids. That is what we need to do.

I have also spent some time in Townsville. In fact, this is my 22nd year of living in Townsville. It is not quite a coalmining town, but when I first arrived there it had the largest fly-in fly-out workforce in Queensland. It was the second largest in Australia—second only to Perth in Western Australia. Mining was a major part of the workforce, particularly in a lot of the schools that I taught in. We had kids who would wait for mum and dad to return from their various times out at those workplaces. I can still remember really clearly some instances where there was a collapse of a mine. Whether it was in the mine that these kids' parents were working at or not, you could see the uncertainty, terror and anxiety in the kids. It really affected these kids mentally.

For some kids, both their mum and their dad were away working on mine sites. These kids were usually under the care and guidance of grandparents or an aunty or uncle. Not knowing what was happening was really difficult for the kids. On those occasions we allowed kids to have their phones switched on so they could receive a phone call from their mum or dad that they were okay, that it was not them. I could never imagine what that was like. I could never imagine thinking, 'Are my mum and dad okay, because I have heard there is a mine collapse or there are some problems in a mine?' This legislation is about protecting workers so that their kids feel safe.

Recently while out west I did a bit of a mine tour. I thank all those mines that welcomed me. It was absolutely brilliant for a city boy who goes to work during the day and comes home most nights to family. The mine environment is very different. The workers rely on their mates and on the safety of the mines. Every single time I went to one of those mine sites, the first words out of people's mouths related to safety. Everything we did was impacted by safety—making sure people worked safely and that we visited those sites in a safe way. The people conducting those site visits were making sure of not only our safety but also their safety and the safety of everyone else. When it comes to mining and some of the big machinery, you do not get a second chance. That is why we have to do everything right. That is why we need to ensure that every step we take is to protect these workers.

When I read through the select committee report and saw what was happening in our coalmining sector, it astounded me. Black lung, as it used to be called back in the day, had all but vanished. For 30 years it was not an issue. It was not on our radar. It was never spoken about. That is what happened in the 'old days' of mining. We have seen that old disease returning. It is affecting the livelihoods and the lives of our workers. It is affecting their partners. It is affecting their families. We need to be doing something about this.

What I saw from reading the committee report was complacency at that initial level. While we had systems in place, complacency had crept in because people had not seen this disease for 30 years. We saw things like coalmines not being required to report dust-monitoring results or any exceedences to the Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health. To me, that is just ludicrous. If you are not relying on data to tell you a story, you are not getting the right story. We need to be doing everything we can. Also, there was no central repository for data on dust exposures in Queensland coalmines. We were just relying on people's memories or adhocery, because we did not believe that this disease existed anymore.

I congratulate every member of the select committee that did the work on this. I know that the former member for Southern Downs, Lawrence Springborg, was involved with it. I acknowledge the work of each and every member of that committee. I thank them for bringing this issue to the attention of this House. Here today we are working through what processes and what steps we put in place.

This bill will establish Resources Safety and Health Queensland as a statutory authority. This ensures that RSHQ will not be part of or subject to oversight from an administering department such as the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. This will ensure that the function of protecting workers is separate from the government functions of growing and facilitating mining and exploration projects and the resources sector as a whole. That is a great step. That is about separation of functions. The government will be able to promote mining while a completely separate body will ensure things are being done appropriately.


The Project Management Office report stated that structural changes do not in themselves protect workers from risks to their safety and health. The management and control of workplace risks involves, among other things, targeted intervention coupled with robust monitoring and review directed at continuous improvement. Organisations work through continuous improvement. That continuous improvement means collecting data, reporting data, having an independent body able to review that data and making sure they put in place the necessary strategies and interventions to address this particular issue.

I mention the annual report. Clause 64 states—

(1) The commissioner must—

- (a) prepare and give to the Minister a written report about the operations of the commissioner during each financial year; and
- (b) as soon as practicable after it is given to the Minister, publish it on a Queensland government website.

That is about clear and transparent accountability for the public. I notice that the committee has also asked in its workings that it see a review of that process as well. Mining, as we have heard, is a huge part of our economy. It is a huge part of our workforce and, as in my background with my great-grandfather involved with the Mount Isa Mines, largely we all have a number of distant relatives who were involved in mining, the backbone of this great state. I commend this bill to the House and thank the committees for their work.

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (4.19 pm): I rise to support the Resources Safety and Health Queensland Bill. In rising today, I want to acknowledge the victims, their families and their communities who have been impacted by the re-emergence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis and recent quarrying fatalities. Every worker in Queensland deserves to come home safe after a day's work. Every worker in Queensland should have faith that the government is doing everything possible to

protect their health and safety on the job. The safety of Queensland's resource workers is at the very heart of this bill. Along with everyone else in Queensland, we were shocked when there was another fatality in January at a mine site. The loss of that young man was a devastating blow and my condolences go out to the victim's family and friends. This was the eighth fatality in two years and it is entirely unacceptable.

The Palaszczuk government has already extensively reformed mine safety and health over the past five years. This bill is another step in delivering on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to protect mineworkers' safety, which already includes sweeping changes to better prevent and detect black lung disease amongst coal workers and provide a safety net for affected workers; extra powers for the mine safety regulator to issue fines without going to court for mine safety and health breaches; and an increase in maximum court penalties to \$4 million. Under this bill, the government is establishing a statutory body, Resources Safety and Health Queensland, to monitor the safety and health within the resources industry and ensure the industry's compliance with the resources safety acts. The bill will also establish a Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health to replace the existing mine safety commissioner. Creating a separate statutory body will ensure the genuine independence of the regulator and that the safety and health of workers will be above commercial considerations.

This bill has arisen from the recommendations of the Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Select Committee and in establishing the statutory body it will not be part of, or subject to oversight from, the mines department. I want to acknowledge the work of community advocates and health professionals who have lobbied for victims after the re-emergence of black lung disease. I particularly want to acknowledge my colleague the former member for Mirani who, as chair of the mine dust diseases victims group, has long championed this important issue.

This bill also provides for an independent Work Health and Safety Prosecutor established under the Work Health and Safety Act to prosecute serious offences. The bill also amends legislation to define what a serious offence is and what would be prosecuted by the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor. I am a proud AMWU member, having first worked there as a young lawyer and advocate, and I note in its submission it supports the safety reset that is key to this bill. I did want to mention John Hempseed, a local Moura resident and long-time coal shop steward for the AMWU, who has fought for many years for a miners' memorial in the town of Moura. At the opening ceremony of the Moura Miners' Memorial, former CFMEU vice-president and local resident Ray Barker spoke. He said—

Some people say time tends to cure all, but I don't think it does in the hearts and minds of the immediate families of these men, of the fathers, husbands, sons that went to work one day and didn't come back ...

The union movement has a long and proud history of giving a voice to workers and defending their rights and fighting for their safety. I want to thank all of the unions that continue to advocate on behalf of their members on these important issues. This is about safety and it is about the right of all workers to go to work and to come home to be part of their family. Every Queenslanders deserves to feel safe at work and to feel confident that they will make it back home to their loved ones. It is about workers and it is about their families and their communities. It is about keeping workers safe. I commend the bill to the House. I move—

That the debate be now adjourned.

Division: Question put—That the debate be now adjourned.

AYES, 49:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 41:

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

KAP, 2—Dametto, Katter.

NQF, 1—Costigan.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Debate, on motion of Ms Fentiman, adjourned.

CHILD DEATH REVIEW LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Resumed from 18 September 2019 (see p. 2915).

Second Reading



Hon. YM D'ATH (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (4.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 was introduced on 18 September 2019 and referred to the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for examination. I thank the committee for its thoughtful consideration of the bill. I also thank the stakeholders and organisations who took the time to make submissions on and attend the public hearing in relation to the bill. I am pleased to inform the House that on 18 November 2019 the committee tabled report No. 25 and made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. I welcome the recommendation of the committee. In doing so, I note the statement of reservation from the opposition members of the committee and I will address this in my contribution to today's debate of the bill.

This bill reflects the Palaszczuk government's ongoing commitment to protecting Queensland's most vulnerable children. The Palaszczuk government has significantly invested in the child protection and family support system after the cuts and divestment we saw when the opposition was last in government. The Palaszczuk government has also implemented wideranging reforms in the blue card system to better protect children and commenced implementing recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The loss of a child in any circumstances is a tragedy. When a child who is known to a child protection system dies, it is imperative that we learn from these tragedies to ensure that we as a government are doing everything that we can to protect children and, where possible, help prevent future deaths. Consistent with the recommendation of the Queensland Family and Child Commission, QFCC, the bill establishes a contemporary best-practice model for reviewing the deaths of children known to the child protection system. The bill requires key government agencies to critically reflect on their involvement with particular children who have died or suffered a serious physical injury and will establish a new independent Child Death Review Board to examine child death cases at a whole-of-systems level to identify opportunities for continuous improvement across the broader child protection system.

While currently only Child Safety and the Director of Child Protection Litigation are required to conduct internal systems reviews, the bill will expand this requirement to Queensland Health, the Department of Education, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Youth Justice where these agencies have also had involvement with a child who has died or suffered a serious physical injury. This expanded system of internal reviews will promote ongoing learning and improvement, accountability and collaboration across these key government agencies that have a high degree of contact with children known to the child protection system. While ultimately agencies will determine the extent of and the terms of reference for their internal reviews, the bill provides that agencies may consider the adequacy of their involvement with a child or their involvement with other entities in providing services to the child and the adequacy of legislative requirements and the agencies' policies. The bill provides a process for internal agency reviews, including when an agency must commence a review and when a review must be completed and a report prepared.

The bill recognises that these reviews may overlap with other established review processes that agencies have in place, for example, root cause analysis or health services investigations undertaken by Queensland Health. It is not the intent of this model to replace or duplicate these existing processes which will continue to apply alongside the new internal review requirement. The bill provides that where there is overlap in relation to a matter, agencies are required to work together to coordinate reviews and avoid unnecessary duplication.

A consistent theme in previous child protection systems reviews and other death review processes, including in the 2018-19 annual report of the Domestic and Family Violence Death Review and Advisory Board, is the importance of open exchange of relevant information across government and non-government agencies. To this end the bill includes new information-sharing provisions which will enable agencies to share information with each other. This is important not only for the coordination of reviews but also to ensure that agencies can identify a child's touchpoints across multiple government and non-government service providers. The bill also allows agencies to request information from an entity, with requests largely expected to be directed to funded and contracted services. This recognises

that often children receive services directly from these agencies, particularly given government's continued investment in the non-government sector to provide early intervention and intensive family support services.

After completing reviews the bill allows agencies to share any relevant findings or learnings with each other. This provides an opportunity for agencies to share not only areas of improvement but also examples where things have worked well, such as policies or procedures that have been helpful or effective or an integrated service response across agencies that has a successful outcome. This exercise is not about assigning blame across agencies. Rather, this is about working together towards shared improvements as part of a unified response to achieving better outcomes for children. Child protection is a shared responsibility and these information-sharing provisions are integral to ensuring ongoing learning and improvement across government. The new Child Death Review Board established under clause 23 of the bill will receive all internal agency review reports relating to child deaths to inform its whole-of-systems reviews. These reports will form a valuable evidence base for the board's reviews which are carried out in relation to the broader child protection system following child deaths connected to the child protection system.

The bill also enables the board to conduct reviews in relation to an issue about a particular system that may have presented in an internal agency review. However, it is important to note that the board's reviews will not necessarily focus on an individual child, as is currently the case for reviews carried out by current child death case review panels. Rather, the internal agency review reports will provide an evidence base for systems reviews by the board for further in-depth analysis. Under the bill the board will conduct systemic reviews of child deaths that extend beyond reviewing key government agency service provision to an individual child, to look across the range of government and non-government services and systems, such as health, education, community and justice services that support vulnerable children and families.

As I have indicated, the board's review could, for example, be based on an individual case or a collection of cases with a similar theme or issues. In exceptional circumstances, as the responsible minister I can also ask the board to carry out a systemic review or to consider a stated system or issue outside its usual scope. Ultimately, however, the board will be independent in performing its functions, including determining the extent of and the terms of reference for its reviews and in the way it conducts its proceedings. In this regard I note that some submitters to the committee raised concerns regarding the independence of the board.

Strengthening the independence of Queensland's child death review model is a key objective of this bill. The QFCC found that Queensland's current child death review system is not sufficiently independent. For example, currently secretariat support for child death case review panels is provided from within Child Safety. This is why the board is located within the QFCC, consistent with the approach in Victoria and other jurisdictions whereby the child death review function is independent from the government department responsible for child protection services.

A number of other measures have also been taken to ensure the board's independence from government. The bill explicitly requires the board to act independently and in the public interest. While the board is located in the QFCC to enable the QFCC to provide secretariat support, it will operate independently with separate and distinct functions and powers.

Consistent with other states and territories, whereby the head of the child death review body is also the head of the agency in which it is located, the bill provides that a commissioner of the QFCC, whom I note is appointed by the Governor in Council, must be appointed as chairperson of the board. While the role of chairperson is certainly an important one, I wish to emphasise that the decisions of the board will be made collectively by the multidisciplinary group of board members.

Importantly, under the bill the board must reflect the diversity of the Queensland community and cannot include a majority of public service employees. This is central to ensuring independent and robust decision-making in which the public can have faith and confidence. The bill makes clear that the board is not subject to my direction, or the direction of anyone else, in performing its functions. While as responsible minister for the QFCC I am able to provide directions to the commissioner in performing functions under the Family and Child Commission Act 2014, this will not extend to the board or to a commissioner in their capacity as chairperson of the board.

Importantly, the bill requires the board to produce annual reports, which must be tabled and can include recommendations about improvements to systems, policies and practices, and legislative change, as well as reporting on progress made on the implementation of previous recommendations. In addition, the board can, at any time, prepare a report about the outcomes of a review or another matter arising from the performance of its functions, such as research. These reports may be published

or, if they contain certain sensitive information or recommendations, be provided to me as the responsible minister, with considerations and requirements for tabling as outlined in new section 29K of the Family and Child Commission Act as inserted by the bill.

I will turn now to an additional matter raised by submitters in relation to the ability of the board to request and share information. Consistent with the QFCC recommendation, a key objective of the new model is strengthening the powers of the board to request information from a broad range of government and non-government entities. Some submitters noted the need to ensure that the board cannot compel entities to provide information in certain circumstances, for example, where consent has not been given by a relevant party or where information may be subject to legal professional privilege. I note, too, that similar information requesting provisions are included for internal agency reviews, which enable agencies to request information from entities that may be relevant to internal reviews. This concern of submitters is understandable given the highly sensitive nature of the information that the board is likely to receive.

For public entities, the bill includes an underlying principle that information should be given to the board on request, in a timely way and to the extent that is appropriate having regard to the relevance of the information to the board's functions and the effect of giving the information on the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children. This establishes the clear expectation that public entities, including government agencies, will be collaborative and provide information as requested to support the board's functions. However, I wish to clarify that there is nothing in the bill that requires that any entity hand over information on request or be compelled to hand over information.

The bill enables the sharing of information and addresses any legislative barriers by making clear that entities may give confidential information to agencies and the board, despite any other law that would otherwise prohibit or restrict the giving of the information. However, there is no requirement for entities to comply with a request and no penalty attached to the provision. If the information is provided, there are provisions in the bill ensuring that confidentiality of information is protected, as well as protection from liability for giving information. This framework strikes a balance between enabling and encouraging the sharing of information, critical for the board to perform its functions, while still allowing entities the discretion to determine what is appropriate to be shared.


Finally, I would now like to turn to the statement of reservation by the opposition members of the committee. Opposition members have questioned the time it has taken, since the release of the QFCC report, for the bill to be introduced. It is of the utmost importance that we get this new model right. That is why, following the release of the QFCC report, significant work was undertaken by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, in collaboration with the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women, the QFCC and other relevant agencies, to establish a contemporary, best-practice child death review model for Queensland. Consultation was undertaken across government to resolve policy, operational and resourcing issues to best give effect to the model.

To build on the work of the QFCC in developing the model, departmental officers undertook targeted consultation with New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia counterparts to explore the strengths of their individual child death review models and identify key opportunities for Queensland. This is consistent with the QFCC recommendation that provided that best-practice benchmarks and experiences of other Australian jurisdictions be considered. These processes take time, but were necessary to ensure that this model delivers on public expectations and meets the key elements of the QFCC report. Rushing to introduce a model without proper consideration of best-practice benchmarks and interstate models does nothing to properly protect vulnerable Queensland children.

I also remind the opposition that the current system whereby Child Safety reviews itself is the system that the LNP themselves introduced while in government. As such, it is a bit rich for the opposition to be calling on the government to rush to get rid of their own model.

Collaboration, not just across government but also across all services in contact with vulnerable children, will be key to the success of this model. This model is not about blame and disciplinary action. The bill makes clear that apportioning blame is outside of scope. This model is about ensuring that we are all doing our part to embrace opportunities for systems and practice improvements, for the benefit of our most vulnerable children.

In conclusion, I would like to again thank the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee for its consideration of the bill and acknowledge the valuable contribution of all those who made submissions and participated in the public hearing. I would also like to thank the QFCC for their report and their continued leadership in the oversight of the child protection system. The amendments made by this bill will enhance the protection of children in line with the Palaszczuk government's strong ongoing commitment to keep our communities safe. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr JANETZKI** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (4.46 pm): What a shemozzle this Labor government is! They have had to adjourn a debate. The Paradise Dam amendments have blown up in their faces and, humiliateingly, they have been forced to adjourn that debate so that we can—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. We are not debating the adjournment. We are not debating a bill that is no longer subject to debate. We are debating the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Indeed. I think the member well knows that he has strayed outside the bill. Could you please keep to what we are doing?

Mr JANETZKI: We now turn to the bill on which the Attorney-General has just given her second reading speech. The opposition will support the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill that is before the House this evening. However, the Labor government should not think that the opposition's support for the bill means that they will not be criticised. This Labor government should not think that their record in relation to the protection of our most vulnerable in Queensland will not be criticised, because it ought to be. Through our support for the bill the opposition acknowledges that these are good and necessary reforms to protect the most vulnerable. However, the Labor government, under this Premier and for previous decades, has left a great deal to be desired. Through criticisms of the Labor government and their approach to the protection of our most vulnerable, they have been given fair notice. They know what the criticisms will be.

On this side of the House we think this is one of the most important pieces of legislation that the House will consider this term. It goes to the question of how we treat our most vulnerable. A little later I will turn to the *Annual report: deaths of children and young people*. We in this place know that if we do not stand with the most vulnerable, with our children, then we are derelict in our duty.

What we have learnt over the years and we know is that we are not talking about individual cases. It is not going to be a matter of picking out individual problems. We are looking at a systemic failure under the Premier's watch in the last two terms of government but also stretching back decades. It just cannot be pinned down to one case, one death, one incident of negligence or mistreatment, it is a systemic failure. Some of the details and statistics in relation to child safety will be addressed by my colleague the member for Burnett, the child safety shadow minister. It is not just an individual case that we are addressing. It is a systemic crisis. It is a systemic failure that this bill is trying to address. It is what this government has failed to deliver over the last 25 of 30 years that this bill is trying to address.

Tragically, in June 2016 Mason Jett Lee, a 21-month-old known to Child Safety, was violently robbed of his life. That violent death prompted the government to request the Queensland Family and Child Commission, the QFCC, to oversee the reviews being undertaken by the department of communities, child safety and disability services and the child death case review panel and the investigation conducted by Queensland Health about the services provided to Mason Jett Lee before his death.

That request from the Premier came in around July 2016. On 30 March 2017 the QFCC handed down its report entitled *A systems review of individual agency findings following the death of a child*. The QFCC made one overarching recommendation which was to consider a revised external and independent model for reviewing the deaths of children known to the child protection system. On 18 September 2019, nearly two years after the QFCC report was handed down, the Labor government introduced this bill. Today, nearing three years after the QFCC report was handed down, we are finally debating this bill. Does that three-year delay from this Labor government not say everything about their approach to child safety and our most vulnerable in Queensland? That three-year delay tells us so much. The evidence has continued to stack up over the last two terms of this Labor government.

We only need to think back to blue cards where there have been 70 amending acts over a couple of decades of Labor rule. They were plugging holes and papering over cracks. The Labor government stole our amendments and adjourned that bill too so they could go away and sort out the amendments they needed to adopt. The QFCC made a series of recommendations in relation to blue cards that would have kept our children safer. The government ignored the recommendations around international criminal checks that would have kept our children safer. We only need remember the tragic case of Tiahleigh Palmer—

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance. The member is now seeking to debate a bill that has already been debated in this House and he should be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Member for Toowoomba South, I was listening to see where you were going with your comments. It would be helpful to me if you could make linkages to the bill in what you are speaking about.

Mr JANETZKI: Then we saw the Mason Jett Lee private member's bill that this side of the House introduced. That would have put a line in the sand when it came to child killers in Queensland. We saw the government react when we started talking about the death of our most vulnerable—our children—under Child Safety notification and watch. Last term of government we saw the Mason Parker private member's bill introduced. Pressure was brought to bear by this side of the House—

Mrs D'ATH: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Firstly, it appears the member for Toowoomba South has not prepared a speech. That is how important this bill is to him. He has talked about three bills previously before this House. He is not actually talking about the bill before us today. I ask that he be brought back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba South, I appreciate that you are giving some broader context, but I urge you to make sure you stick to what is in the long title of the bill. I am having a look at the objectives of the bill as well. I think we have given you some latitude with that. I would appreciate it if you would make sure your comments are within the long title and objectives of the bill.

Mr JANETZKI: I find it pretty rich that the Attorney-General would seek to make points of order when I just heard the Attorney-General talk about the QFCC. She waxed lyrical about the QFCC. It was that side of the House, it was the Labor Party that opposed the creation of the QFCC. This side of the House will not be lectured to on child safety by a Labor government.

It is entirely appropriate to give context. In the last couple of decades the LNP and the National Party and Liberal Party had always given bipartisan support to child safety enhancements—

A government member interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Minister!

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Those on my left, too! I cannot hear the member for Toowoomba South.

Mr JANETZKI: Over the last two decades the Liberal National Party and the Liberals and Nationals previously always gave bipartisan support to the Labor government of the day. That is until the Carmody inquiry recommendations and the creation of the QFCC which the Labor Party opposed. They did not support the reforms arising out of the Carmody inquiry. The Attorney-General got up at the time and said that there was not enough consultation before the introduction of the QFCC. That is after there had basically been a commission of inquiry. To hear the Attorney-General get up and wax lyrical about the QFCC is blatant hypocrisy. For the Attorney-General to be interjecting on this side of the House simply for giving some context to this legislation is a misuse of the House.

I want to turn to some of the specifics of the bill. The objective of the bill is to implement the recommendations of the QFCC report and give effect to the government's commitment to develop a new, independent model for reviewing child death cases. This is achieved by establishing a new, independent Child Death Review Board located within the QFCC responsible for carrying out system reviews following child deaths connected to the child protection system.

The board will also be responsible for identifying opportunities for continuous improvement in systems, legislation, policies and practices, and to identify preventative mechanisms to help protect children and prevent deaths that may be avoidable. In exceptional circumstances the minister may ask the board to carry out a review in circumstances where the child is not connected to the child protection system but the death or injury is relevant to the child protection system. In particular, any review will consider matters relating to the provision of services to and other interactions with children and their families by government and non-government entities.

The government's objectives will also be achieved by expanding the requirement to conduct an internal systems review following the death or serious physical injury of a child known to Child Safety or to other relevant government agencies involved in providing services to that child. Currently, Child Safety and the Director of Child Protection Litigation conduct internal reviews, but this will be extended to Queensland Health, the Department of Education, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Youth Justice.

The purpose of the internal review is to promote the safety and wellbeing of children who come into contact with the child protection system by facilitating ongoing improvement in the provision of services and promote accountability of the agencies involved with the child. To best achieve this it is

encouraged that agencies work collaboratively by sharing information with each other in a timely manner. In the case of child deaths, review reports are given to the board which then carries out further reviews of relevant systems.

There were six submissions received in relation to the bill. Submitters included the Australian Association of Social Workers, Bravehearts, Queensland Law Society, Sisters Inside, PeakCare Queensland and an unidentified submitter. Bravehearts was strongly in favour of the bill and Sisters Inside, AASW, PeakCare and the QLS agreed in principle with the proposed amendments.

It is now over 15 years since former premier Peter Beattie introduced the Child Safety Legislation Amendment Bill establishing the new Child Death Case Review Committee. That bill implemented many of the 110 recommendations of the Crime and Misconduct Commission's report *Protecting children: an inquiry into abuse of children in foster care*. That in turn built on the groundbreaking Forde inquiry of 1998 and 1999 which examined the abuse of children in Queensland institutions. Then premier Peter Beattie said at the time—

The bill also establishes the new Child Death Case Review Committee. This independent committee will provide a critical, external accountability mechanism that will oversight the child death case reviews undertaken by the Department of Child Safety. It will be chaired by the Children's Commissioner and members of the committee will have appropriate broad-ranging expertise. The role of the committee will be to review the departmental case reviews. It will make recommendations to the Department of Child Safety about its policies and procedures relating to the delivery of services to children and families, and will monitor the department's response to these recommendations.

He went on to say—

The committee will also be able to recommend whether any disciplinary action should be taken against officers of the Department of Child Safety. The bill also expands the jurisdiction of the coroner to investigate the deaths not only of children subject to orders but also those children in a placement with a parent or guardian's consent.

From that time we did see bipartisanship on child protection matters in the House until, as I have already alluded to, after the Carmody inquiry and the government of the day opposing those recommendations.

Presciently, at that time then opposition leader, the former member for Southern Downs, again supporting the Labor government bill at the time, said—

These processes will have to be put in place, but I stress again that they are there because mistakes have been made in the past. We will have failed our children in care if in another five or six years we look back and an unacceptably high number known to the department have died. If mistakes are made, they have to be properly scrutinised and the department's processes improved. We should not accept a standard lower than this.

They were prescient words of the then leader of the opposition and former member for Southern Downs. In those comments he used the time frame of five or six years looking back but, as we have seen over this past period of government with the Premier's leadership and ministers, we have seen systemic challenges in child safety and the protection of our most vulnerable. We have failed to learn from mistakes. The nonpartisan way in which these matters were once addressed lapsed after the Carmody inquiry recommendations and the QFCC was opposed by those opposite.


Upon their return to government in January 2015, their record in relation to the protection of our most vulnerable has been appalling: redacted records, hidden reports, questions left unanswered. Time and time again we have seen children neglected and systemic problems continuing. There is mass confusion. We have seen washed data. The former child safety minister admitted that in 2017-18 child safety notifications reached their highest level in five years at nearly 24,000. There are nearly 10,000 children living away from home, an increase of about 1,000 on 2013-14 figures. The number of children subject to a protective order jumped to over 10,500 by June 2019. That is 556 children more than 12 months earlier and 1,237 children more than in 2014-15. The completion rate of investigations being carried out is extremely low, with only 39 per cent of investigations being completed in time. Child safety officers are clearly overburdened and under pressure.

If any names are to be given to the Labor government's generational failures in child safety it is the names of those children who have lost their lives. We know those names that are so bound up in these issues—Mason Jett Lee, Tiahleigh Palmer, Curtis Powell—and all those other nameless children we do not know about. Yes, there have been sincere attempts on both sides of the House to try and correct systemic problems, to try and address the deep-seated challenges facing our community, but time and time again they have just not improved the system. We need only turn to the *Annual report: deaths of children and young people, Queensland 2018-19*, which is an outstanding report. There we see again that our most vulnerable children and young people are dying.

I want to point out that in 2018-19, 58 children passed away. The most troubling statistic for me relates to the suicide of young people. This bill will assist in determining why these things happen. We have seen the suicide rate go up 53 per cent: 29 of the 57 deaths in 2018-19 were from suicide. That

is more than ever a call for this House to do whatever we can to provide mental health support for our young people. One other remark I want to make in relation to this report relates to the over-representation of Indigenous Queenslanders in the infant mortality rate, being 6.4 deaths per 1,000 Indigenous births compared to 3.7 deaths per 1,000 non-Indigenous births.

This report should be read by all members of this House so that we fully understand the challenge—the important duty on all of us—to do what we can to support our most vulnerable: our precious children. As I said at the beginning of my second reading contribution, if this House does not stand with our most vulnerable, our most precious children, then we are derelict in our duty. That is why, despite the reservations I have outlined in my contribution, the opposition will support the government's bill. I commend everyone in this House to do what we possibly can in whatever way we possibly can to do our utmost to protect our most vulnerable and most precious children.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (5.08 pm): I rise to support the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. We must never forget that we are debating a piece of legislation that is about the welfare and safety of some of the most vulnerable members of our community—our children. Community safety is of paramount importance to our government, and that is why this legislation is being introduced.

On 10 April 2017, the Queensland government released the Queensland Family and Child Commission's report entitled *A systems review of individual agency findings following the death of a child*. The government accepted its single recommendation to 'consider a revised external and independent model for reviewing the deaths of children known to the child protection system'. To that end, the government will establish a new, external and independent Child Death Review Board. The board will replace existing child death case review panels within child safety. The board will consistently focus on all deaths of children known to the department who have died in the previous 12 months, with the ability to make whole-of-systems recommendations to government, non-government or private entities in a way that is timely and transparent. The Queensland government is committed to introducing legislation that requires key agencies, including Queensland Health, the Department of Education, the Queensland Police Service and the department of child safety, to undertake internal reviews in child death cases.


What I have just outlined is the essence of the changes the government will introduce. What matters also though is the motivation. What do we want? We want all children to be as safe as possible. The question is how we can best achieve that objective, that motivation. This government will always do everything in its power to keep the community safe and to keep vulnerable members of our community safe, especially our children. This goes without saying. Our government will always do everything in its power to protect our children, but it is also a community responsibility. The safety of children is everybody's business. It is a collective responsibility. It is a matter for families. It is a matter for communities. It is a matter for organisations. It is a matter for governments. Every child has the right to be brought up in a loving, supportive family environment but, when necessary, the government does need to step in to ensure the safety of children. In the event of a child's death, the government will ensure that all circumstances are fully investigated.

The independent review board will have the ability to look at a child's involvement across a range of systems and services that may be provided by government, non-government or private entities and in turn make recommendations. The board will also have supporting functions to analyse data and apply research to identify patterns, trends and risk factors. Beyond this, the board will also have the power to request confidential information from any entity, whether that is government, non-government or private. For example, the board could request confidential information from a public entity, a non-government agency that provides a service to children or families, a private hospital, a medical practitioner, the principal of a school or an early childhood education and care provider. Provisions in the bill maintain existing protections to ensure privacy and the confidentiality of information obtained.

An important difference from the current system is that the board will be able to make public system recommendations and publicly monitor the implementation of these recommendations. The bill provides that the board produce an annual report on its operations. In the interests of transparency, this report will be tabled annually in parliament. As I mentioned, the motivation behind this bill is a very noble one and that is to protect our children, to do everything in our power to keep our children safe, especially those in vulnerable circumstances.

I commend this bill to the House. I encourage all members to support it. I pay tribute to all of those hardworking people in our community—be they in government agencies, like the department of child safety or the Queensland Police Service, or in non-government organisations or in the community.

They work hard every single day to ensure kids are kept safe. I pay tribute to them. Their work is hard but it is very honourable work. I keep them in my thoughts because I know their work is challenging. I commend the bill to the House and I encourage members to support it.

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (5.14 pm): I rise to speak on the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. This bill symbolises a tragedy that occurred for a little boy named Mason Jett Lee—a 21-month-old baby who, at the hands of his abusers, died a painful, lonely death on 11 June 2016. The tragedy of Mason is not only that those who were meant to care for him failed him; it is that two government agencies—child safety services and Queensland Health—knew of Mason prior to his death and both agencies had the capability and the power of the law to keep him safe, to remove him from his abusers, but both agencies failed to do so.

When Mason's story broke, shockwaves were sent through the public. The ripple effect of his death was far-reaching inside the workings of these two government departments, particularly child safety services—so much so that the confidence of the child safety workers to do the very job they were there to do was seriously compromised. Workers felt hung out to dry. Blame was being levelled at the front line, yet according to the then minister an internal review would give us the answers we needed.

Both agencies initiated their formal review process to examine their involvement with Mason prior to his death. The Premier brought in the cavalry to oversee this. The Queensland Family and Child Commission was brought in to ensure that the agency reviews were timely, thorough and able to deliver outcomes to improve service delivery to vulnerable children in Queensland. The QFCC was there to provide oversight because not even the Premier had faith that her two government departments could conduct their reviews in a timely and thorough manner or deliver outcomes to improve practices for children in most need of protection. When the Premier has no faith in her own government systems, then what faith should the general public hold in them?

This bill is only being introduced because of the circumstances of involvement of government departments prior to Mason's death. As I have already mentioned, Mason died on 11 June 2016. The QFCC's oversight report was handed down in March 2017 and contained one recommendation. We are now in February 2020, three years later, debating this bill that resulted from that one recommendation to revise the model for reviewing deaths of children known to the child protection system. That is three years to implement a process that was the sole recommendation of such an important report—important enough for the Premier to commission, but not important enough to act upon immediately that recommendation was made three years ago. It was one recommendation only; it was one single line that the QFCC believed would help remedy a broken system and ensure other children like Mason would never succumb to his fate.

That single recommendation that has taken the Palaszczuk Labor government three years to act upon involved consideration of a revised model for reviewing deaths of children known to the child protection system. If any government should have acted immediately upon any recommendation involving the child protection department, it should have been Labor with their dismal track record of scandals in this very space. It is now more evident than ever before that Labor put protecting children in the too-hard basket. They always have. Their track record is evidence of this. Labor simply cannot run a child protection system in Queensland. They fail on every measure and then they sit on recommendations that just may have saved lives over the last three years.

The truth is that the Queensland public will never know whether this bill will in fact help to ensure lives are saved and our most vulnerable children, like Mason, will indeed be protected. They will never know because accountability for Mason's death and the circumstances surrounding Child Safety's involvement will never be known. What the Queensland public know is that the cone of silence, the confidentiality provisions used to the fullest extent and most liberal interpretation, has allowed this government and the hierarchy of Child Safety to never be held to account.

Changing processes in how a child's death is reviewed is a good thing, but this is not accountability. Tweaking the process for how deaths of children like Mason Jett Lee are reviewed internally and externally is not accountability. Accountability is what happens when those at the highest level take responsibility and say, 'We failed this child and we vow never to do this to any other child.'

They were not the ones who inflicted the pain and suffering upon Mason, but they were certainly responsible for a system that failed him and ultimately left him to die a painful and lonely death in the hands of his abusers. The very system that was there to protect Mason Jett Lee at a time when he needed protection the most failed him and no-one stood to account—not the minister and not her director-general, no-one. Instead, those with the ultimate responsibility for resourcing Child Safety service centres to allow the front line to do the job they are there to do—the minister and her


director-general—hung their workers out to dry. When the story of little Mason broke in the media, shock waves were sent through the community. How could two government authorities that were involved with Mason—Child Safety and Queensland Health—get it so wrong and fail to be held accountable?

It was, in fact, my colleague the member for Mudgeeraba who took up the fight for Mason to ensure what happened to him never happens to another child. It was the member for Mudgeeraba who held the minister and her director-general to account on behalf of the Queensland public. Without the member for Mudgeeraba keeping Mason's death front and centre on people's minds this little boy would just be another child known to Child Safety who died, eventually making his way as a number into the annual child death statistics. I want to thank the member for Mudgeeraba for what she did. Her strong advocacy for Mason following his death should never be underestimated nor ridiculed by this Labor government.

Revising a model for reviewing child deaths of children known to the child protection system will only ever be an after-event process. It will only ever be legislation that, whilst necessary, is only there to deal with children known to Child Safety after they die. It has taken three years for the Palaszczuk Labor government to act on one single recommendation. The intent of the single recommendation made by the QFCC back in March of 2017 is to ultimately save lives from learnings of review processes involving systems that are there to protect our children. Taking three years to act on this recommendation is disgusting. The Premier ought to be ashamed as she took the wheel on this one.

In the time since Mason's death we have seen tragic headline after tragic headline of failures of Child Safety to protect vulnerable children at their greatest time of need. What we will never know is had the Palaszczuk Labor government acted immediately upon the QFCC's single recommendation after it was made in March of 2017, would some of these children known to Child Safety still be alive today? Taking three years to make good on one recommendation is inexcusable and only drives home the absolute lack of accountability that this Labor government takes in the most important government agency that exists: the one that is there to protect children at their greatest time of need.

Mason was not yet two when he died. He would be turning six this year—the year that one single recommendation resulting from his death finally makes its way to the House to pass as legislation. Shameful!

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (5.22 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Child Death Review Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. The bill amends the Child Protection Act 1999, the Director of Child Protection Litigation Act 2016 and the Family and Child Commission Act 2014. The bill gives effect to aspects of the Queensland Family and Child Commission's recommendation from its report, *A systems review of individual agency findings following the death of a child*, which proposed a revised external and independent model for reviewing deaths of children known to the child protection system. The bill expands which government agencies must review their involvement with a child following a death or serious injury.

The bill establishes a new Child Death Review Board to review systems, identify opportunities for continuous improvement and mechanisms to protect children, and prevent deaths that may be avoidable. Queensland's current child death review system is a two-tiered system established under the Child Protection Act 1999. This involves: an internal systems and practice review of service provision by Child Safety and the Director of Child Protection Litigation; and the convening of external multidisciplinary child death case review panels, located in Child Safety, by the Minister for Child Safety to conduct an independent review. The QFCC report focused on system-level issues arising from the agencies' child death reviews.

As I said, Queensland has a two-tier system for reviewing departmental involvement with children and young people who have died or suffered serious physical injury. Tier 1 is the internal review process conducted by Child Safety, known as a systems and practice review. Tier 2 is an external review of Child Safety's internal review by an independent child death case review panel.

The QFCC report identified several significant strengths of Queensland's current child death case review model, including that everyone involved was passionate and committed to improving outcomes for children; systems and practice reviews were guided by clear documentation and effective practice; and there were good working relationships between external child death case review panels and the secretariat. The review of the current model also found that Child Safety's internal review processes are comprehensive and effective at an agency level. In addition, child death case review panels are established under legislation and members are drawn from a variety of disciplines.

The QFCC report noted that both tier 1 and tier 2 reviews examine serious injuries and not just death, and both are 'empowered to consider learning and system improvements'. This has proven problematic in practice. However, Queensland's current system for reviewing deaths of children known to Child Safety does not consider or identify systems changes required to protect vulnerable children, or 'encourage verification of key points of agency interaction and service delivery'.

The QFCC identified several best practice benchmarks to be considered in the design of a contemporary child death review model. In concluding its review, the QFCC made a single, overarching recommendation that the Queensland government consider a revised external and independent model for reviewing the deaths of children 'known to the child protection system'. Our government accepted this recommendation and committed to introducing legislation requiring additional agencies involved in providing services to children in the child protection system—Health, Education and Police—to conduct internal reviews which are already undertaken by Child Safety and the litigation director. The bill before us gives effect to that single, overarching recommendation of the QFCC and our commitment as a government.

The bill amends the Child Protection Act to expand the requirement to conduct an internal review when a child known to Child Safety dies or suffers serious physical injury to other key government agencies and amends the Family and Child Commission Act to establish a new, external and independent Child Death Review Board located within the QFCC. The board will replace existing child death case review panels within Child Safety.

The key issues raised in submissions included the expansion of agencies required to conduct internal reviews; information-sharing provisions, both for internal agency reviews and systems reviews conducted by the new Child Death Review Board; the issue of individual accountability; and the collaborative function of the new Child Death Review Board. While submitters raised issues with particular aspects of the bill, all published submissions acknowledged the importance of advocating for and protecting Queensland's most vulnerable children.

In respect of internal reviews, Sisters Inside supported the expansion of agencies required to conduct an internal review because—

... all organisations concerned with children should work towards the wellbeing and safety of children and in particular, government departments should always ensure that children are properly cared for and protected from harm.

Bravehearts' submission affirmed this view noting that 'through a thorough, effective and independent review process, government will be better placed to protect our most vulnerable children'. Submissions from PeakCare, the Queensland Law Society and the Australian Association of Social Workers also supported measures to expand the conduct of internal reviews to other relevant agencies involved in providing services to children to enhance the safety of children and young people who have contact with the child protection system.

With respect to other relevant agency reviews, although Sisters Inside supported the purpose of internal reviews, its submission raised concerns about the conduct of an internal review by the agency head. While it recognised an agency 'may be in the better position to provide a review of its particular involvement', Sisters Inside suggested there may be a possible lack of independence. The submission proposed that in order to improve independence, internal reviews be conducted by an independent party. In response to this, the department highlighted the requirement of nominated agencies to review their involvement with children known to the child protection system who have died or suffered serious injury forms part of the QFCC's recommendation, which the government accepted. The purpose is to promote learning and analysis of internal decision-making, consideration of systems issues and collaboration with other agencies.

Further, the department added—

Requiring relevant government agencies to conduct an internal review, rather than having an independent party conduct the review, enables these agencies to critically reflect on their involvement, supports learning and continuous improvement, and, importantly, recognises that child protection is a shared responsibility.

I support this notion. In respect of information sharing, a number of submitters raised concerns with regard to relevant protection from liability for the giving of relevant information. I will not expand on this point any further as I appreciate the Attorney-General provided further clarification in this regard in her second reading speech.


Any improvements to the protections and the systems that afford those protections to our most vulnerable are to be supported. We can never do enough to prevent such deaths and we certainly should never shy away from shining a light on the issue.

I thank the Attorney-General and her department for their assistance during the committee's inquiry, submitters for their valuable contributions as part of the inquiry, my fellow committee members, our committee secretariat and Hansard. The committee made one recommendation—that the bill be passed. Accordingly, I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Linard, adjourned.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Same Question Rule

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I refer to my ruling on 27 March 2019 with respect to the application of the same question rule to the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, passed by the House on 17 May 2018, and the member for Maiwar's Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill. Both the act and bill deal with the issue of the prohibition of political donations. However, I ruled that the member for Maiwar's bill did not offend the same question rule.


On 16 October 2019 the House passed the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 2 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 with amendment. The bill received assent on 30 October 2019. The act primarily deals with real-time disclosure of electoral expenditure; the management of councillors' conflicts of interest and requirements relating to registers of interests to align with the requirements that apply to state members of parliament; mandated full preferential voting for mayoral and single councillor elections; councillor complaints framework; and electoral funding and financial disclosure, amongst other matters. I am satisfied that the same question rule is not enlivened as a result of the House's decision with respect to the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 2 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Act.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT (CLEARING FOR RELEVANT PURPOSES) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 26 November 2019 (see p. 3803), on motion of Mr Katter—

That the bill be now read a second time.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (5.31 pm), continuing: I rise to contribute to the debate of the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill. This bill does not go far enough when it comes to high-value agriculture. The private member's bill seeks to create an obligation on the chief executive to issue an information notice where an application for clearing as assessed under section 22A of the Vegetation Management Act 1999 has been rejected. The LNP proposed a much more proactive approach for landholders. In regard to our proposals for vegetation management laws, we contend there should be high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture opportunities for landholders.

Further, the LNP has proposed that high-value and irrigated high-value properly made applications can be assessed against guidelines developed in genuine consultation with industry. Furthermore, the LNP proposed a deemed approval process, giving even more certainty and a streamlined approval process to landholders who make these applications. Under the LNP's plan, landholders would not need to go through a time-consuming and possibly expensive appeals process to the chief executive officer as outlined in the private member's bill.

The LNP proposals are more workable for landholders. They reduce red tape, deliver that certainty that landholders are absolutely craving in this area and do so much more than what is proposed in this bill. Amendments to the private member's bill tabled in the last sitting fall short of delivering certainty for landholders—something they had through the self-assessable fodder harvesting code delivered in government by the LNP. The private member's bill amendments only apply during a drought declaration period. They do not take into account those landholders who use mulga as fodder as part of their property management during non-drought periods.


The LNP had in place a workable fodder harvesting code when in government, and that worked during drought periods and when there was no drought. Why? Because landholders need to be able to deal with the thickening of vegetation. They do not necessarily have the resources during drought

periods to do that and, further, drought is not a time when they can re-establish grass growth in areas being rehabilitated from vegetation thickening. Landholders need to be able to harvest and thin mulga and manage its incredible ability to thicken. They say that if you take down one mulga tree 10 others will come to its funeral—and that is so correct when you see what is happening across my electorate.

The LNP's proposed amendments to Labor's vegetation management laws continue the retention of a fodder harvesting area management plan and allow for the self-assessment of mulga to continue in drought periods and non-drought periods. The private member's bill keeps the red tape during the non-drought periods. The LNP propose that the red tape be cut for good—not just in the drought.

The shadow minister and I have been out speaking to landholders in my electorate. In fact, we spent a whole day with landholders at Charleville listening to their concerns with the Labor government's vegetation management laws. It is simple: the people in my electorate have been managing and harvesting mulga for 100 years and fodder harvesting is not tree clearing. Landholders tell me that they have more mulga now than they had 100 years ago.

These landholders want a plan from the LNP. They want what was delivered when the LNP was in government. They want workable, practical vegetation management landscape laws that cut through the red tape, streamline the processes and give certainty—drought or no drought—to the ability to harvest fodder and manage the thickening of that vegetation. This is so important to them, because there are many areas across my electorate that have lots of acres of mulga which they need to manage appropriately.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (5.35 pm): I rise to speak against the Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018, a private member's bill introduced by the Katter's Australian Party. I am passionate both about a strong, growing economy with jobs for locals and about protecting our environment for generations to come. However, an analysis of this private member's bill provides very little in terms of how it would support long-term economic growth and sustainable environmental protections into the future. These are the key criteria on which this legislation should be analysed.


Let us be clear: Queensland had vegetation management laws in place from 2004 to 2013. During that time, those laws were in place in communities in the Cook electorate—and the Cook electorate continued to grow and prosper. That was until the Newman government scrapped the laws that it promised to protect at the 2012 election. The 2013 amendments to the Vegetation Management Act 1999 allowed a landholder to apply for development approval to allow broadscale clearing of remnant vegetation for high-value agriculture or irrigated high-value agriculture.

The former LNP government should be considered in this debate because scrapping the vegetation management laws had a huge impact on the environment, resulting in wholesale land clearing for high-value agriculture and irrigated high-value agriculture. The flow-on effect meant that near-threatened species were at risk of becoming smaller or in decline, and there is a concern for their environment.

The amendments put forward in this private member's bill will look only to abolish the strong framework already in place and, if anything, strip any accountability and transparency measures that are there to protect our greatest asset, our natural environment and biodiversity. It is absolutely necessary that Queensland has a strong vegetation management framework for managing a valuable resource on behalf of its people. I would like to see a vegetation management framework that delivers a simple and effective process where the application of these protections is judged in the context of the local needs and demands across the most diverse communities in our state.

Under the current legislation there are protections for local landholders. In the cape, landholders can continue to apply for other types of clearing permitted by the vegetation management framework. Landholders in the cape can also clear under the accepted development codes and exemptions for a range of activities. These activities include clearing for property infrastructure; weed control and public safety; and exemptions to clear to construct and maintain fences, firebreaks and necessary infrastructure.

We have had this legislation in the past and we continue to grow local opportunities. I am confident that we have a strong future with a strong vegetation management framework in place not only to support the continued economic growth but also to achieve long-term environmental outcomes that we need to build a strong future for generations to come. As I said at the start of my speech, I do not support this bill.

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.39 pm), in reply: It is very disappointing that there have not been more speakers on the bill. Government members' contributions to this bill have been very disappointing. I tried to set the bar very low with the amendments we have brought to the House. It is very disappointing to hear during the course of the debate comments to the effect that we are trying to turn things back. I thought we made it very clear at the start that this bill just sought to tidy up what we inherited, respecting the views and the ideologies of the government of the day. Labor won the war in this parliament in relation to tree clearing—we acknowledge that—but let's tidy things up and make them fair.

I refer to the contribution of the member for Warrego. It was very nice to hear a critique of what should be done, but the LNP had ample opportunity to do that itself rather than criticise what I am trying to do—something affirmative to help people. We will talk about mulga, as the member suggested.

I spent some time in the electorate of Cook, in the cape. The member made a comment about looking after the natural environment. Vast amounts of country in the cape are very unnatural because there is regrowth. I think it is because people are buying these carbon credits and locking it up, so there is all of this scrub that comes up. Usually that country has big hot burns going through it or had mechanical clearing. Back in the day, before white man's settlement, the fire was much more aggressive and would clean out that scrub, but it is all thickening up there. I would not describe that country as being in good health now. I think most people would not. If you get on the ground you will see that quite clearly.

Some other points were made. They were very disappointing. I would say they were at best ignorant but at worst misleading. It was asserted that I was trying to turn back the clock to allow more high-value agriculture. Members have not read clearly the purpose of the bill. All we are asking is that grazing activities be included in those areas that are already approved for high-value agriculture. We are not advocating more high-value agriculture, which we would love to see. Member for Warrego, of course we would love to see all of this repealed, but we are accepting that the Labor Party has won that battle. We are saying: if there is high-value agriculture there and you have said that it can only have irrigated cropping on there, why not let cattle graze on the same piece of land that is already approved? What is wrong with that?

To put that more clearly, if you have a paddock of land that is approved under the old laws for high-value agriculture, you can grow a crop, make hay from that crop and toss that hay over the fence to the cattle, but you cannot let those cattle through the gate into that same paddock to eat the hay in situ. It is just ridiculous. It is an anomaly. I think anyone who thought about that for more than five minutes and applied some intellectual rigour would say that just makes sense, but this has become a political battleground. Labor has to win the votes of urban voters who just think this is all terrible. I have tried to lower the bar to just get some buy-in so we could make things fair. Unfortunately, the member for Warrego just threw rocks at that. I thought we would get some buy-in from the government.

There was some commentary by government members that there are rights for appeal. There are rights for appeal, but why would you not just include it in the Vegetation Management Act? I can tell a real story of one person spending \$400,000 on an application. It is just locked up there in a department. No-one can tell me that departments do not follow the lead of the government. If the government has a certain ideological bent, the departments will acknowledge that and will perform accordingly.

If departments have an application in front of them, that means people have spent hard-earned money—\$400,000—thinking, 'Governments are good people. They will treat me fairly.' They put in an application and knock on the door after a year or two saying, 'We are paying interest on this 400 grand. It is a lot of money for me. How is my application going?' They are told, 'Sorry, can't tell you.' Then they say, 'Well, hang on. It's been three or four years now. Government is here to help. How is my application going? I'd like to know.' They do not have to tell the applicant, and they are not telling them. That is really unfair. They should be forced to give a notice and set a time limit. They could say, 'No, we're not giving it to you.' A no can be accepted, but just give them a no.

There is then a right of appeal to follow that through, but the government is denying them that. It is saying, 'They can just go to the other court. There are other avenues.' Of course there are, but why make them incur all these additional legal costs when it should just be dealt with? Why does the department not give them the courtesy of saying, 'This does not conform with the intentions of our legislation. Here are the reasons. Sorry about that.'? Why would you not give people that courtesy? Is that too much to ask? That does not pass the fairness test.

Members have made arguments that we are rolling things back. We are not. I say again: this acknowledges that Labor won the battle on this issue—the government of the day won that right—but we just want to put some fairness in place and tidy up what we have inherited. I say to the member for Warrego that that is what it is. It is not a case of, 'Let's wait for the next parliament to turn this around. That's when we'll do it.' That is what we have tried to achieve.

The issue of mulga was raised earlier. I am pleased that it was, because it should be dealt with here. We talk about drought. I heard all these politicians, including Queensland government members, say, 'We have to do more on the drought,' and we pass around the tin for gold coins and ask people to donate. Meanwhile, there is 45,000 acres of mulga sitting out there in the south-west. It is under-utilised. Government members can come up with all the reasons and make it look nice on paper—'It is easy: they just have to make an application'—but it is impractical and unusable. If they got out there and asked people they would hear that it is impractical and unusable. When you are fighting to keep the whole place together, when you are fighting for financial survival—feeding drought starved cattle, checking your water and moving cattle—you do not have time for all this paperwork and to keep on top of these things.

The regime around mulga is so tight that people will put in an application and be told, 'You knocked that over five years ago so you can't touch that. You must touch this bit now.' Say you are carrying 500 head on your station. You might have rain down the bottom paddock of your property. You have 500 head on the dry section of your property, where you are approved for mulga. You will use all of the mulga you have been approved for to try to get a certain benefit, whereas if you have had rain down the bottom of your property you might need only half that quantity of mulga. Deregulating the mulga, especially when there is pressure on it, can lead to less usage of it, because you do not need to use as much if you are using it more efficiently. But that is not accepted. Down here, where people are not on the ground, decisions are made—everybody loves a nice, tidy, tick-a-box formula—and it becomes impractical, and no-one trusts the landholder to manage these things.

One of the thoughts I had about mulga was, 'You can't start deregulating this or lowering the bar because people might just go and knock this mulga down.' The response given to me was that no-one is stupid enough to put a match through their hay shed. I thought that was a good way to sum that up. If you are managing mulga, you will need some there for next year, the year after that and the year after that. You do not just smash away all your mulga in one hit. That is what most people will have the image of. A grazier said to me, 'I have mulga that I knocked over a couple of years ago. It is 12-feet high after two years of drought.' This is a readily available, in situ product for drought-affected properties that, with the tick of a box, the government could give them access to tomorrow for the remainder of the drought. They are not going to knock it all over because they need some for next year and the year after that. We could do that.

The member for Hinchinbrook tabled a foreshadowed amendment on my behalf. We would like to move an amendment during consideration in detail, if given the opportunity. I table the explanatory notes to that amendment.

Tabled paper: Vegetation Management (Clearing for Relevant Purposes) Amendment Bill 2018, explanatory notes to Mr Robbie Katter's amendment [\[167\]](#).

It is very disappointing. I tried to present a bill that met the government halfway and said, 'Look, we understand you have won the war. We do not agree with it—we hate the fact that you won that war and it has created a lot of bitterness and animosity out in the bush—but we are stuck with that now. Let's try to tidy up these laws.'

We need to at least give those people some certainty and some fairness around that, yet the government has thrown it back in our face. It has thrown it back in their faces as well. It has shrouded the whole thing in politics and it is very disappointing. I appeal to the government and members of the opposition that if we can get through the second reading we can then have a debate on including something to save these people in droughted areas with regard to mulga. That would be a wonderful thing for us to do.

I do not accept any of those arguments that there is any threat to the environmental integrity of any of these places. It is absolutely misleading to say that this legislation will facilitate more high-value ag in Queensland. It just says in the definition in terms of anything that is approved under 22A that we can allow grazing on it. It does not say that it allows more high-value agriculture. It just says that for all of the things that have been approved—and there will probably be hardly any approved again—such as the high VA that is existing and the remaining things that have been approved, that means that they are allowed grazing on that same parcel of land rather than just straight farming. It is an anomaly that needs to be fixed—simple—and I hope people would find it in themselves to support that.

On a lighter note, I make an apology to the House. Members could say that if I was being cheeky I was perhaps testing people's awareness, but in the explanatory notes of my bill I made an error in the objectives of this bill which is captured again in the committee's notes. It said 'remove grazing activities from the definition of high value ag' when in fact I intended the bill to do the opposite and the bill does the opposite. Perhaps I was just testing people in my error, but no-one seemed to pick that up. Perhaps people were being polite or kind to me, but I make that point for the record that there was an error in those explanatory notes.

I hope that people can find some compassion. I am trying not to be too emotive in this debate—and there certainly is a lot of emotion around this outside of the metropolitan areas—but we want to keep it sensible and acknowledge the fact that these are very modest compromises, a fact about which the member for Warrego was criticising me before, but that is because I am trying to reach out to find some common ground of something that is sensible. It is a pity that there was criticism labelled at that. The criticism would have been very fair from the government if it said, 'We don't agree with that sort of stuff,' and leave it at that, but do not try to portray that people are not getting knocked back by saying that hardly any applications have been rejected. People are not applying. People are talking to their friend who spent \$400,000 and he still has not got an answer in three or four years and so they say, 'Blow that. I'm not going to have a go at that because it's expensive and I know that the government's going to knock it back.' It is very misleading to say, 'We're not knocking many back,' or 'This is the rate of knock-backs and that's the truth.' It is not the truth. If you get out on the ground and talk to people you will find that that is very misleading.

I respect the government's position on these things. I do not agree with it—I bitterly disagree with it—but I respect the fact that it is the government and it holds those views, but do not try to misinterpret or manipulate those facts to provide a false sense of what the reality is. I would see that as an enormous unfairness to people in rural areas not just on the properties themselves but the towns that surround them, because we all rely on those industries in a symbiotic way. With that, I would very much urge the House to adopt these two amendments to the bill. Hopefully we will get through the second reading to address that amendment that has been circulated that would allow mulga clearing during the drought for those drought-affected areas to save those people who so desperately need it to give them a free source of fodder that is in situ and available to help them right now.

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

AYES, 43:

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

KAP, 3—Dametto, Katter, Knuth.

NQF, 1—Costigan.

PHON, 1—Andrew.

Ind, 1—Bolton.

NOES, 48:

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

Grn, 1—Berkman.


Resolved in the negative.

ELECTORAL LEGISLATION (POLITICAL DONATIONS) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

Resumed from 14 May 2019 (see p. 1588), on motion of Mr Berkman—

That the bill be now read a second time.


 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (6.00 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill 2018 introduced by the member for Maiwar. According to the objectives of the bill, the bill amends the Electoral Act 1992 and the Local Government Electoral

Act 2011 to prohibit the making of political donations by for-profit corporations to candidates in state or local government elections, groups of candidates in local government elections, third parties, political parties, councillors and members of state parliament.

When did for-profit corporations stop becoming citizens of this country? This should be a fundamental right. There are already guidelines and disclosures around donations to political parties. This Labor government has banned one section of our society from making donations—that is, developers. Developers have been excluded from the process. That is bad enough.

The explanatory notes state that most recently the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2018 amended the Electoral Act and the LGE Act to introduce a ban on property developers donating to political parties, elected members and candidates in a local or state government election. Candidates, groups of candidates, third parties, political parties, associated entities and councils are prohibited from receiving gifts from a property developer or industry representative organisation where a majority of members are property developers which are now prohibited donors. I note that this does not include not-for-profits and therefore organisations such as GetUp! are not included.


I am particularly frustrated as we have a large employer in the district, which I have already mentioned today—New Hope's New Acland mine—that is going through its stage 3 process. There are objectors to that process and the legal work is being done by the Environmental Defenders Office who I note are supporters of this bill. Taxpayers' money is provided to them and they are putting together the case to put the taxpayers at the New Acland mine out of work. This is another attack on our democracy. I think it is absolutely outrageous and it should be strongly opposed.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (6.03 pm): I rise to speak against the Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill 2018 introduced to this parliament by the member for Maiwar. As detailed in the bill's explanatory notes, the objectives of the bill are to eliminate the actual and widely perceived risk of corruption within Queensland's democratic parliament as a consequence of corporate donations to politicians, candidates and political parties. The bill builds upon the restrained reforms proposed in the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Belcarra bill, to help restore Queenslanders' confidence in their political system. The Crime and Corruption Commission's report, *Operation Belcarra: a blueprint for integrity and addressing corruption risk in local government*, included a variety of recommendations following the Crime and Corruption Commission's investigation into local government corruption.

At the conclusion of the first reading speech by the member for Maiwar on 16 May 2018, the bill was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee for review. The committee tabled its report in November 2018, being report No. 21 of the 56th Parliament. The Economics and Governance Committee made only one recommendation in its report and that was that the bill not be passed.

The principal aim of the bill is to ban political donations from for-profit corporate donors. To achieve the policy objectives the bill would amend the Electoral Act 1992 and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 to prohibit the making of political donations by for-profit corporations to candidates in state or local government elections, groups of candidates in local government elections, third parties, political parties, councillors and members of parliament. The bill would make unlawful the making and acceptance of political donations made by or on behalf of prohibited corporate donors. As well, the bill would make it unlawful for prohibited corporate donors and others on their behalf to solicit other persons to make political donations and provides for appropriate transitional arrangements.

In May 2018 the Queensland parliament passed the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, which bans donations by developers to political parties for local government councillors or state members of parliament as well as candidates for these positions and related political parties. The legislation was made retrospective to 12 October 2017. In closing, I thank the members of the Economics and Governance Committee, the committee secretariat, the submitters and Hansard. I again say that I oppose the bill.

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (6.07 pm): I rise this evening to make a contribution on the Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill 2018. I will not be supporting the bill. I was on the committee—the Labor dominated parliamentary committee, as the member for Maiwar broadcast incorrectly—that examined this bill. For the purposes of clarity, this is a cross-parliamentary committee, it is not a Labor dominated committee. There are some really important points that are worthwhile putting on the record in relation to this proposed legislation. The committee took some time to consider the bill. We invited written submissions from the public and identified stakeholders. We received some 19 submissions. On 20 August 2018 we had a briefing from the member for Maiwar and two witnesses. We looked at the bill quite rigorously and in some detail.

It is interesting that this bill itself stems from the Belcarra report that the Crime and Corruption Commission put together, yet the Crime and Corruption Commission does not support the bill's intent to expand upon the reforms of the Palaszczuk government's Belcarra bill. In particular, they drew attention to aspects of the recommendations that they made in their Belcarra report to consider whether the bill's provisions concerning the prohibition of corporate donations reflects the High Court decision in the case of *Unions NSW v New South Wales*, whether they are justified and whether or not there is perceived or actual corruption that can be sufficiently demonstrated.

In the submission the CCC commissioner, Mr Alan MacSporran, even stated that there needs to be an evidence based response that is proportional to the threat identified. Mr MacSporran stated—

The CCC acknowledges that one of the matters the Committee's current inquiry may consider is whether there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the Bill's provisions prohibiting political donations by for-profit corporations in State or Local Government elections is a proportionate response to any demonstrated threat of actual or perceived corruption in those areas of government. However, at the time of preparing this submission, the CCC is not aware of, and does not consider it holds, sufficient evidence in this regard.

I think that that particular point is really at the heart of why government members and I cannot support this bill. While the member for Maiwar may hold the view that prohibiting donations from corporate organisations because of a perceived risk of corruption is appropriate, it is not something that the CCC has found anywhere. In fact, as members will recall, we implemented reforms around the Belcarra recommendations that prohibited developer donations. We administered that at a local government level as well as at a state level because there was a perceived and actual risk of corruption that existed between developers and local government councillors and mayors in terms of their very localised decision-making. The implication certainly was a broad consideration for the committee when thinking about banning a single class of donors in these for-profit corporations, including the potential for corporations to find a way to circumvent the prohibition. That was something that we looked at and considered in great detail.

I must say that this is a bill of good intentions and insufficient evidence. Certainly, as legislators and representatives of communities we want to uphold the highest of standards. We want to ensure that the community has confidence in the trust that they place in us. In this regard, when we have sufficient evidence it is absolutely necessary for us to act. However, the problem that we explored through the consideration of this bill is the restrictions it would have on the implied freedom of political communication. There was not sufficient justification for that restriction. We could not justify the actions, and the proposals in the bill were not sufficient in that regard.


There are a couple of things that I would like to highlight in summing up my contribution. I think that this bill is likely to be unconstitutional. For donations to be banned, the High Court has held that there needs to be a clearly identified corruption risk. Nowhere in this bill has that risk been identified. That has been highlighted through both the contribution of stakeholders in the committee process and in terms of the case law that we see in these matters. If the bill was passed, it is very likely that we would go straight to the High Court. It is incumbent upon all of us to decide whether or not that is a justifiable use of taxpayer money. While I appreciate that the LNP may be happy to bury their donations and not report them correctly, resulting in the ECQ having to spend taxpayer money in taking that to a court of law in this country—while they may think that is a good use of taxpayer money—certainly I do not think that is a good use of taxpayer money or a use that I could justify to the members of my community.

When this bill was introduced into parliament, the Attorney-General asked the member for Maiwar to do the work to provide the evidence to demonstrate that the ban that he is proposing is constitutionally justified. To date we still have not seen that. Therefore, we do not have the evidence to justify the assertions this bill makes. In order to ensure integrity in elections, the capping and banning of donations is only a single piece of a very big puzzle. It requires a more holistic approach and an approach that has caps on expenditures too.

Banning donations does not capture transfers from interstate branches of political parties. In its work the committee explored that at length and looked at some examples around the Australian Greens and the Queensland Greens in that regard. Because of the opaque nature of federal political donation laws, there is very little oversight in terms of the money that goes into the coffers of federal parties and, subsequently, to their state branches.

In closing, I would thank my fellow committee members for the work that they did on this bill. I thank secretariat and our committee staff, who always do a terrific job. I thank those people who took the time to share their views with us. I thank the CCC for the work that they have been doing and the

other stakeholders who came and shared their views. As I have said throughout my contribution this evening, there is simply not the evidence to support the proposals in the bill. Therefore, I will not be supporting the bill.

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (6.17 pm): It will come as no surprise to the members of the House that I do not share much in common politically with the member for Maiwar, although I get along well with him man to man. I have to say that his second reading speech on the bill was a tedious, moralising lecture. To my ears, it spoke about all of the hypocrisy that we see from the radical left. We heard the member for Mermaid Beach describe it as grandstanding and I think that captured it pretty well.

What this bill misses is that the trade union movement is able to continue to donate to the party of its choice, the Labor Party, with relative impunity. In his speech, the member for Maiwar said that the Labor Party needs to get away from its corporate donors. That misses the point. In fact, the productive part of the economy is probably pretty upset with the Queensland Labor Party because of its stewardship of the Queensland economy, so I cannot see them sprinting to the Labor Party donations desk to fill its coffers. However, the trade union movement is another matter.

We have seen some very unedifying spectacles, such as the mangocube debacle, where we had a little window into what is perhaps happening every day to those who sit on the treasury benches of the government—that is, trade union bosses who have contributed large amounts of money to the Labor Party having direct and, in some cases, undisclosed—perhaps, in many cases, undisclosed—access to ministers of the Crown and thereby exercising undisclosed influence on the government. In any other context, it simply would not be tolerated for a donor to call the government, demanding, ‘We want this done’, ‘We want that person appointed’, ‘We want this legislation’, but that is what happens day to day.

If the member for Maiwar and the Greens are serious about eliminating undue influence from our government, elections and so forth then they would not be excluding donations by the trade union movement from the bill. The Greens speak as though they are the little party and they need to have an easier landscape in which to compete with the major parties. I would say to the Greens that they almost entirely represent affluent electorates. Their membership and support base is not so much a hippie with dreadlocks in a kombivan at the beach anymore. It is a professional living in a leafy suburb close to the centre of Brisbane. They as individuals have the money to contribute large amounts to their party.


Whenever we introduce a measure which favours one side of politics over another in terms of their ability to raise money we skew the electoral landscape. We nobble the opposition, which has a job to do in holding the government to account and competing in elections. This bill, which in many ways resembles the government’s bill—that is, to clamp down on the election donations of their political opponents—will achieve just that.

I was listening to the member for Pine Rivers when she spoke in this debate. She talked about the perceived or actual risk of wrongdoing associated with donations in the local government context when it comes to developments and so forth. I notice that she did not mention any possibility of that occurring at the state level. I must say that I agree with the member for Pine Rivers in that sense because neither did the CCC. Their investigations did not reveal that there was a propensity for donations from developers to influence developments at a local level, which is where they occur in Queensland. This bill, just like the Labor Party’s bill, would also deny political parties the opportunity to be given support by those who want that party to be elected.

It is a very slippery slope to say to individuals, ‘You do not have the right to support the party of your choice and to provide them with assistance to be elected in order to provide the governance that you want.’ That is a very slippery slope. The LNP’s opponents, the Labor Party, are extremely well funded by the trade union movement. The government’s bill and this bill would see the further erosion of the potential for the opposition to have a sufficiently funded campaign to keep the government to account.

This bill is repugnant to me. It is clearly repugnant to the government because all of the speakers on the government side have said they oppose it. It fundamentally betrays the misunderstanding that the Greens have about democracy in our country. The moralising and the handwringing we see seeks to hide a party that has just as much politics behind it as any of the others and is very well supported in terms of funding.

I do not want to see an electoral landscape in this state where parties are unable to raise funds because of the artificial constraints placed upon them by their political opponents. That is an anathema to proper democracy. I oppose this bill. I am sure that when the vote happens there will be many in this chamber who join with me.

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (6.23 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill 2018. Public trust in state, federal and local Australian governments and our major institutions has just about collapsed in recent years. This is particularly the case amongst our young people, workers, small owners and farmers.

The Centre for Governance and Public Policy at Griffith University published a report earlier this year which contained shocking data on this issue from the Australian Constitutional Values Survey. According to the most recent survey results in 2018, trust in state and federal governments has plummeted from 82 per cent to 46 per cent in the last decade. That is an astounding drop by any measure. The survey also revealed that 56 per cent of respondents, equating to over 10.2 million Australians, say they have had personal knowledge or experience of political favouritism where undue influence was used, resulting in political decisions that have benefitted wealthy and powerful interests. Overall, an incredible 85 per cent of respondents stated that they believed many politicians in parliament today are corrupt.

When the public's view of government has sunk this low, the matter can no longer be viewed as a party political issue but rather a genuine breakdown in people's trust and confidence in the integrity of the political process itself. Each and every one of us in this parliament today has one overriding and fundamental responsibility, and that is to respond to community concerns and to always operate in the public's interest. It is therefore up to everyone involved in government to consider practical and legislative ways that we can help rebuild people's trust in their governments and institutions. The goal should be not just greater political equality but also to end the capture of governments by powerful economic interests and to create space for economic policies that will further the interests of the majority of citizens and not just the wealthy few.

It is unacceptable for any government to be perceived as an instrument or a tool of big business. Large corporations, by their very nature, are simply concerned with one thing—profit maximisation. Their primary focus is industry specific and their overriding goal at all times is how to further protect or expand their market advantage. Corporations do not act or plan in the public interest. That is the role of the government. It is a role that sometimes needs to be actively safeguarded.


In recent years, mining industries have come to exercise an undue influence on government and institutions in this state. This has led to successful moves by them to oppose or circumvent workplace health and safety laws, environmental regulations and legal frameworks. Their overriding agenda is to obtain and defend valuable land lease, even if it means pressuring governments to extinguish native title or environmental controls, such as vegetation management laws, that other industries are forced to abide by. All of this has led to deep resentment and anger amongst the wider community.

When considering this bill I went to the AEC's website. There is a yearly register of political donations made to all political parties in this state. Almost the first thing that struck me was how many big corporate donors were giving money to both Labor and the LNP. In fact, of the 30 donors listed as having made donations to the Labor Party in Queensland, over half—16 out of 30—had also made donations to the LNP. This is of huge concern to me. It clearly shows that these donors are not acting out of genuine feeling or ideological or philosophical support for one side or the other. Instead, they are only concerned about preserving their influence over the government, whether Labor or LNP.

This would explain why most of the time it seems that there are no real areas of difference between the two parties. When it comes to economic policy or policies that protect favoured interest groups, they are invariably both on the same page. It is also why so much legislation is being raced through parliament without debate or mandate half of the time. If both parties act in a bipartisan manner, that effectively removes the democratic scrutiny of that legislation. We see that with some of the bills that are rushed through this place.

The bill will hopefully go some way towards eliminating the perception and reality that rich donors are able to buy access or influence in politics. To those arguing that this is a free speech issue my response would be that money is not speech. Governments have the right and the duty to regulate electoral donations in order to preserve free and fair elections where every citizen's vote counts.

Corporations are also not people. They therefore have no constitutional right to finance elections, overrule democratic legislation or evade state controls and regulations. We need to separate corporate power and money from government decision-making in order to go some way to restoring people's faith in the independence and integrity of government. If we do nothing then the revolving door between industry and government could replace democracy with plutocracy before long.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (6.28 pm): Across Australia and in Queensland there have been concerns about the undue influence being asserted on the political process via large corporate donations in exchange for access to decision-makers. This perceived or real influence may be a

contributing factor, as we have heard earlier, in the increasing disengagement of Queenslanders with politics and politicians and an increasing sense that governments do not represent their interests. We sit in this chamber as elected representatives and a voice for our electorates. We have a responsibility and obligation to maintain the integrity that is expected of us. The trust of our electorate is essential to do our job.


The Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill 2018 proposes to address the perceived and/or actual corruption risk at both state and local government levels by banning donations from all for-profit corporate donors. This bill works to build upon the reforms proposed in the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, which gave Queenslanders a troubling glimpse into the corrupting influence of political donations on the workings and decisions of local governments. It highlights the importance of restoring public confidence in the political process and the responsibility we have as members of parliament to lead by example.

It is noted that the bill relates to donations from any company registered under the Corporations Act 2001 or an industry representative organisation a majority of whose members are companies registered under the Corporations Act 2001. It does not include charities, not-for-profit organisations or employee or employer organisations under state or federal industrial relations legislation.

Given the series of litigation outlined in the committee report involving bans on political donations, it is understandable there is a lack of confidence that the evidence provided to support this bill is sufficient for it to pass the Lange test. Further, CCC commissioner Mr Alan MacSporran noted that the High Court has said—and the law is—that there needs to be an evidence based response which is proportionate to the threat identified. We did hear this from the member for Pine Rivers.

In their submission the Sunshine Coast Association of Residents stated that they believe this bill is a desirable first step. I have no doubt that many Queenslanders would agree. However, supporting it in its current state would not be appropriate, as targeting only one source of large donations could be seen as creating an uneven playing field and not addressing what is sought: reducing the risk of undue influence or corruption.

I thank the member for Maiwar and committee stakeholders and attendees at the public hearings for their hard work. I encourage the member to continue seeking both a reduction in perceived or real undue influence with regard to the decision-making process as well as equity for all candidates.

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (6.31 pm): I am happy to oppose this most appalling intrusion into the democratic rights of people who live, build businesses, create wealth, pay taxes and generally support the Australian economy and the Australian community introduced by the member for Maiwar. The member for Maiwar, no doubt lamenting the Greens' appalling performance over the last two years, believes that money is the root of all evil. He particularly believes that private money earned by private investment—by private risk-taking and private initiative—ought to be banned from being donated to political parties by the people who take that risk, who employ it and who have the initiative to do so.

I would suggest that the member for Maiwar may want to look to his own party for their own failure. If you look at some of the recent reviews into the performance of the Greens in Victoria, they lost a number of seats, their own internal review described a culture of misogyny, a failure to vet candidates properly, bullying and intimidation. A number of candidates and members quit the Greens party. Do you think that could be a reason people have lost faith in politics?

In the case of the Greens in New South Wales, of course their poster child is Lee Rhiannon. We all remember Lee Rhiannon, the senator who effectively wants to ban Israel. That might be another reason the Greens are not doing so well. In relation to the Greens down in New South Wales they talk about the left faction and the right faction. I would dearly love to see the right faction in the Greens. They would be the standouts. They would probably still vote against electric vehicles, but would have them in preference to riding around on bicycles. That would be the way Greens factions would break up in New South Wales.

A government member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I am doing the Labor Party's job for them here, Mr Speaker. It has been my gross misfortune to be in this place long enough and to listen to them for so many years that I have picked up their rhetoric against the Greens, their mortal enemies, with respect to that.

A government member interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I blame a lot of members over there for that. In any event, more than anything this legislation is an attempt to hobble the free exercise by genuine businesspeople of their democratic right to support the political party of their choice. No-one is suggesting that money is being paid for

people to go and stuff ballot boxes on election day. There is no evidence of that whatsoever, and the CCC has made that abundantly clear. In fact, the response of this Labor government in 2017 in relation to Operation Belcarra was to overstep what the Belcarra report said.

In evidence given to the committee in relation to legislation that the Labor Party introduced in order to hobble the LNP back in 2017, Mr MacSporrán did not recommend that those prohibitions be made with respect to state elections because he had no evidence of it. Evidence based policymaking flew out the window that day in favour of purely partisan political advantage. With no recommendation and no evidence, in 2017 the Labor Party decided to ban developer donations to political parties knowing the impact it would have because they know that people in the property development industry on a broad scale do not support the policies of the Labor Party, and why would they?

They regard the member for Sandgate as someone who slipped through into the Property Council back in his consultant days. They are not quite sure how he got through the vetting program, but he got there anyway. Then he got caught up in the Rainbow Beach developments and those sorts of things as well. The Labor Party introduced that legislation to hobble the LNP. The LNP complied with that legislation, and it complied with that legislation to the tune of almost half a million dollars in developer donations that were returned to those developers in order to comply with the law. The LNP complies with the law.

An opposition member: Even the retrospectivity laws.

Mr NICHOLLS: Even the retrospective law. Despite all the comments and all the claims, there is no evidence of any wrongdoing by the LNP in relation to the receipt of donations from any party. You may argue that you do not like the source of them. We do not like the source of the CFMMEU donations. With over 80 convictions for breaking Australia's industrial laws, their money is still accepted by the ALP. They have the worst history of law-breaking by a union in this country and the ALP still takes their money. We do not like it. We can have the argument in here about it, and you are right.

I know the High Court decision in the Unions v. New South Wales case, and it is the law. There is no argument about that. It is the law of the land, but it is not the law of the land that what the member for Maiwar proposes ought to be accepted or should be accepted. In fact, I would argue that it is completely contrary to the law of the land and the decisions of the High Court, particularly in the Unions v. New South Wales case. The response must be proportionate and it must be based on evidence, and there is no evidence.

What the member for Maiwar says in the explanatory notes is unsupported by evidence. The opening paragraph of the explanatory notes state—

... to eliminate the actual and widely perceived risk of corruption within Queensland's democratic—

I think he must mean democratic process—

as a consequence of corporate donations to politicians, candidates and political parties.

Where is the actual corruption within Queensland's democratic process, and where is it particularly at state level? I challenge the member for Maiwar to say where that has happened and, more importantly, where it has happened and where it has not been found out.


We have had instances of it. The former member for Sandgate, Mr Nuttall, was discovered, prosecuted and went to prison for his crimes and misdemeanours. He was also prosecuted by the Ethics Committee of this House. Just so that I am not accused of just picking out one member, I will also mention that we had the former member for Redcliffe in the 2012 to 2015 parliament who was also discovered and prosecuted for doing that.

As we all know, the level of scrutiny on MPs and political parties and by us on ourselves and each other is intense. In no case has it been able to be shown that a political donation—other than those that I have mentioned—has led to an outcome that is not a policy outcome supported with a policy rationale and a policy background. What the member for Maiwar seeks to do here is to deny people who have a legitimate interest in politics and a legitimate interest in supporting the political party of their choice—whether it be the LNP, the ALP or the Greens party, as it was with the founder of Wotif who wrote out a couple of hundred thousand dollars in cheques to them. That was never handed back, as far as I can recall.

Those people have shown initiative, have shown enterprise, have been successful, have employed people and have paid taxes. They have sought a profit, as if seeking a profit is a bad thing. The last time I checked the profit motive was a pretty important and pretty good thing. It developed most of the businesses in this country, starting from BHP down to Charlie who runs Greens & Grains in a little shop next door to me. They should be able to donate to whom they want without let or hindrance.

There should be laws around disclosure; I fully support that. There should be real-time disclosure; I fully support that. People are entitled to see the source of the funds and where they come from; I fully support that. People should be happy to say, 'I am proud to support this party' or 'I am prepared to put my money behind this party,' but you should not be stopped from exercising that fundamental political choice you have as an Australian citizen or as a company registered in Australia with an Australian business number that carries out business in this country. That is what the member for Maiwar's bill seeks to achieve.

He seeks to gain for the Greens party an advantage that he cannot get by getting out in the marketplace of ideas and selling his ideas and policies out there in the corporate world because he knows that the corporate world will reject his policies. The corporate world will reject the Greens policies as loopy, as out of touch, as unsustainable, as destructive of the Australian way of life—as is the entire Greens party.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (6.41 pm): What an outstanding contribution from the member for Clayfield. In line with that outstanding contribution, may I also rise to oppose what is nothing more than a financial gerrymander by the Greens. They can dress it up in any manner they seek, but it is nothing more than a grubby attempt to make a play for a political advantage, it is a sob story to go back to their base in an attempt to say that they are somehow holier than thou. All it is doing is seeking a political advantage for a political party.

Is it any wonder the Greens have tried it when the government has done a very similar thing albeit on a smaller scope? The government has come in here and said that one sector of the community should not be able to make a donation, so is it any wonder the Greens are seeking to use that to their advantage to take it a step further?

Let me pick up a few things following the member for Clayfield. First and foremost, I want to say this. In the end, it is not whether or not you should start focusing on one section of the community. It is about declarations. It is about people being prepared and forced to declare if they are making a contribution to whatever side of politics. When that is done and when that is made, the public can form their own assessment on the validity of that donation and whether or not that donation sought to buy favours.

There are times when we might not like where our political opponents are receiving their money from—whether they are unions, whether they are individuals or whether, member for Maiwar, heaven forbid, they are a business that is employing people and paying taxes. We might not like the fact that they are making that donation, but in a democracy we should be prepared to accept that that is good for our democratic process.

I have had the privilege of serving my community at two levels of government, and I have never once had a single person, business or anybody who has made a donation to me seek to leave a favour on the back of that donation—not once. I have a theory that when people make a donation to the political process they are attempting to buy good government rather than buy a government. That is my view. I might not like where those opposite get their money from and I might not like some of the member for Maiwar's policies, but in a democratic society we have to accept that is part of the process.

There is an irony about the member for Maiwar taking this here. The member for Mermaid Beach raised this, and I was saving it but it was a great interjection. The irony that a political party which shuns corporate Australia and which hates everything about anyone who wants to have a go, to make a quid, to take a risk and to employ people would accept the second largest donation in Australian political history is never lost on me.

Mr Langbroek: \$1.6 million.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will take the interjection from the member for Surfers Paradise. It was over \$1½ million. They are prepared to cop it. I am sure there will be those who say, 'But it was made by an individual.' I am quietly confident that Mr Wood did not make his money at the local council. I do not think he made the \$1½ million he donated by pumping petrol at the local servo or going to work for a corporate person. He made it by taking a risk and, you know what, good on him.

I might not like the policies of the Greens—and I will touch on those soon—and I might not like that in relation to someone who has made a really good living because people have taken a risk and built a hotel, people have taken a risk and gone to work there and made all the challenges that come with a business venture, but I respect it and I will defend his right to give it every day of the week. For the member for Maiwar to come in here and somehow say that one form of money is dirty because it happens to come from risk-takers is offensive.

Do members know what else is offensive? This is a political party that is warped in looniness. When we see the policies that they espouse, is it any wonder that anyone who takes a risk would want to donate to the Greens? This is a political party that wanted to put lifetime leases on properties, reintroduce death duties and abolish any form of grant to anyone who might want to buy a home for themselves. This is a political party that despises the rule of law. This is a political party that does not believe a police officer should be able to carry a taser. What should they have, member for Maiwar? A microwaved lettuce leaf? What is it that they need?

An opposition member: A flyswatter.

Mr CRISAFULLI: A flyswatter? What is it that they need? Why does the member for Maiwar's political party believe that somehow it should be open season on all sorts of drug users? Why is it that the Greens political party refuses to acknowledge that dams are an important part of agriculture and that regional Queensland can have a voice?

Government members interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: When those opposite chime in, I can only shake my head because that is the political party which relies on the preferences of this mob to stay alive. They know that their base is under siege.

Mr Whiting interjected.


Mr CRISAFULLI: The member for Bancroft can chime in from the sideline and chirp all he likes. He knows full well what would happen without the Greens, without the march of the left, without the support from these people who prop up their vote. There are seats that the LNP win on primary votes, but because of compulsory preferential voting, because of dodgy deals, we have people like the member for Maiwar swapping and trading preferences. Those opposite run spooky scare campaigns, yet quietly they sit there and they harvest these preferences more often than not at a rate of 80 per cent.

No other preferences flow that way. We know they will come in here and say that somehow there are deals between other minor parties, but I do not see any other minor parties' preferences that flood 80-20 to a major political party. I do not see that. I look through the figures and I do not see that. I do not see the member for Maiwar winning on primary votes. No! In fact, if my memory serves me correctly I would suggest the incumbent LNP member nearly won on first past the post; he was so close, but the grubby deal existed. Those opposite will come in and they will seek to condemn this motion. However, they laid the foundation with their own attack—

Mr Dick: Why are you preferencing them in South Brisbane if they are so bad? Why are you preferencing them in South Brisbane?

Mr CRISAFULLI:—and still the interjections come. When it is close to the bone that is when it hurts the most. Still the interjections come. Do honourable members know why? Because they know full well that without the support of the member for Maiwar and his political kind they will not have a chance of winning an election. They know that full well.

I return to where I was when I was interjected upon by the member for Woodridge. They laid the groundwork for this. They laid it when they started with an attack on one section of the community. They might not like where that section of the community directs most of its contributions, but in a free and democratic society they should accept that. They should accept that if there are adequate donation and declaration laws, that is the best and fairest system. Above all, whichever side of politics they like, Queenslanders like a fair go. They want to know that when there is a fight, it is a fair fight. There is a reason two boxers get categorised around the same weight and a 100 kilo person does not fight a 60 kilo person. It is because you want a fair fight, and what the member for Maiwar is proposing is anything but fair. It should be opposed.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (6.51 pm), in reply: I think honourable members all enjoyed that soliloquy as much as I did. I rise to reply to all of the contributions on the Electoral Legislation (Political Donations) Amendment Bill 2018. I will start this contribution by quoting the Premier in an answer she gave in question time during the last sitting week of last year. The government has made much in recent months of its intention to take up the Greens' electoral reform policy and capping all donations and electoral spending. In the last sitting week of last year the Premier said—

Under my government, we will clean up the big business donations in this state. We have already banned property developers. Now we will take the next step.

I would suggest that just a few years ago it would have been unthinkable for either Labor or the LNP in Queensland to stand up in parliament and promise to clean up 'big business' donations. What we now know is that, unlike my bill, which would ban all corporate donations, the government's bill will not actually ban corporate donations; it will just cap them.

In introducing this bill, way back in May 2018, I made the following comments—

There is still a need for the imposition of caps on all donations across-the-board, not just those from profit driven corporations. We should reinstate a cap on the amount that is spent on elections and put a stop to the endless barrage of negative advertising, smear campaigns, pushy political operatives and the plastic paraphernalia that is strewn around polling booths on election day.

I welcome the fact that the government has stepped up and adopted this longstanding Greens policy. The government bill has its flaws, and we will get to that in good time.

Mr POWER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. He seems to be speaking to the 2011 Bligh legislation, which is not actually being debated, instead of his own legislation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr BERKMAN: Once again, I appreciate the non-point of order.

It is important to pause and consider just how far this private member's bill and the Greens have moved the debate in Queensland, including moving Queensland Labor. Regular Queenslanders know that our system is broken. Every time the big parties feel threatened by the Greens, they start to listen to us and to what Queenslanders want. They follow our lead. Queenslanders should take heart from this progress and know that we intend to keep that going. Even with only one Greens MP in here, we will keep the government moving in the right direction. I would invite everyone to imagine what we can achieve when I finally have some Greens colleagues in this place.

I lost count of the number of times a member on one side or the other said in this debate that the bill was nothing but a stunt or an exercise in grandstanding or moralising, as the member for Southern Downs said a moment ago. We hear that rhetoric thrown around in the federal political arena all the time, for example, when the Greens moved a motion to raise the rate of Newstart. Within just a month, that 'stunt' forced federal Labor to support an increase in Newstart and even some government members came onside, not least of all poor skint Barnaby Joyce.

Here in Queensland, once again, we are very happily witnessing Labor adopt Greens policy on electoral funding reform. It was a few short months ago that I wrote to the Premier and the Attorney-General to note my intention to introduce the necessary next stages of electoral reform policy. Specifically, I indicated my intention to propose legislation to impose caps on donations and on electoral spending, just like those now proposed by the government.

This bill would ban all corporate donations, and that is all the more pressing in light of the recent data dump from the Australian Electoral Commission, as well as the constant revelations from Queensland's live disclosure scheme. The data made public just yesterday from the AEC showed that politics in Australia is still awash with corporate cash. I will share this because it has just been released and it is relevant to the most recent election. It showed that despite the state-level ban on developer donations, the Australian Labor Party and the federal Liberals both received hundreds of thousands of dollars from big developers with major projects in Queensland, including \$92,000 for Labor from the developers of the Queens Wharf megacasino and \$37,000 for the Liberals.

The Walker Group, the developers of the infamous Toondah Harbour development, which Queensland Labor and the federal Liberals both support, gave \$50,000 to both the ALP and the Liberals. The Meriton Group, with multiple developments across Queensland, gave \$50,000 to the ALP and \$200,000 to the Liberals. The fossil fuel industry have also put their hand on the scales of democracy, with Adani giving more than \$200,000 to the coalition, and Woodside Petroleum, Shell, Origin Energy, Alinta and others flooding both major parties with cash to the total of \$700,000 for the ALP and \$1.4 million for the Liberals.

Of course, the biggest fossil fuel donor of all, Clive Palmer, gave \$83 million from his own companies to his own political party, all to make sure his own massive coalmine in the Galilee Basin can go ahead and he can keep lining his own pockets. I would also say that neither party in this parliament can distance themselves from that donation since they are both working night and day to make sure Adani and all the other Galilee Basin mines, including Clive Palmer's project, go ahead. Big banks, insurance companies, and the pokies and gambling industry all featured, and Queenslanders are rightly suspicious when big corporates write the cheques and they call the shots.

I would like to respond to some of the comments from others in this debate who have asked where this amounts to corruption. I invite them to try to convince some regular people that when big corporations make donations, they are not expecting some outcome, some return. We know they are law bound to spend money when they know it is going to raise money for shareholders and for their CEOs. What I and so many others have been referring to is legalised corruption, where corporations like big banks, fossil fuel companies, insurance companies and the pokies lobby make donations to protect their own financial interests. The question is about bosses who are trying to underpay their

workers, banks that are ripping off their customers and mining companies that are trying to dig up a dangerous product. Should those corporations be writing cheques to the same politicians who are making decisions?

I only have a few minutes remaining. The committee in its report and countless members in their contributions made a lot of hullabaloo about constitutional concerns. There were specific concerns raised in respect of the High Court's previous decisions in *Unions NSW v New South Wales*, and in *McCloy v New South Wales*. The claim broadly made, which we have heard again this evening, by members is that a ban on corporate donations would be a disproportionate infringement on the implied right to freedom of political communication. None of us here is a constitutional lawyer, although some members perhaps think they are, given the confidence and the authority with which they have stated the law in their contributions. We all must be absolutely clear that the committee's view on constitutionality is not only very softly worded, but clearly not the incontrovertible truth. Nobody but the seven judges of the High Court can make an authoritative statement on the constitutionality of a bill. The committee only went so far as to say—


The committee is not confident that the evidence provided by Mr Berkman MP is sufficient for the Bill to pass the Lange Test given more recent High Court cases, as committee considers that the Bill proposes to restrict the implied freedom of political communication without sufficient justification for the restriction to be considered appropriate.

I disagreed with the committee's conclusion on the question of constitutionality when it published its report but, importantly, we now have the benefit of a new High Court decision—fresh jurisprudence on the question of political donations and the constitutionality of a ban on these. On 15 May last year, after the last time the House adjourned debate on the second reading, the High Court delivered its reasons—

Debate, on motion of Mr Berkman, adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Koalas, Tourism

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (7.00 pm): The draft South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy is out and, in a word, it is a disappointment. It does nothing more than kick the can down the road for what is an important decision we in this state need to make. It has been nearly four years since the government announced an expert panel on this. In that time, funding for protected areas and the purchase of such is down 65 per cent. In that time, the government collected \$36 million in environmental offsets from developers and did not spend a cent. Not one hectare of land has been bought despite \$36 million being collected.

The koala council and the expert panel have been meeting, thrashing out details—doing it in good faith—yet what was one of the greatest expenditures of those panels? Nearly \$19,000 on catering. That is one of the greatest legacies of those opposite. They spent more money on tea-leaves than on purchasing eucalyptus leaves! They went absolutely nowhere with the strategy they promised nearly half a decade ago.


There is a study into the northern Gold Coast. To have the member for Coomera here tonight is magnificent, because nobody knows it better than the member for Coomera. That study shows that, if we continue on the current trajectory, the koala population will be unsustainable within two decades and non-existent within four decades. This strategy does not put aside the money needed to purchase strategic land parcels. You cannot say to somebody who has property rights, 'Sorry, you can't develop here.' That is against the rule of law. Money needs to be set aside. Those areas must be purchased and quickly. I have little faith in the mapping. I have little faith in the government finding a solution that can walk between the environmental movement and the development industry. Only a change of government will deliver the solution.

A government member interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection. The solution is that you buy strategic parcels, you do smarter planning and you do the things that need to be done. They are prepared to stand beside Borobi at Commonwealth Games time but are not prepared to save his real-life furry friends.

Koala tourism is worth nearly \$3 billion to this state each year. I finish my contribution by talking about tourism. Right now, tourism is hurting in this state. Right now, tourism needs an injection from the government. We need to look at things like fee relief and upping the marketing spend. The coronavirus is just the latest in a series of onslaughts for our great industry. The industry needs help now and the minister must act to reinvigorate a vital part of our economy.

Hendricks, Aunty Joan; Redlands Electorate, Schools


 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (7.03 pm): Redlands has lost a treasure, Queensland has lost a treasure and our nation has lost a treasure. I was privileged to be able to call Aunty Joan Hendricks, ngugi woman of the Quandamooka people, a very dear friend. Aunty Joan, affectionately known as 'Momo' to her family, lived on Minjerribah, one of the most spectacular islands in the world on our beautiful Quandamooka coast. I remember many a night that Aunty Joan would stay with my family rather than take the ferry back home. We had late-night chats about everything from local issues on our beautiful Quandamooka coast through to her pride and love of her family, particularly her grandson Zane. The last time I got to hug Aunty Joan was on 12 December, a very special day for our Quandamooka people, and to witness her joy mixed with relief will stay with me forever. It was for the handover of the Minjerribah native title deed with the Premier and Deputy Premier. It was a very special day.

Aunty Joan had a deep commitment to her Quandamooka people and culture. She shared the richness of the Quandamooka culture and heritage with our Redlands community and in fact right across our country. Aunty Joan brought Indigenous Australian issues to the world stage at the United Nations. She was generous and gracious and shared all of that with the rest of us. She was a friend, a teacher and an unforgettable community leader. May we never forget her enduring legacy for a glad tomorrow. I will miss you, Aunty Joan.

Like Aunty Joan, I am passionate about education; I know it changes futures. By stark contrast to my LNP predecessors, who for over a decade neglected our Redlands schools, I am proud to say that in two short years I have delivered some fantastic outcomes for my schools and plan every day to keep on delivering more: \$1.2 million for the Russell Island State School classroom refurbishments; \$1 million for the Victoria Point State High School library upgrade; \$100,000 for the Thornlands State School multipurpose court resurfacing; \$2 million for the Victoria Point State High School hall expansion that is currently underway; \$9 million for the Redlands District Special School new learning precinct, design works underway; \$1.6 million of new classrooms at Redland Bay State School completed for term 1 just started and opened; \$700,000 for the Bayview State School new buildings, opened and just started this term; \$400,000 worth of new classrooms for Redlands District Special School; a \$2.4 million new YMCA vocational school underway and in construction at the moment; \$15 million of building and revitalisation of the TAFE that was nearly closed; and the KindyLinQ trial on Macleay and Russell islands—this program will change futures.

We know how important it is to help our children's first teachers—their mums and dads—and to help them be the best educators possible. We have more teachers, teacher aides and simply amazing staff at all our schools. I love working with my schools, my principals, the P&Cs and our school communities. They are the thumping heart of Redlands. I love Redlands and I will work every day and night to keep delivering for my community. That was my promise two years ago, and I do not break my promises.

Coomera Electorate

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (7.06 pm): If there were ever confirmation of the need for a second M1, we saw it in January. We saw traffic chaos occur just days apart when a fuel tanker crashed, blocking the M1 in both directions, and when a deluge cut the M1 at exit 57. A second M1 would have provided an albeit slow alternative for drivers but better than the one alternative via Reserve Road. A second M1 will take 60,000 vehicles off the M1 every day. There is only one party that has committed to commence construction of the first section spanning the Coomera River immediately. Bring on 31 October 2020.


In an adjournment speech late last year I commented that tenacity certainly pays off and talked about some of the infrastructure wins in which, with the support of northern Gold Coasters through petitions and other means, we have been successful. I am talking about road and overpass infrastructure like exit 54, additional bus services and funding commitments from the federal government that have forced this transport minister to cough up the money for exits 41 and 49. There is good news for locals, with the hard-fought bridge to nowhere finally opened and much sooner than originally planned.

There is so much more that I will continue to fight for right up to the next election: an additional exit 45 south of the Pimpama River and an additional entry on to the M1 on the western side of the existing exit 45 north; upgrades at exit 38; a hospital in the Coomera electorate adjacent to public transport and the M1; an ambulance station in an appropriate location in Ormeau adjacent to the M1—

not kilometres away where it impacts on locals; fast-tracking the Pimpama Railway Station—2024 is too far off and we need that station much sooner, 2021 perhaps; a police citizens youth club at Pimpama, where we have the highest percentage of people under 25 years of age in this state at around 43 per cent of the population—that is the target audience for police citizens youth clubs; fast-tracking the federally funded car park upgrade at Coomera Railway Station; calling for the doubling of existing capacity; \$15 million committed by the federal government in May 2018 and still no movement on it by this transport minister; and more bus services between Ormeau and Coomera railway stations and an extension of operating hours.

We called for an increase to the 722 service, which saw an immediate increase in passenger numbers, and providing a more commonsense service meant the commuters came. We need to do the same for the 721 service. We need to do the same for the Beenleigh-Ormeau railway station bus services. A bus service to Jacob's Well will immediately see an uptake, taking many cars off the road. We have new schools, a new fire station, a new police station—all hard fought for and coming online thanks to the power of the people. It makes sense that public transport keeps up as well.

Redcliffe and Caboolture Hospitals

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.09 pm): The Leader of the Opposition today reminded us that we are 269 days away from the state election. Clearly, the LNP in the Moreton Bay area is not paying attention because there is no sense of urgency from its local people. We are still waiting to hear its plans for our community. It looks like we will be waiting a while, because the LNP has no-one on the ground. We hear that the LNP has been asking people to run against us but it keeps getting the same answer: no. When they eventually show up, we will say to them that the Palaszczuk government is in the midst of a massive, half-a-billion dollar reconstruction and refurbishment of Redcliffe and Caboolture hospitals—our local hospitals.

Redcliffe Hospital is undergoing a \$120 million refurbishment and redevelopment. There will be a new maternity ward, a special care nursery, paediatric ward and birthing suites. Some 1,700 babies will be born there this year. We are doing a new day surgery ward and sterilisation facility. There will be new cancer care and kidney dialysis facilities and an additional operating theatre.

Further north, Caboolture Hospital is undergoing a massive \$350 million expansion and redevelopment. That includes a new four-storey clinical services building that will bring new services to Caboolture Hospital. The redevelopment includes a rehabilitation unit and a palliative care unit. The expansion of the emergency department at Caboolture is really getting locals excited. The Palaszczuk government will double the size of the hospital's emergency department. There will be new treatment spaces, refurbishment of the waiting room, new assessment rooms, a dedicated mental health assessment area and a dedicated paediatric assessment area.

In relation to car parking, the Palaszczuk government has delivered incredible benefits to our local hospitals. Some 1,640 new spaces will be provided at Caboolture. That is a net increase of 500 spaces.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mrs Wilson interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Burleigh. Member for Pumicestone.

Mr WHITING: Construction at Redcliffe started in August—

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Burleigh, I have just asked you to come to order. Come to order.

Mr WHITING: There will be 603 spaces at Redcliffe. It is more than just bricks and mortar; we can point to what we have achieved across the state. We have put on 6,000 new nurses, 2,000 new doctors—

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, stop waving that around like a prop. Come to order or I will warn you.


Mr WHITING: There are 500 ambulance officers as well. How can we fund this? We provide great economic management. Those opposite do not like to hear that. We are on track to deliver five budget surpluses—

Mr Hart interjected.

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

Mr WHITING: Our debt is lower than when the LNP left government. We have a \$49 billion infrastructure pipeline that is keeping the economy going.

Pumicestone Passage, Shellfish Reef Restoration Trial; Stuckey, Mrs J

 **Mrs WILSON** (Pumicestone—LNP) (7.12 pm): Late last year I was out on the water witnessing the deployment of two reefs made from recycled oyster shells as part of a shellfish reef restoration trial in the Pumicestone Passage. This trial has been ongoing since 2017 and is being undertaken by local community groups including OzFish Unlimited Pumicestone chapter, the Pumicestone Passage Fish Restocking Association, local oyster farmers and Indigenous representatives in collaboration with Healthy Land and Water.

I was extremely disappointed to discover that this reef restoration trial is considered by the marine parks authority to be a temporary research project and that authorities have indicated the trial reefs will need to be removed once research permits expire. I was also stunned that they were not allowed to properly mark the area with four buoys or provide signage on the single marker buoy to alert boaties not to anchor on the reefs, especially as anchor damage is a major threat to reef establishment. I was then told that Marine Parks has asked the community groups to withdraw all other applications for permits to conduct future shellfish reef restoration trials in Moreton Bay.


Given the environmental and socio-economic success of similar projects elsewhere throughout Australia and overseas, I consider this moratorium on shellfish reef restoration in Moreton Bay an embarrassment to our state. Other states in Australia and overseas countries are moving forward and embracing shellfish reef restoration projects because of the proven environmental and economic benefit and universal community support from environmentalists, Indigenous groups, fishing groups and local businesses. I table some links for the minister's benefit, in case she wishes to do some research.

Tabled paper. Document, undated, containing a series of internet links relating to Nature Conservancy and shellfish reef projects [168].

Essentially what is happening here in Queensland is that this Labor state government has placed a moratorium on reef restoration in Moreton Bay—threatening to pull the successful trial reefs out, even though they have been shown to increase local fish stocks between three and 10 times over what used to be there before the trial. The last thing my community needs is more red tape and misguided marine parks legislation that prevents positive projects such as reef restoration. I ask whether the minister even knows of these issues and, if so, what she will do to fix what is threatening to prevent my community from saving our marine environment.

Whilst I have the floor, I wish to acknowledge the contributions to the Queensland parliament and, more importantly, to the Currumbin community of my friend and former colleague Jann Stuckey. Jann's work over 16 years as the local member for Currumbin should be held in high regard in this House. She will be missed by her community and I personally will miss her greatly.

Fitzroy River Barra Bash

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (7.15 pm): 2020 marks the third year of the Fitzroy River Barra Bash. It will be my pleasure to perform the official launch on 21 February at the Frenchville Sports Club. The Queensland government, via Tourism and Events Queensland, was able to provide funding once again to support this great local event.

In November 2015 the state government ended net fishing in the Fitzroy River, with the aim of increasing recreational fishing opportunities and thereby supporting tourism and economic development.


Mr Power: Did it work?

Mr O'ROURKE: Yes, it did. This event aligns with our strategy to build visitation of economic growth via tourism in Central Queensland. At the official launch we will see the prize boat for this year—last year it was a Polycraft 410 Challenger—which will be won on the family fun day in May. The 2020 Fitzroy River Barra Bash tournament kicks off on Wednesday, 13 May and runs to Saturday, the 16th. It is a great competition for keen anglers lure fishing for barra and threadfin salmon, with over \$20,000 in cash and prizes. The 2020 Fitzroy River Barra Bash offers everyone the opportunity to participate in

an array of events, including the all-new recovery session at the Frenchville Sports Club including a boat giveaway. The family fun day will be held as a separate, standalone event on Saturday, 3 October, offering all fish-loving families the opportunity to get out on the water and cast a line.

The Fitzroy River has become a mecca for fishing, especially for barra and threadfin salmon. We have seen new boat ramps at North and South Rockhampton and the construction of three fishing platforms—all funded by the Palaszczuk government. Today I stand here in awe of how successful the recreational fishing industry has become as a result of the net-free zones and the businesses that have helped shape us as an iconic fishing destination. We have heard about the impact the coronavirus has had on tourism across the state. Why not come to Rocky, enjoy a fish and see some of the many great sights around Central Queensland?

Innisfail Hospital, Car Parking


 **Mr KNUTH** (Hill—KAP) (7.18 pm): I rise to speak on an issue that has sparked a lot of passion from local residents in the Innisfail region. The parking situation at Innisfail Hospital has been described as appalling. It is difficult and at times impossible to find a parking spot for patients onsite from Monday to Friday, particularly between the hours of 7 am and 6 pm. Currently there is very little off-street parking available on the hospital site. This is a significant issue for elderly patients or those patients with mobility problems, who need to park close as they are unable to walk 300 metres or more uphill to the hospital.

Innisfail has an ageing population with close to 30 per cent aged 60 and over, with a median age of 41 years. Elderly patients are having to walk up to 300 metres uphill in steaming hot weather just to get to the hospital entrance because no parking is available nearby. It is a miracle that no patients have passed out or worse just trying to get to the hospital's front doors. I want to point out that the Innisfail Hospital is a vital facility and staff do a wonderful job in our community. However, the situation has reached the point where residents are frustrated and angry at not being heard in terms of their concerns. I now table a petition signed by over 200 residents supporting the call for a solution to be found to the parking situation at the Innisfail Hospital.

Tabled paper: Nonconforming petition regarding car parking at the Innisfail Hospital [\[169\]](#).

This issue has also attracted numerous passionate callers to the local radio station and articles in the *Innisfail Advocate*. Quite often these issues do not come with recommended solutions, but in this case a couple of solutions have been provided. I have written to the Minister for Health on this issue calling for funding to be allocated in the 2020 budget to build a car park in front of the old nursing quarters facing the North Johnstone River or investigate other alternative options. The Cassowary Coast council has also recognised this as an issue and has offered its assistance to work with the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service and the government to develop a solution to the parking issues at the Innisfail Hospital. I call on the Minister for Health to take action and work with the community to resolve this problem once and for all.

Volunteer Firefighters

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.21 pm): Tonight I rise to pay tribute to a group of brave community volunteers who have been pushed harder this year than ever before. Australia's volunteer firefighters have always been heroes. I know that no-one in here would argue with that, but this year the whole nation has come together to appreciate what these selfless legends do for our community and our country. I have said before how proud I am of my wife, Angie, who—we sat down and worked this out the other day—has been a rural firey for about 20 years in both Western Australia and Queensland, and my pride in her and others has grown immensely this season.


Over the years she has been on many deployments, but this year is a different one, as we all know. She has been on four and is currently away on another. Like all families you hate saying goodbye and you fear what they face every time they go to leave on a deployment, but I know how well our crews are prepared and trained and that helps give comfort. The workload has definitely been shared around, and if my wife has been on four alone it does not take much to work out that with the thousands of volunteer firefighters across the state just how many hours have been given and it gives a clear indication of how unprecedented this fire season is. It also illustrates that our volunteers and their families have put in this season like never before.

Late last year I was honoured to represent Minister Crawford at the handing over ceremony of six new appliances for brigades in the Moreton Bay region, and these have certainly been put to good use since. The pride our rural fireys have in their equipment and their role was on display that day, as it has been every time I have had interactions with them. It has not just been the Palaszczuk

government's response to these fires throughout Australia that fills us with pride; the whole community has come together to help in any way that they can towards stopping the fires, helping the victims—both human and animal—and rebuilding.

I want to give a quick shout-out to some businesses and groups in my area that raised money to help. I know I will have missed some, but here we go: the Squealing Pig butcher; the Toasted Pig coffee shop; Narangba Valley Tavern, Central Tavern and the Petrie pub—all of the pubs in the Kurwongbah electorate, a perfect record; Ravneels Curry House; and the Pine Rivers Country Women's Association as well as many other community groups and businesses. Musicians, sporting professionals and celebrities have also stumped up, and kudos to them for doing that. I know we all work better when we work together and this disaster has brought us together as only tragic events of this magnitude can. I hope that in the studies and dissections of this fire season that will come we can continue to show this resolve together to stop it happening again and that we can accept the science of climate change and stop the silly political games that revolve around it.

Lockyer Electorate, Water Security


 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (7.23 pm): Water is life. Water has caused wars and water is the lifeblood of our community and the economy of the Lockyer. It is an exciting time. For years—in fact, decades—people have been trying to bring water and water security to the Lockyer and I believe that this year—2020—will see the best opportunity in the past and foreseeable future to deliver that water security.

The efforts of the Lockyer Valley and Somerset Water Collaborative cannot be understated. This powerful coalition of leaders and interest groups is charged with the security and sustainability of our region. We are one of the most fertile valleys in the world. We have the soil and are close to transport markets, and we have the know-how. Our farmers are some of the best in the world at turning water into food. The collaborative members must be congratulated. Through their efforts and with their partners in industry and together with local, state and federal governments, the collaborative has developed a strategic business case to unlock additional water and government funds.

The stars are aligning and we are so close at getting this additional water, but now the project is reaching some very important tension points and real leadership is needed. Over the last week there have been six information sessions for one of the most important stages of the project—the water demand assessment—and I take this opportunity to encourage all farmers and water users in our region to put in their expression of interest. This is the opportunity of a lifetime. If they do not express their interest now and real demand, this once-in-a-lifetime project could fall over. If people are unsure, get some advice. Seek some good advice. In years to come I am sure that if they do not they will regret it. A minimum request of 20 megalitres will be accepted. I call on all farmers and water users to put in their expression of interest.

The additional water will come at a cost, but studies show that even in the worst case in the best seasons it will be better and in a poor season like we are in now it could be a thing of the past. Whilst we are doing our part, I call on the government to live up to its part. Current government policy is instructed by different storage levels and triggers to implement new initiatives and controls. One of those triggers has passed and soon we will see a trigger to recommission the western corridor recycled water pipeline, delivering enhanced water security for South-East Queensland and unlocking this potential. I call on the government and minister: let us do the right thing. Let us see the western corridor recycled water pipeline recommissioned.

Leafe, Ms CJ

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (7.26 pm): It is with great honour that I speak tonight to recognise the work of one of Logan police district's finest, a constituent and a good friend of mine. It is with great sadness that I do this posthumously and I seek the House's indulgence to outline the service of Sergeant Charmaine Jannette Leafe. She joined the Queensland Police Service in May 1998 and was sworn in on 4 December that year and was appointed to the Logan police district. This is where I first encountered Char when she came to Slacks Creek as a first-year constable. Even at that early stage of her career her work ethic was impeccable, but that was not to say that we did not enjoy our work. We were a tight-knit crew at Slacks Creek and her send-off was one of the biggest we ever had.

Over the next seven years Charmaine and her family would live and serve in Mareeba, Rockhampton, Ipswich, Palm Island and Ingham before returning to Brisbane. It was pointed out by the Logan district officer during his valedictory speech that Charmaine and her family had undertaken

transfers equivalent to the distance of London to the North Pole and back in service of this state. That is the toll that frontline service takes on our uniform families. I table the valedictory speech that was given.

Tabled paper: Queensland Police Service valedictory for Ms Charmaine Jannette Leafé [\[170\]](#).

I again crossed paths with Char at the Police Academy where we were both recruit instructors, and a finer role model for police recruits you would never find. While you can take the officer out of Logan, we all seem to return and in 2014 she was appointed the officer in charge of the Loganlea community police beat. She was proud of her beat; she was proud of her community. She also provided leadership in establishing the Logan district's Domestic and Family Violence Unit. In 2016 when I was working in the Vulnerable Persons Unit in police headquarters, I called up Char for a favour. I was developing a statewide DFV training package and I needed an officer that police throughout Queensland respected and would listen to. She was not keen for the attention but she stuck her hand up, and for that I am eternally grateful.

My last project in 2017 was the inaugural QPS Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Awards and on the night I was delighted to see Charmaine and her team from Logan win the state's gold award for their local work. Whilst a career is more than the sum of its parts or its postings, she was awarded a Commissioner's Certificate for her role in search and rescue operations at Grantham in 2011 and a District Officer's Certificate for her response to an armed man threatening a three-week-old baby in Kingston in 2016. I want to acknowledge the commissioner's awarding of the Queensland Police Service Meritorious Service Medal at her funeral. I could not think of a more deserving recipient. To Michael, Megan and Jack, know that you are in our thoughts and in the arms of the blue family. I will leave the House with a quote from Charmaine—

You do tend to get that feeling from society that (the police) are to fix it all. In your eight hours you try to make it better than what it was, if you can. We can't fix every problem. You just have to go out and be proud of what you do for the day.

The House adjourned at 7.30 pm.

ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Batt, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Costigan, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke B, O'Rourke C, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Sorensen, Stevens, Stewart, Trad, Watts, Weir, Whiting, Wilson